

Lesson 9: Personal Evangelism (Part 1)

INTRODUCTION

Every true Christian has been privileged by God to be given the responsibility to win souls for Christ. God could have created or used a far better creature than us to herald His good news of salvation. Yet the Lord, in His infinite wisdom and grace, had chosen His elect to tell people about His Son.

No person just becomes a Christian. Someone must take the responsibility to urge poor sinners to repent and trust Christ alone for their salvation. More than a sense of duty, bringing people to the feet of the Savior is a great and wonderful privilege.

OUTLINE *(Excerpts from ATG's messages on Soul-Winning)*

A. THE GREAT HARVEST OF THE LORD (Luke 10:1-3)

The Lord compares the bringing of men and women to faith in Christ to a huge harvest. Most too often, we look at people with natural eyes. When the Lord, on the other hand, "*saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd*" (Matt 9:37). Compassion for the lost souls provides us the eye that can see the things hidden to our natural sight. Only through the eyes of compassion we can perceive man's spiritual need and readiness.

1. THE PROSPECT OF THE HARVEST --- "*The harvest truly is great*"

- Great – abundant, plenteous, great in number
- The fields are filled and ready to be harvested
 - John 4:35 – "*Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already unto harvest*"
- There are people all around us who are in need of the Savior.
- While the disciples might hate the Samaritans, Jesus sees a harvest among them (John 4:35-38)
- In the Samaritan village of Sychar, Jesus began his teaching outside of town at the well with a woman and brought many to faith (John 4:40-42)

2. THE PREDICAMENT OF THE HARVEST --- "*but the labourers are few*"

- This is such a sorrowful reality:
 - Too many Christians evade the intense labor of the harvest
 - Too many people make excuses for not serving God (Luke 9:59-60)
 - Too many professing believers are here to be served and not to serve
- Today, we have an abundance of churches, but very few actual workers and disciples
- Very few are willing to take the challenge of the harvest, to roll up their sleeves to work for God
- 1 Cor 3:9 – "*For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry...*" – farm, for cultivation
- Matt 4:19 – "*Follow me and I will make you fishers of men*" – if you are not fishing, you are not following
- We do not lack in numbers, only in laborers

3. **THE POWER OF THE HARVEST** --- ***“pray ye therefore”***
 - In God’s field, He is the one who gives the increase (1 Cor 3:6)
 - Our part is not to give the increase --- but to pray
 - Prayer is the power of the harvest – yet prayer is a neglected resource
 - Prayer is the answer to the problem of too few workers
 - *“he would send forth”* – Greek *ekballo* – root word – to eject, to drive out forcibly
 - Basis of the English word “ballistic” – power
 - God himself is driving them out as laborers

4. **THE POSSESSOR OF THE HARVEST** --- ***“the Lord of the harvest”***
 - The Lord is the Owner of the harvest
 - Human leaders, such as pastors and missionaries, may be the instruments, but God is the moving force
 - Ultimately, it is the Lord of the harvest who sends men and women out as workers
 - Those who stick out in the Lord’s work are the ones who do so from a sense of calling, and not just from a mere sense of responsibility
 - Paul’s sense of calling -- *“woe is me if I preach not the gospel”* (1 Cor 9:16)
 - Both the pastor and the members are called by God for the harvest.

5. **THE PERILS OF THE HARVEST** --- ***“behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves”***
 - Jesus warns His disciples of the dangers involved in the harvest.
 - Matt 10:16 – be wise as serpents and harmless as doves
 - As workers in the Lord’s vineyard, we are most vulnerable and susceptible to the devil’s attacks
 - Therefore, we must continually rely upon God for protection and strength

6. **THE PRESSURE OF THE HARVEST** --- ***“carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way”***
 - Jesus places strict limits on how the Christians should equip themselves for their mission
 - We must learn dependence upon God for our supply:
 - *No purse* – not to bring money to supply our needs – but trust God to supply
 - *No scrip* – to travel light – not allowing the cares of this world to slow us down
 - *No shoes* – no extra pair of shoes
 - *Salute no man by the way* – deals with the urgency of our mission – not to be sidetracked by “the good” so as to be prevented from accomplishing “the best”

7. **THE PROVISION OF THE HARVEST**--- ***“if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it... and in the same house remain, eating and drinking, such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house”***
 - Principle:
 - If the householder is a person receptive to the gospel of salvation, then the peace and blessing of the gospel will rest upon him
 - If not, the blessing returns to the disciples who offered the gift and blessing
 - *eating* – v.7,8 – to be content with what they are given
 - *hire* – Greek *misthos* – wages –
 - The Lord of the harvest sends out laborers to harvest his crop
 - The Lord is a just the Owner that always pays his workers promptly and justly (Lev 19:13, Deut 24:14-15)
 - The workers are deserving of sustenance just like any other laborers
 - 1 Tim 5:17-18 – *“do not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn”*

- 1 Cor 9:4-18 --- Paul discusses his right to financial support, even though he has chosen to waive it in order to offer the gospel free of charge

B. COMMON OBJECTIONS IN SOUL-WINNING

1. **“I have no time to witness”**
 - The question is not one of time, but of priorities.
 - No Christian can legitimately say “I have not time”
 - We all have the same 168 hours per week but we choose to spend those hours on what we think are most important (Ephesians 5:15-16).
 - Christ made sharing the Gospel His highest priority
2. **“It is the Pastor’s job”**
 - Ephesians 4:11-12 says that pastors, evangelists and teachers are all to equip God’s people for the kinds of service that builds up the body of Christ. God intends for pastors to witness, but also to equip lay persons on how to effectively share their faith.
 - All Christians are called of God to be “fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19)
3. **“I only witness by life”**
 - The person who only witness by life is not really a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - People do not learn of Jesus Christ by simply watching someone live a morally good life.
 - They come to Him by hearing, understanding and believing the gospel.
 - However, Christians who are in a place restricted to the gospel must use discretion and sanctified common sense in dealing with people.
 - When asked, they must be prepared to communicate their hope in the gospel of Christ with meekness and fear (1 Peter 3:15).
4. **“I am afraid (or too shy) to share my faith”**
 - Like the disciples in the early church, we need to pray for boldness (Acts 4:29).
 - Although the Lord Jesus Christ equipped His disciples, they still needed to pray and ask for boldness to replace their timidity.
5. **“It is not my gift to share the gospel”**
 - The gift of evangelism exempts no one from involvement in personal evangelism.
 - The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) was given to the church in corporate capacity and it is for all disciples to fulfill.
 - Every disciple is compelled to witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.