

## PERSONAL EVANGELISM DURING GOSPEL MEETINGS

(Mark 16:15-16; Rom 1:16-17)

A. **One thing is certain;** we will not help to convert anyone to Christ unless we first discuss the importance of that work.

B. **What would you say IS** the main cause of conversion today?

1. Studies have shown (The Institute For American Church Growth) that it's not what you might expect.

a. Physical or Spiritual needs - 3%

b. Liked the preacher - 6%

c. Visited a service - 1%

d. Bible classes - 5%

e. Gospel meeting - 0.5%

f. Programs - 3%

g. A friend or relative invitation - 79%

2. This doesn't mean that the other factors are not important or involved in one's conversion, but it does point to the power of personal influence.

3. So if we're going to use our influence effectively, we must have two things: concern for souls, & knowledge of truth.

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**Matt 9:35-38** – Then Jesus went about all the cities & villages, **teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom,** & healing every sickness & every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with **compassion** for them, because they were weary & scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. “Therefore **pray** the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

**Rom 9:1-4** – I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that **I have great sorrow & continual grief in my heart.** For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, who are Israelites...

**Rom 10:1-3** – Brethren, **my heart's desire & prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.** For **I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.** For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, & seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

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[How may we increase our opportunities to lead our relatives, friends, neighbors to Christ during our g. meet.?)

## I. DO YOUR PART TO EDIFY THIS CHURCH

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**Eph 4:15-16** – but, speaking the truth in love (vs. 11), may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ-- from whom the whole body, joined & knit together by what **every joint supplies**, according to the effective working by which **every part does its share**, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

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A. **Everything else** may be right: organization, doctrine, & worship, but if each one is not doing his or her share – supplying a part – then we greatly diminish our chances of converting someone to the Lord.

1. Because doing “our share” is evidence of our love for one another, which the Lord said would be our greatest tool for evangelism.

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**John 13:34-35** – A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**

**Rev 3:7-8** – And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, He who has the key of David, He who opens & no one shuts, & shuts & no one opens: “**I know your works.** See, **I have set before you an open door**, & no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, & have not denied My name.”

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## B. How do we edify this church?

1. First we must love each other enough to know each other by name.

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**John 10:1-5** – Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief & a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, & **the sheep hear his voice; & he calls his own sheep by name & leads them out.** And when he brings out his own sheep, **he goes before them; & the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.** Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers (cf. **Rom 16:16**).

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2. Secondly, to edify this church we each one must be hospitable; exhibit our love for each other.

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**1 Pet 4:7-10** – But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious & watchful in your prayers. And **above all things have fervent love for one another**, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” **Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.** As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

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3. When was the last time you called & asked to visit someone in their home, or in the hospital?  
(Invitations rarely come. Pittsburg: “Come see us,”)

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**Jas 1:27 – Pure & undefiled religion** before God & the Father is this: **to visit orphans & widows** in their trouble, & to keep oneself unspotted from the world. (To attend to their needs you must go to their homes.)

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**Matt 26:36** – ‘I was naked & you clothed Me; **I was sick & you visited Me**; I was in prison & **you came to Me**’

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4. You can edify this church by giving of your time, resources & abilities to every endeavor that makes it possible for us to grow up in all things into Him who is the Head, & to edify ourselves in love: from building maintenance to preaching & teaching.

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**1 Peter 4:10-11** – **As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.** [Peter mentions two general areas of gifts] 11 If anyone speaks, let him **speak** as the oracles of God. If anyone **ministers**, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory & the dominion forever & ever. Amen.

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5. You can edify this church by making a determined effort to be at every service, on time.

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**Rom 12:10-11** – Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; **not lagging in diligence**, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

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[Let's say that several of us have invited someone to our gospel meeting & that some of them have accepted the invitation. How much more likely will they be to receive the Truth if they see a congregation that has edified itself in these ways?

- A congregation where everyone is obviously doing something for the betterment of the congregation.
- Where they hear us call each other by name, & we call them by name.
- Where they overhear us talking about our members who could not make it out.
- Where they notice that we have planned to visit in each other's homes, & where they are invited to come too.
- Where they observe how quickly we offer our services to the physical & spiritual needs of the church.
- A congregation where they perceive that attendance is given the priority of our time.

I believe we can be fairly certain that a congregation like THAT has the greatest opportunity of leading someone to the Lord & to the salvation He offers to those who will come to Him & become a part of His body the church.

However, there are a few additional actions that will help.]

## II. MAKE A LIST OF NAMES

- A. **You will be surprised** by the number of people with whom you have some degree of influence that you did not think of at first.
1. Besides, how many of us remember everything that needs to be done without a “things to do” list?
  2. Well, we need a “people to invite” list; it will help focus our attention on those we hope to reach with the gospel, so as not to neglect or overlook them.
    - a. Neighbors, coworkers & other people you see nearly every day.
    - b. Locals who have visited recently.
    - c. Wayward members who need restoring.
    - d. Casual acquaintances.

[And of course once you make that list don't forget pray for those people before & after you have extended to them an invitation to the gospel meeting.]

## III. PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

- A. **A prayer for the lost** is not a means of absolving ourselves of any further responsibility toward them.
1. It is an acknowledgement that God gives the increase when the invitation is made & the gospel is presented.

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**1 Cor 3:5-7** – Who then is Paul, & who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? ***I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.*** So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

**Col 4:2-6** – ***Continue earnestly in prayer***, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; mean while praying also for us, ***that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ***, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer...

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[Let's say that all your effort has paid off, & the person you invited has come to the gospel meeting.

What do you do next?]

#### IV. LISTEN TO THE CONTENT OF THE SERMON

A. **Make sure the person** you invited is exposed to that part of the gospel they most need to hear first.

1. On Sunday evening brother \_\_\_\_\_ will bring a lesson entitled “\_\_\_\_\_.”
  - a. If your invitee comes on that night, they may not hear the topic they most need to hear.
  - b. I can assure you that Wayne's lesson will whet their appetite to want to hear more spiritual teaching, but that lesson may not have addressed his or her specific need.

2. So by being aware of what is being preached & how that topic relates to the needs of your visitor, you will be in a better position to direct them toward the teaching they most need to hear.

[You may wish to direct that study yourself in your home or theirs, or you may want to ask for someone's help. We have video tapes, CD's & Bible Correspondence Courses that explain the fundamental topics of the NT.]

#### CLOSING

- A. **The things we have discussed** will help to prepare us for the work Jesus Christ has called us to do.
1. If a single soul is not converted to the Lord or turned away from religious error, then may we at least do all we can for the cause of Christ.
  2. Through obedience to His commands & by implementing the suggestions made in this lesson we will become vessels useful to the Mater's cause (2 Tim 2:19-22).

**GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR SALVATION:**

**Hear the gospel of Jesus Christ; read it in your Bible:** Acts 2; 3; 13; Rom 10:17

**Believe Jesus to be Lord and Christ, the Son of God and Savior:** Acts 2:36; John 3:16; 8:24; 20:30-31; Acts 4:12; Titus 1:4

**Repent of your sins:** Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 1 John 3:4

**Confess your faith in Jesus Christ:** Matt 10:32-33; Acts 8:37; Rom 10:9-10

**Be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins:** Acts 2:38; Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:27; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet 3:21

**Be obedient to the Lord, He will be your Judge:** Titus 2:11-12; Heb 5:9; 2 John 9; Rev 2:10; John 12:48