

THE EVANGELIST AND EVANGELISM – TAKING THE GOSPEL INTO ALL THE WORLD!

INTRODUCTION TO THE EVANGELIST AND EVANGELISM

Jesus told His disciples, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). The Scriptures reveal that all believers in Jesus Christ are called to share His Good News with others (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). Even those who are called and gifted as pastors to serve a local church are exhorted to evangelize at every opportunity (2 Tim 4:5).

However, there are those specifically called and appointed by God to the gift and function of “evangelist” (Eph 4:11). This issue of ACTS Magazine will help explain the call and role of the evangelist according to Scripture.

This teaching will also be valuable to any church leader or Christ-follower, for it contains principles that will encourage, train and equip you and those you lead to win the lost to Jesus Christ!

WHO IS THE EVANGELIST?

ARE YOU AN EVANGELIST?

As you read this article you may ask yourself if you are an evangelist. Here are some questions to help you prayerfully decide if God is calling you as an evangelist:

1. Am I sure that the Lord has spoken to me by a calling, or within my spirit, that I am to be an evangelist?
2. Do I often feel heaviness about the pain and hopeless state of people separated from Christ?

3. Do thoughts of others living without Christ come to me frequently?
4. Do I have a strong desire to tell others about Jesus' life, death and resurrection?
5. Do I have a hunger to study God's Word to gain a deeper understanding of the Gospel?
6. Do thoughts of men and women spending eternity in hell away from God affect me greatly?
7. Do I feel an urgent need to preach to those who are not saved?
8. Have I had dreams or visions in which I am preaching to the lost, which compel me to want to evangelize?
9. Do I see practical areas of need that make me want to help others, so I can also introduce them to Jesus?
10. Do I feel burdened when I meet other Christians who don't think or care about reaching the unsaved with the message of Jesus?
11. Is showing others the way to Christ most important to me?
12. Have I made plans to preach or share with others the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ alone?

You may have answered "yes" to many of these questions. If so, it is very possible that God is calling you to the work of evangelism. This article will:

- examine who the evangelist is;
- discuss the nature of the evangelist's work;
- identify the evangelist and those with an evangelistic calling;
- encourage, challenge and teach the evangelist;
- help pastors to identify and encourage evangelists, be effective in evangelism themselves, and grow the Church by winning new believers;
- give practical help in the practice of evangelism for leaders and their churches.

[Note: This article will use the terms "they", "he" and "she" when speaking of the evangelist. Both men and women – now, and throughout history – have served in the role of evangelists and received callings from God to be evangelists.]

WHO IS THE EVANGELIST?

An evangelist is a man or woman chosen by God to spread the Good News (Gospel) of salvation through Jesus Christ. An evangelist is a speaker for God. He or she tells others about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior. The evangelist tells in words the story of Jesus and the purpose of His life, death and resurrection.

An evangelist, in other words, preaches the Gospel. There is no greater message to preach. The Gospel is *“the power of God to salvation”* (Rom 1:16).

The story of Jesus Christ includes how He came into the world; lived a perfect, sinless life; died on the Cross; rose up from the grave; and forever lives. The purpose of Jesus’ death was to take upon Himself God’s judgment for the sins of all people, and to destroy sin’s power. Jesus conquered death and defeated the devil and all of the powers of evil. Jesus’ life, death and resurrection bring hope to all people and take away fear.

If you are an evangelist, you are God’s messenger with the most important news in the world!

AN EVANGELIST IS ONE WHO IS SENT

The evangelist is a messenger – one who is sent to make an announcement. Like John the Baptist, the evangelist announces Jesus to the people. “Gospel” is a word that means **good news**. So the evangelist takes a message of good news to people who need to hear it. It is the best news in the world, about how Jesus died on the Cross to bear God’s full wrath for our sins and thereby obtain for us forgiveness of sins, and give us eternal life.

John the Baptist was sent by God to the river Jordan in the desert (Matt 3:1-12; John 1:6-8,19-34). An evangelist will often be sent to a place where people do not know, or have not yet heard, about Jesus.

The term “evangelist” means **a person sent with a message**. God chooses evangelists to go with the message of Jesus and to tell it to others.

Evangelism requires hard work – including diligent study of God’s Word, sacrifice, planning, courage, prayer and fasting.

THE EVANGELIST IS A GIFT

Read Ephesians 4:11,12: *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”*

These verses tell us that Jesus gives evangelists as gifts. A gift is meant to be received with thanks and appreciation. Sometimes evangelists are not appreciated by pastors or churches. But people who come to Christ through the work of an evangelist thank God again and again for the gift He sent them—someone who told them about Jesus and explained to them how they could have salvation and new life through Christ.

The evangelist is one of the five servant-leader gifts given by Jesus (Eph 4:11). The evangelist is **a gift to the Church** because he or she brings people to Christ. People who are truly saved go into churches and learn how to follow and serve God.

The evangelist is also a gift to the people of the world. He or she tells them the wonderful news about the Savior, Jesus, who died and rose again.

Through the preaching of the Gospel, people hear how they can have their sins forgiven and receive eternal life. The preaching of the Gospel is the core of the evangelist’s ministry.

A FUNCTION OR AN OFFICE?

Each of the five ministry gifts named in Ephesians 4:11 is fulfilled by people who are called to do a job for God. One is a pastor, one is an evangelist, and another may be an apostle.

Some teach that the gifts mentioned in this passage are **offices**, or positions of authority. They claim that this gives a pastor or an evangelist the right to command others in the Church.

The Bible does not teach this. The pastor or evangelist is not to be a king over God’s people. But the Bible is clear that they are to become **leaders who train others**, as Paul writes, *“for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry [service]”* (Eph 4:12).

Jesus' way in ministry, and His example for us, is to **serve** others. *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many”* (Mark 10:45).

LEADERS ARE SERVANTS

Jesus had the attitude and actions of a servant (Phil 2:4-12). To be a godly leader in the Church means to take the way of the Cross, to die to personal ambitions and plans (read Luke 9:23; Galatians 5:16-25; Philippians 2:3-11). Christ-like leaders live as servants to others, with true humility.

Pastors, evangelists, teachers, apostles and prophets should demonstrate lives devoted to serving others. The five ministry gifts are for **leader-servants – those who serve others as Jesus served.**

A CALLING, NOT A TITLE

The five gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4 involve the **actions** and **functions** of those called, not their titles. They are called to lead and to train other Christ-followers.

For example, the pastor will care for the believers, nourish them with the Word of God, and counsel them. The pastor is gifted and called by Jesus to do so. The pastor will answer to God for how he/she treats and trains the sheep.

Evangelists also have a work to do. Their calling and gifting also come from Jesus. They are uniquely appointed to preach about Jesus and the Cross of Jesus. Each servant-leader is especially equipped in his/her area of calling. The pastor can deal with problems and relationships in the church. He will make sure the people are growing and healthy spiritually. He will also use discipline at times, like a shepherd, to help his flock. He will not misuse his position in order to control people or take advantage of them for his own gain or ambitions.

Evangelists are often gifted with discernment and boldness to challenge demon spirits and other powers that oppose the Gospel work where they are sent to preach. They can preach the Good News with power, often with signs from heaven to confirm their message. They can expect results when they

preach in obedience to God because they are doing the work of their calling, and speaking the truth of the Gospel (Rom 1:16).

NOT A TITLE

People who love titles will insist on being honored for the title. They soon think that they are more important than others. But Jesus said, *“Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven”* (Matt 18:4). Read more about what Jesus said to His workers and followers concerning humble service in Mark 9:33-35 and John 13:3-15.

It is often thought that just gaining a title qualifies you to lead others. Some think that they must be shown great respect if they have the title, “Evangelist”. There are men and women, however, who love Jesus and who share Christ with people in many towns and villages. They do not have a title or great recognition, but they are **true evangelists** who are doing the work.

Paul brought many people in Corinth to a saving knowledge of Jesus. Paul told them that **they** were his letters of recognition. His work and calling were shown by the many people who believed in Jesus Christ (read 2 Corinthians 2:14-3:3 and 1 Thessalonians 2:19,20).

The Epistle of James teaches us to show our faith by our works, not by words only (Jas 2:14-20). It is wrong to think that a title alone makes you an evangelist.

The ministry Jesus gives is not a title. **Ministry is service**. It means hard work, dedication to your calling and submission to the will of God. Ministry is not gaining a title so that you receive honors from other people. This work done by the evangelist is the ministry that pleases God and will bring honor from God Himself.

The Bible teaches, *“Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth”* (Prov 27:2). Let others recognize your gifting by your work and fruit, not by your self-given title.

Jesus said, *“You will know them by their fruits”* (Matt 7:16). A pastor is known by his genuine care for and sound teaching of the sheep; he leads and protects the people of God. The evangelist is known by leading sinners to Christ **and** bringing them into the Church.

ONE OF FIVE LEADERSHIP GIFTS

Evangelism is a mighty and beautiful calling. But no person should be full of pride because of their calling, since it is given by Jesus.

The evangelist is one of the five leadership gifts given to the Church, with a specific job to do. Pastors and believers should recognize the evangelist as a gift, and treat him/her well, providing for evangelists just as pastors are given honor and financial support for their work (1Cor 9:14; 1Tim 5:17). An evangelist should, in return, be expected to lead and serve in the work of evangelism.

Christians and leaders must recognize that **every** Christian is a necessary part of the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12 and 14; Rom 12:3-8). Each Christian is important and has work to do for God in this world.

It is better to think of the five people-gifts in Ephesians 4:11,12 as **those who work hard to carry out God's plans. They serve with a unique gifting because they obey Jesus.** They achieve results because they are appointed by Jesus. This is a much better way to think about these leaders, rather than as officials with titles and authority to tell others what to do.

FRUIT IN MINISTRY

Pastors, teachers, evangelists, apostles and prophets who work hard to fulfill their calling and to please God will make the Church strong and healthy. It is far better to serve with integrity and diligence than to hold a title and accept flattery. James 3:16 states, *"For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there."* It is God's will for those with specific callings among the five leadership gifts **to work together**, each in his own calling, and get results for God.

Seek to win souls to Christ and work well with others, and everyone will know that you are a true evangelist. Your work will give testimony for you.

PASTORS AND EVANGELISTS ARE MEANT TO HELP EACH OTHER

Pastors and evangelists have different jobs and callings, but both are **workers together** in the world for Jesus Christ. Pastors and evangelists should value and honor each other's gifts and calling. One calling is not more important than the other; **both are necessary**.

Pastors and evangelists have different functions. They should seek to help each other in the Gospel work. Some have said that the pastor is the most important leader in the Church. This is not true. **All New Testament leaders are important and very valuable to God and His purposes.** Remember that Jesus calls and gives such men and women to the world. While Jesus was on earth, He functioned as an apostle, an evangelist, a pastor, a teacher and a prophet. Now he has left those same works for others to do (Eph 4:11,12).

The evangelist helps the pastor by bringing new Christians into the church. The church grows. The evangelist knows that the pastor will teach the new believers and help them become strong in Christ. The pastor helps the evangelist by praying for him, by encouraging people to help him in his work, and by supporting him with money and resources.

The pastor and evangelist are mutually submitted to one another, preferring one another in love (Rom 12:10; Eph 4:1-6). One does not tell the other what to do. Both are under God's authority.

SOME ARE PASTOR-EVANGELISTS

In some places many people are saved in a short time. They need to be taught and grow in their life with Jesus. Evangelists who preach the message of Christ and win believers may need to take care of these new sheep in God's fold until pastors can be found to care for the new believers.

Some men and women have a "double calling" to lead sinners to Jesus and then also teach the new believers. They are passionate about **making disciples** for Christ.

You may be a pastor who has a strong calling in evangelism. If you are busy bringing in souls for Jesus, you are living out the message of Paul the apostle to Timothy the pastor: "*do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry*" (2 Tim 4:5). God has planted you in a place to care for His sheep, and you can also do a strong work of evangelism in that place. Perhaps God wants you to plant a church in another city or town. Your gifts in evangelism can help you

get many people saved. But be careful that you are not training to be pastors those who are called to be evangelists!

THE EVANGELIST IS A SPECIALIST

God has spoken to specific men or women to preach and tell the message of salvation. The evangelist says “yes” to serving God in this way.

Every Christian is commanded to share their faith in Christ with others (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8). **Every Christian should joyfully tell about who Christ is and what He has done for them.** All Christians should win others to Jesus Christ!

But the evangelist has a special calling to do this. The evangelist is trained and equipped in the specific ministry of bringing souls to Christ. An evangelist has been given the life-long calling to “catch” men and women for Jesus. Jesus said to Peter, *“Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men”* (Mark 1:17).

THE EVANGELIST IS GIFTED

God has given gifts and tools to evangelists to equip them in their work. Evangelists can preach with authority and power because that is part of their gifting from God. Miracles often take place when an evangelist is ministering - but it is the Gospel itself, not miracles, that saves (Rom 1:16; 1Cor 1:21-24).

God can teach the evangelist how to preach so that people will understand the Gospel and believe. If you are an evangelist, you can ask God to give you tools and understanding to do your job better.

THE EVANGELIST IS IMPORTANT

There would be no Christians today in your country if someone had not come to preach the Gospel. Thomas the Apostle was the first to travel to India to share the Good News. The Ethiopian eunuch of Acts 8 carried the Gospel into Africa. Evangelists may well have included Roman soldiers and merchants who carried the message of Jesus into Europe and Britain.

Lost people cannot be saved unless they are made aware of the Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ (Rom 10:14,15).

THE EVANGELIST SHOULD BE SUPPORTED AND ENCOURAGED

An evangelist is a person, man or woman, with a God-given zeal to share the truth of salvation with as many people as possible. This may bring hardship to the evangelist. God often sends the evangelist to remote places, or to places where the Gospel is resisted.

The devil fights against the work of a true evangelist. Satan opposes evangelism because he knows the great power of the Gospel to save people from hell, transform their lives and set them free from sin and demon spirits.

The evangelist prays for the sick and those with demons to be set free. The evangelist calls on people to repent of their sins and serve the true and living God. Evangelists often go to a place to bring others to Christ and prepare them for planting a church.

Pastors and churches should value evangelists and support their work with prayer and finances. We do not expect unsaved people to pay an evangelist for bringing them the Good News about Jesus. It is the privilege and the responsibility of Christians and of churches to support and encourage evangelists. The Church needs evangelists!

However, every minister should also be willing to work to help support themselves. The Apostle Paul did this by making tents (Acts 18:1-3; 20:34; 1Cor 4:12). Paul stated that it was right to receive support from others as a minister (1Cor 9:1-23). But Paul also declares that he did not depend upon this provision, *“That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel”* (1Cor 9:18). Evangelists – and all ministers – must use wisdom and be led by the Holy Spirit in these matters, that no criticism or accusation can be brought against them or the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

JESUS PREACHED THE GOSPEL

As Jesus traveled around the cities of Galilee, people came from everywhere to be healed and to hear Him preach and teach.

“And Simon and those who were with Him searched for Him [Jesus]. When they found Him, they said to Him, ‘Everyone is looking for You.’ But He said to them, ‘Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth’” (Mark 1:36-38).

What was it that Jesus was preaching? Primarily, it was the Gospel! Jesus preached the Good News: *“Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel’” (Mark 1:14,15).* Jesus was preaching as an evangelist!

Near the end of Jesus’ ministry, He was both teaching the people and preaching the news that people should repent and believe on Him to be saved: *“Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and **preached the Gospel**, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him” (Luke 20:1).* This verse shows that Jesus was preaching to unbelievers near the time He went to the Cross. The fact that Jesus preached the Gospel models to us the importance of the evangelism ministry.

THE APOSTLES PREACHED THE GOSPEL

Jesus sent the apostles to evangelize. *“Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might **send them out to preach**” (Mark 3:14).* Later, Jesus sent out 70 more for this work of telling the Good News (Luke 10:1,9).

PAUL PREACHED THE GOSPEL

The journeys of the Apostle Paul took him to many people who had never heard of Jesus. On his second journey, Paul and his team went to Macedonia because of a dream God gave him (Acts 16:9). In the cities there, he preached as an evangelist to the non-Jewish people.

After this, believers gathered together and Paul taught them as a pastor. His first work was to preach Christ to those who did not know about Him. Then churches grew up in these cities.

Paul then went to the next city and preached again as an evangelist. However, Paul sent Timothy, Titus or another member of his team back to teach and help the new disciples.

In Macedonia, Paul went to Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and then Corinth (see Acts 16:9-18:11). Each time he first preached as an evangelist. The Book of Acts tells us that Paul stayed in Corinth for 18 months at the command of the Lord. He both preached as an evangelist and taught and led the people as a pastor.

MANY OTHER DISCIPLES PREACHED THE GOSPEL

Mary Magdalene was sent by Jesus as the first evangelist to tell the disciples that He had risen from the dead (John 20:17,18). Philip was called “the evangelist” (Acts 21:8). Others acted as evangelists before they became pastors.

Peter preached as an evangelist on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36). He preached to people who knew about the true God but had not yet believed in Jesus. His sermon in Acts 2 gives the facts about Jesus and the **explanation** of the facts – that when Jesus died, it meant something important. Peter also told the people what they should do, now that they knew about God’s work through Jesus Christ (vs 37-39).

The four Gospels in the New Testament have a clear evangelistic message and purpose (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:31; 1John 1:1-4). Matthew, Mark, Luke and John each fulfilled an evangelistic function because they wrote the story of Jesus for everyone to read. They wrote the first four books of the New Testament. They tell how Jesus suffered, bled on the Cross and died for the sins of mankind. The Gospels also tell the world how Jesus rose from the grave to defeat death.

The writers of the New Testament epistles also fulfilled an evangelistic function. Paul, Peter, James, John, Jude and the writer of the Book of Hebrews explained the importance and truth of the Gospel. Every evangelist (and every believer) should diligently study the epistles to gain a thorough understanding of the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ. The Scriptures are powerful, unfailing and essential resources God has given to every person.

A FOUNDATION IN EVANGELISM

This is an important section for both pastors and evangelists to read. It will greatly help in teaching evangelism to others.

Every house needs a good foundation. If the foundation is crooked, unstable or built with the wrong materials, the house may collapse, especially in a storm (Matt 7:24-27). The story of the two houses, told by Jesus, applies to whatever you do for God. Your ministry, family and personal life must be built on a sure foundation that will not crack or decay. So it is with the work of evangelism.

Evangelism is not understood well by many leaders in the Church. Some think evangelism is holding a church meeting and expecting unsaved people to come into a church and respond.

Some make the mistake of merely telling people they should follow certain Christian traditions instead of showing them their need to receive and follow Christ. Getting people to conform to outward behavior and adopt Christian traditions is not bringing them into salvation through Christ!

To be a Christian means to be one who receives and follows Christ and is restored into relationship with God the Father. You are not saved by joining a church or following religious traditions. Being saved is receiving the risen Jesus, surrendering your life to Him, trusting in Him and His work on the Cross to save you, and making Him your Lord and Savior.

We must clearly present the full truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is why we must diligently study what the Bible teaches about evangelism and the true Gospel message.

An evangelism message should not be overly complicated. It should be a clear, complete, easy-to-understand presentation of the Truth of Jesus as revealed in Scripture. It should be declared in a way that listeners can understand. This is the work of the evangelist.

THE GOSPEL IS ABOUT A PERSON – JESUS

Paul gives a simple Gospel message in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5: Jesus Christ died as a sacrifice for our sins, was buried, and was raised from the dead to give us salvation and restore us to relationship with God. This is the Gospel that saves.

EVANGELISM IS TELLING THE GOSPEL

Sharing the Gospel means telling of the great things Jesus has done. Jesus loves people so greatly that He died in their place to take upon Himself the penalty for their sins. When Jesus rose from the dead, He defeated sin, death, hell and every power of evil. This is good news for every person on earth!

EVANGELISM TERMS

Understanding and using the following terms will help you present the Gospel in a clear way so that people will understand God's plan of salvation.

Love. God loves you and gave His Son to die and take the penalty for your sin. God's love is an everlasting love, a love without limits or conditions. God loves you even though you are a sinner and have offended Him. Nothing and no one can change God's love for you (John 3:16; Rom 5:18; 8:31-39).

Repent. This means **a changing of the mind**, which results in a change of purpose and action. So, to repent is to make a decision to change direction – to turn from evil and sinful ways and turn toward God. Repentance is not just feeling sorry; it involves changes in behavior (Matt 3:8). To repent is to admit you are a sinner, and to choose God's ways over your own (Mark 1:15; Luke 7:44-49; Acts 26:20).

Forgiveness. Every person has sinned, and needs to be forgiven. Everyone needs to know that the shame and guilt of sin can be taken away. The forgiveness of God means that God has relieved you of the burden of your offense. He has taken away and forgotten your sins (Rom 4:6-8; Eph 1:7).

New Life (Eternal Life). Jesus offers new life to those who believe on Him.

You become a new creation (2Cor 5:17). You receive a new start in life, forgiveness of your sins, peace in your heart, God's love for you and others, and a new way of living. You will also live forever with Jesus Christ in heaven (John 3:1-6; 10:27-29; 1 John 5:11,12).

Relationship. A relationship between God and a person is possible only through Jesus Christ. Our sin separated every one of us from a holy God. But when we receive Christ's sacrifice for our sins and His forgiveness, God no longer counts our sins against us (read Romans 4:4-8). God declares us "righteous" because of Christ's work, and we can thus approach God in relationship (Rom 3:23,24; 5:18,19; 1Cor 1:30; 2Cor 5:21).

Our salvation and relationship with God do not come from keeping a list of rules of "do this" and "don't do that". It is true that if we love God, we will keep His commandments (John 14:15). But **our works can never save us** (Eph 2:8-10).

Jesus revealed God to us as our Father (Matt 6:9; John 14:7-9). We can know God and He can know us (John 17:3; 2Tim 2:19). This is the Christian life – not empty rituals, living in fear or working in vain to be good enough to be accepted by God.

Believe. To "believe" is to trust in, have faith in, be fully convinced of, rely upon. To believe in Jesus is to put your whole trust in Him and to become His follower. This is not just a mental agreement; it means giving your entire life to Jesus (John 1:12). To believe is to be so convinced that you will confess with words your trust in Christ (Rom 10:9,10).

Hell. The Bible describes a lake of fire reserved for Satan and his angels (Matt 25:41). Jesus said that hell would be "*outer darkness...weeping and gnashing of teeth*" (Matt 8:12).

Those who reject Jesus Christ and His work are instead choosing sin and their own way. Sadly, they will follow Satan right into the eternal place of punishment, hell. God did not intend this for mankind, as it is not His desire for anyone to perish and suffer eternally (1Tim 2:4; 2Pet 3:9). But every person must either choose Jesus as their Savior and be restored to God, or suffer eternal separation from God in hell.

FOUR PRIMARY GOSPEL POINTS

The Gospel has four main points. Whether you preach the message, share it with someone, write a letter, or speak to a group of men or women, the basic message is the same.

The points are these: **God's Plan – Man's Rebellion – Jesus Christ's Saving Work – Man's Response**. Study the scriptures below to learn more about each of these four points. [Pastors: Teach this to the people in your church so that they can share the Gospel with others!]

1. **God's Plan**

- God loves you (John 3:16; Rom 8:35-39)
- God desires to give you abundant life and fellowship with Him (John 10:10; Rev 3:20)
- God desires to reveal His good purpose for your life (Jer 29:11; Rom 8:28)
- God desires for you to know Him (John 17:3)

2. **Man's Sin**

- Sin is rebellion against God and His ways (John 3:19,20; Rom 5:10)
- Sin separates you from God (Eph 2:12; 4:18)
- Every person has sinned, causing much pain, suffering and death in the world (Rom 3:23; 5:12)
- God's perfect justice requires judgment for mankind's sin (Rom 6:23)

3. **Jesus Christ's Saving Work**

- Jesus died on the Cross in our place to pay for our sins (Col 2:13-15; 1Pet 2:24)
- Jesus made the only way for us to come back to God (John 14:6; Acts 4:12)
- Jesus conquered sin and death, and rose from the dead (Tom 1:3,4; 1Cor 15:20-23)
- Jesus gives forgiveness from sin, and gives peace, love and new life (John 10:10; Rom 5:1)
- Jesus lives today as the King of all kings! (Rev 1:17,18; 19:16)

4. **Man's Response**

- I must respond to what Jesus has said and done (2Cor 6:1,2)
- I will accept Christ's sacrifice for me and my sin (Acts 2:37-41; 16:30-34)

- I will ask Jesus to forgive my sins and be my Lord and Savior (John 3:15,16; Eph 1:7)
- I will turn away from my sinful life and live by God's words and plans (Rom 6; Eph 4:17-32)
- I will follow Christ every day (Luke 9:23-26; 1 John 1:7)
- I will share with others about my new faith in Christ (Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15)

A good Gospel presentation – using these four basic points – may go something like this:

“There is One all-powerful God who created the entire universe. He is perfectly holy and just; greater than anything or anyone. There is nothing that can compare to the greatness and power of the Almighty God. This mighty God loves you. He created you for Himself. He intended to have relationship with you.

“But something has come between you and God. Something prevents you from having fellowship with God and knowing His great love and purpose for you in this life. This is called sin. Sin has come between you and God. Sin causes so many problems and trouble in the world. Sin is things like lying, cheating, hatred, stealing, evil thoughts, murder. The Bible says that every human heart is corrupted by sin (Jer 17:9). Ever since Adam and Eve [the first created humans] disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, every person is born with a sinful nature (Ps 51:5). Sin is like a wall, keeping you from God. Because we are by nature sinful, we want to live our way rather than God's way. All people have sinned (1Ki 8:46; Rom 3:23). God's perfect justice requires a punishment for our sin.

“God knows that we are dead inside because of our sins (Eph 2:1; Col 2:13). He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself the punishment we deserve for our sins, to die in our place on the Cross. Jesus broke down the wall of sin, and made a way for us to come back to God. Jesus rose from the dead to prove that He is God (Rom 1:4). Jesus Christ now lives forever as the King who is greater than any other king!

“You can believe that this is true and accept Christ's sacrifice. You can admit you are a sinner, tell God you are sorry, receive Christ's forgiveness and live in peace with God. The choice is yours: Believe in Christ and receive His

forgiveness, or continue in your sin and live in destruction now and for eternity. Will you choose to believe in Jesus Christ?”

There are many ways to talk about these four main points. Presenting the four points of the Gospel will become easier as you practice. You may begin by speaking them out loud to yourself; then practice with another Christian, and then begin sharing with non-believers.

PAIRS IN PRESENTING THE GOSPEL

Here are some “pairs” that work well together when you present the Gospel. Learn to use these pairs; they will help you share the Gospel clearly and lead people to accepting Christ.

First Pair: Your Story And The Word Of God

Telling your story, or testimony, of how you came to believe on Jesus helps people see that God is interested in helping them personally, too. It is good to give thanks and tell others what Christ has done for you (Luke 8:39).

Sometimes it is also helpful to tell another person’s story. The testimony of what God can do to change people’s lives is a powerful witness of Christ’s transforming work.

A good testimony has three parts:

- 1) What was my life like before I met Jesus?
- 2) How did I come to meet Jesus (what situations brought me to Christ)?
- 3) How is my life different since I met Jesus?

If you answer these three questions, you will give a good testimony as you speak. Do not tell all the details, but choose the important details. Do not emphasize the many bad things in your past life, but tell how good Jesus is and how He changed you. It is helpful to write out your testimony. It does not have to be very long. You can make a strong impact by a short story.

The words of the Bible are living and powerful. There are no other words that are more important. Share the words of the Bible, as God’s Word is powerful to save sinners: *“having been born again, not of corruptible seed but*

incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever... the word of the Lord endures forever. Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you” (1Pet 1:23-25; see also James 1:18).

The Bible is our most important tool. Our testimony can also be an effective tool. Use these tools together when you witness for Jesus or when you preach.

Second Pair: The Word And The Spirit

As you witness or preach for Christ, use the words of the Bible. In some cultures, people have very limited education. They may not even know how to read. Their vocabulary is limited and simple. If it is necessary, you can carefully take God’s words and make them simple for others to understand.

For example, you can say, “All people have done wrong things and dishonored God; we deserve punishment, but God offers us forgiveness through Christ.” This is a principle [truth] found in the Bible in Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23 that you have put into simpler words. But **you must be very careful to never change the meaning of what the Bible says.**

The Holy Spirit is the second part of this pair. He promised you that He would help you understand and remember what Jesus taught (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13). It is the Holy Spirit who convicts sinners and leads them to believe in Jesus (John 16:8). Without the Holy Spirit’s work, you cannot bring people to salvation.

The Spirit of God promises to give you power to be a witness (see “Be Filled With The Spirit” in Part Seven). It is important to ask the Holy Spirit for power and boldness. Preach using the Word of God and trust the Holy Spirit to bring conviction. It is God’s will for all persons to be saved and know the truth (1Tim 2:4), so God will help you!

Third Pair: Prayer And Preparation

You can be effective in winning people to Christ **as you pray** for those with whom you will share the Gospel. Much prayer should be made for the people and the place where you will preach. God may even place on your mind a burden for a specific man or woman. You ought to pray regularly for this person.

Then you also need to be **prepared**. Your preparations involve:

- reading and studying God's Word;
- preparing a message (see Part Seven of this magazine);
- practicing what you will say;
- spending much time before God in prayer.

Take time to ask, "What is the right approach to this person or group?" Memorize verses from the Bible. Ask Jesus to show you better ways to share Him with people. If you pay close attention, God will help you, so that many people can come to know Christ.

Fourth Pair: Go Out In Twos

Jesus thought it was important that His workers not travel alone, but "in twos". If you are witnessing on the street, take another person with you to pray silently while you speak. This is a very good practice. Working in pairs also allows you to train others in the work of witnessing and evangelism. You can also encourage and help each other.

In South Africa there are young men and women who love Jesus Christ and work every day to win souls to Him. Some are students; some have jobs. They do not pastor a church but they are soulwinners. Every week they go out on the street or into homes to tell others about Jesus. They have learned the four points of the Gospel and they understand the pairs of tools to use. They pray and prepare themselves to witness. A young woman wins two to four people a week by walking in the city during her lunch hour and speaking to people. She leads people to Jesus and brings them to church.

This is God's will for every Christian: to understand His Gospel message, to know how to present the message, and to speak it without fear or shame. Every Christian should learn how to share the Gospel in the most effective way possible.

BE CLEAR WHEN YOU SPEAK

The Bible asks, *"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?"*

And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom 10:14). But how can people be saved if they don't understand the message?

It is important to learn to present the Gospel simply and clearly so that people will understand the decision you are asking them to make and truly believe. (See Part Three, The Message of the Evangelist). Sometimes, religious terms that are familiar to us will sound like a foreign language to someone who does not understand them. Avoid terms that people without a Christian background will not understand.

Use simple, everyday language in your Gospel presentation. If you use Christian terms, be sure to explain them, and any Gospel concepts they may not know. Above all, make sure that the words you use clearly and fully explain the Gospel.

Examples:

Hard to Understand

"You should be saved, submit to Christ."

"Hallelujah, brother, eternal life can be yours!"

"I was saved and delivered."

"I was a sinner but now I am saved."

"Let me tell you my testimony"

Easy to Understand

"You have a need. Christ died for you to take away your sins."

"Give your life to Him."

"My friend, Jesus wants you to have life – now and forever!"

"Jesus took away my sins and made me free."

“My life was ruined by sin. Then I met Jesus and He forgave my sins and changed my life. He has given me a life worth living.”

“Let me tell you my story of how Jesus saved me.”

A good rule to follow: make your words as simple to understand as possible without changing the truth of the Gospel.

A second rule: Try to understand the circumstances of the people you speak to. If you understand them, you can speak clearly to them.

It is of the greatest importance that you – as a pastor, evangelist or leader in the church – understand how to give a Gospel presentation. You should know how to present the Gospel in a clear and complete way. Once you know how to do this, you can speak about Jesus Christ in any place, to any person, in the way that is needed for that moment.

God requires that you handle the truth diligently, accurately and carefully (2Tim 2:15). This means more than being able to explain the Bible to Christians. It also means being able to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to unsaved men or women.

METHODS FOR SHARING THE GOSPEL

1. **In relationships.** This is sometimes called “friendship evangelism”. Become a friend to someone. Get to know the person before you begin to share about Jesus. Build a bridge of trust and caring. The person will be open to hearing about Christ as you love them and live your life as an example of faith to them.

In some cases (as with Muslim people), you must earn the right to speak to them. People need time to see that you are sincere and genuine.

This way of evangelism takes time. It is a process. It means you will be involved with this person’s life – their cares and joys, their worries and hopes, their family and work.

2. **One chance to speak.** This way of evangelism is quick and powerful. It is what you can share as you sit on a train or bus next to someone, or when

you meet someone on the street. In most cases, the person is a stranger whom you will probably never meet again. This is a confrontation. You tell them the four points of the Gospel and, if possible, ask them to pray with you to receive Christ. Sometimes you can leave them a Bible, a tract or a piece of literature. You can show the love of God to them. Ask the Lord to give you boldness to share the Gospel when you have the opportunity.

3. **A service.** An act of kindness or sacrifice speaks loudly. Doing something to help someone can open their heart to listen to the Gospel about Jesus. Pray and look for opportunities to share Jesus in this way. This is what God did for us: He demonstrated His love for us by sending Jesus to die for us (Rom 5:8).
4. **Public declaration.** This type of evangelism is speaking to a spontaneous crowd of people. Sometimes you must gather the crowd so that you can speak. Music, a singer, dancers or other performers will draw people, and then you can preach.

This is not the time to preach a long sermon. You must give the Gospel in five or six minutes. People will not stay to listen to you if you preach a long message. Remember, this is not a church meeting! You have only a few minutes to share information that is very important to the people who are listening. This also is a time to ask people to pray with you to receive Christ.

5. **A special event.** Your church or ministry can sponsor an event or activity to gather people. Churches in many countries have done such things as: hosting an evening of music or a festival; inviting a special speaker; giving a dramatic presentation; showing a Gospel movie; or having a choir perform. Some churches have had a meal for invited guests who are not saved.

The people in your church can go to serve at schools or in a hospital. This may give an opportunity for you to share the Gospel with a group of people.

You must always make the people feel welcome and not bound to your particular church customs. If you want to convert them just so they will become members of your church, they might sense your selfish motive. But if you want to introduce them to the wonderful Savior Jesus, they will likely receive Christ (and may come into your church).

There are many other ways to reach people. God will give you wisdom to know how to

share the Gospel, and to train others to share also. Learn and remember the four points of the Gospel. Then you can teach others to also share about Jesus.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EVANGELIST

THE BASIC MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL

Preaching the Gospel is telling about Jesus. The evangelist's message is about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

To gain a better understanding of the Gospel message in Scripture, read and carefully study the following Bible passages:

Jesus Christ Prophesied

- Genesis 3:15
- Deuteronomy 18:15
- Psalm 16:10; 22:1-31; 41:9
- Isaiah 7:14; 9:6,7; 53:1-12; chapter 61
- Zechariah 11:12,13

Jesus Christ's Coming And Message

- Matthew 1:21; 7:13-14; 18:11
- Mark 1:15; 10:27,45; 16:16
- Luke 2:10,11; 9:56; 19:10; 23:33
- John 1:12,13; 3:16; 10:10,28; 14:1-7; 20:31
- Acts 2:17-39; 3:19; 4:12
- Romans 3:9-26; 5:1-21; 6:17-23; 8:1-11, 15-17
- 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
- 2 Corinthians 5:18-21
- Galatians 2:16; 3:13,21-26; 4:4-7; 5:16-24
- Ephesians 1:1-14; 2:1-18

- Colossians 1:13,14
- 1 Timothy 2:5,6
- 1 Peter 1:1-5; 3:18
- 2 Peter 3:9
- 1 John 4:9,10

Jesus Christ's Return

- Matthew 24
- John 14:1-3
- Acts 1:10,11
- 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18
- 2 Thessalonians 2:1,2
- Titus 2:13
- Revelation 22:1-5,20

To preach well, the evangelist must tell about Jesus, explain what the Bible says about Him, and then call people to repent and believe in Jesus.

Read Acts Chapter 2. Here Peter preached and 3,000 people believed on Jesus Christ. Peter **told the facts** about Jesus and **explained** them to the people. Then Peter told the crowd of listeners **what to do** now that they knew the truth. He told them to repent and turn to God, to believe on Jesus and follow Him.

PREACH THE FACTS

You, too, can see men and women come to Jesus Christ as you preach the message about Jesus. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: *“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you – unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”* It is a simple message: Jesus lived, died on the Cross, was buried, and was raised by the power of God (see Romans 1:4).

EXPLAIN THE FACTS

Explain that Jesus came to restore our relationship with God Who loves us (Rom 5:1; 2Cor 5:18-20; Eph 2:11-18; 1John 4:9,10). Jesus came to forgive our sins (Eph 1:7; Col 1:13,14) and to free us from sin's bondage (Rom 6:17-23). Jesus Christ came to give us a new and clean life (Eph 1:3,4; 2:10; Titus 2:13,14). He sent His Holy Spirit to give us power to live right and please God (Rom 8:1-11; Gal 5:16-23). Because of Jesus, we can be restored to our true destiny as sons and daughters of the Living God, to be co-heirs with Christ! (John 1:12,13; Rom 8:15-17; Gal 4:4-7). And one day, when our assignment on earth is fulfilled, we will spend eternity in God's presence, enjoying Him forever (John 17:3; Rev 22:1-5).

ALWAYS ASK FOR A RESPONSE

Jesus asked men and women to respond to Him. After Jesus healed the blind man, Jesus searched for him and asked the man to believe on Him (John 9:35-38). In John Chapter 4, Jesus spent time with the woman at the well and asked her for a response to Himself – as the Son of God.

A good evangelist will ask for a response at every opportunity (unless for a specific reason they do not think that they should at that moment). People need to hear the truth of the Gospel, and then do something about what they hear!

In a city in India, a team went to a jail every week to share the Gospel, but they never gave an opportunity for the men to accept Christ. Later, a visiting evangelist came and spoke about the claims of Christ and told the men it was important to accept Christ. He said, "How many of you will pray with me to receive Jesus Christ as your God and your Lord?" Many of the young men listening responded to receive Jesus.

People should respond when they hear the Good News of what God has done for them in Christ. Tell the people how to respond. They must repent of their sin; they must turn to God and ask Him to forgive them. They must receive Christ's sacrificial work and accept Him as their Lord and Savior. Asking Christ into their hearts, they should commit to follow Christ as Lord.

A POWERFUL MESSAGE

It is important to believe that God commands, empowers and blesses the preaching of His Word about Jesus (Isa 55:10,11; Rom 10:14-17; 1Thess 2:13; 2Tim 4:1-5). Believe it because Jesus says the seed of the Word will produce a crop, and people will be saved (Mark 4:26-29).

God tells you how powerful the word, or message, about Christ is: “...*having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the Lord endures forever. Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you*” (1Pet 1:23-25; see also James 1:18).

The Gospel message is the most powerful news in the world. It can change the heart of a man or woman; it can change a family, a city or a nation. As you preach and share this powerful message, you can gain a harvest of souls for God.

THE WORK OF THE EVANGELIST

THE TASKS OF THE EVANGELIST

1) The main work of the evangelist is:

- to tell about Jesus (who He is and what He did);
- to call people to repent of their sins;
- to urge them to believe in Christ;
- to tell them that receiving Christ is the only way to have relationship with God.

Most true evangelists will feel a burden for the spiritual darkness that blinds the men and women around them, for those who are lost and going to hell without Christ. Evangelists may not be satisfied with just attending church. They will have a strong desire for God to use them to rescue people from darkness now, and from an eternity in hell, which is reserved for those who reject Christ (Gal 1:4; Col 1:13; 1Thess 1:10).

Evangelists will feel compelled to pray and intercede for lost people (they may be of the same nationality, or from another part of the world). They will also have strong desires to go to these people to tell them the truth so that they may be saved. Others may try to discourage them from going, fearful of the danger or other challenges. But evangelists will go anyway, because they know that God has spoken to them and they must obey. These are among the marks of those with an evangelist's calling.

An evangelist must learn to be effective in calling people to receive Jesus and helping them make a lifelong commitment to following Christ. He or she must learn how to extend God's invitation to lost men and women to receive forgiveness. They must also learn to lead them in prayer to confess their sins and ask Christ to be Lord of their lives.

2) An evangelist trains other evangelists. Many evangelists become very effective in their ministries. However, they fail to pass on their knowledge, skills and experience to others. An evangelist can bring thousands, even tens of thousands, to Christ. But evangelists have not completely fulfilled their mission if they do not become trainers of new evangelists.

God's plan is always that His leaders (which include evangelists, pastors, teachers and others) should train others and raise them up to carry on the Lord's work (Eph 4:11,12; 2Tim 2:2). In this way the work of ministry is multiplied to every generation.

If you are an evangelist, who are you raising up in leadership for evangelism? Who will follow you in the work? Paul wrote to Timothy: *"And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also"* (2Tim 2:2). Each leader ought to teach the next generation, and pass their wisdom and experience on to others.

These trained men or women should then train still others as evangelists, too. Your experience is very valuable to younger men and women. Your guidance, understanding and training can help them avoid many mistakes and problems. Invest time in the evangelists whom God brings to you to be trained by you.

Take them with you on your mission trips. Give them lessons in evangelism. Teach them from the Bible. Train them how to do evangelistic ministry. In this way the Kingdom of God grows!

There is a man in Europe who is a busy pastor and evangelist. He has a large church of thousands of people. Yet he spends an entire day each week with

12 people he is training for the Gospel ministry. He spends hours talking, teaching, advising, listening and praying with them. He assigns them work helping and ministering, as he teaches them. After a year or two, when they are ready, he releases them into their ministries. Each of those 12 people then begins to train 12 more people. In just two years there are 144 people being trained to serve God as Christian leaders. In two more years, there are 1,728 people being trained! And so on.

This is the way Jesus trained His disciples. You should spend time with those who want to learn to be evangelists. Pastors, you should seek for an experienced evangelist who can train new evangelists. He or she should be your partner and friend. Evangelists can be a great blessing to your church and to the Kingdom of God.

3) An evangelist teaches believers to evangelize. A third work of an evangelist is described in Ephesians 4:11,12: *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, **for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.**”*

Notice in these verses that God’s leaders, including the evangelists, are to get the people in Christ’s Body ready for the work of serving God in the world. The evangelist is to teach and prepare people to do this.

Evangelism is the work of every Christian. God calls evangelists to devote their lives to sharing the Gospel. But **every** believer should make an effort to tell others about Christ and what He has done for them. It is needful for every Christian to be trained to share his/her faith.

An evangelist will teach others how to bring people to Christ and how to share their faith so that more people can come into the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

This is an important work of an evangelist. An evangelist stirs up faith and passion in others to share Christ. Teaching people how to share their faith in Christ will also help them grow stronger. Faith in Christ is meant to be shared with others!

THE EXAMPLE OF PHILIP THE EVANGELIST

Take a few minutes to read Chapter 8 of the Book of Acts. Notice how Philip is a man of God and of good character. He is the only man in the Bible to specifically be called “*the evangelist*”(Acts 21:8).

A MAN WHO SERVED OTHERS

We first read about Philip in Acts Chapter 6. He was one of seven men chosen by the Jerusalem church to help meet practical needs. Philip began to serve God by helping feed poor widows. He served because the church and its leaders asked him to do this work. Philip did not think himself above working in this way. He was willing to humbly serve and to learn.

If you want God to bless you, begin where He has placed you. The Bible states that Philip was one of a group of seven men who got a reputation for their faith, their wisdom, and their spiritual power in the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:1-6). This was said about Philip as his qualification to work to serve meals to widows!

Philip worked hard at his job, meeting practical and spiritual needs. **Seek to work diligently in the church or ministry into which God has placed you.** Be alert to people’s needs around you. Serve the men or women that God has placed over you, just as Philip served the apostles, the leaders of the church in Jerusalem. Strive to excel in your service and to be a diligent worker; as you do, God will increase you and move you into greater areas of responsibility (Matt 25:21; Luke 16:10).

PHILIP: MAN OF PRAYER

The Book of Acts states that Philip went north to Samaria. Why did Philip go to a strange city? The Bible tells us that he went because of a great persecution that had begun in Jerusalem. Philip likely would have spent time praying and listening to God, and asking God where he should go to preach. Philip also likely prayed for the sick because the Bible tells us that many were healed.

A GODLY CONCERN FOR THE LOST

Philip was moved by God to preach to the Samaritans. They were very different than the Jewish people Philip knew. Philip went to a foreign people,

those who hated his own people, to tell them about Jesus. Philip had a godly concern for the lost Samaritans. They needed Christ, too. He went because Jesus sent him. He went to tell others about Jesus Christ. He went because he knew God's concern for these lost people. What mattered to God mattered to Philip. Philip developed a heart like Christ's own heart, very likely by praying and listening to God in prayer. But Philip didn't just pray, he acted. He went to preach.

THE MESSAGE PHILIP PREACHED WAS SIMPLE

The Gospel itself is a clear, simple message. God created us and loves us. We are separated from God because of sin. Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth in the form of a man; He died on the Cross to forgive our sins and restore us back to God. Then Christ was buried and rose up from death and the grave. Sin and Satan's power were destroyed. Jesus Christ lives today and is all-powerful. Jesus wants you to believe in Him and give your life to Him. Judgment awaits those who reject God's Son; eternal blessing is for those who follow Him.

This is a powerful message; it is a message that works to change people. It touches the hearts of hard people and gives hope to the ones in darkness. **Telling people they ought to be good is not the Gospel.** Men and women cannot be good on their own; they need the power of Christ in their lives to fully overcome evil and to live right.

Tell people that Jesus is powerful and can take away all of their sins, their shame, their guilt. Jesus can make a new man or woman out of them (2Cor 5:17). He can give hope to the hopeless and strength to the weak (Isa 40:29; Rom 15:13). He heals the sick and gives us what we need to live this life for God.

The Gospel is a good message, full of hope and promise! As a good evangelist, Philip knew how to preach a simple message that made sense to those who listened – and many were saved.

MIRACLES WERE GIVEN TO PHILIP

Miracles, signs and wonders should be part of the evangelist's ministry. The Bible says that great miracles took place when Philip preached (Acts 8:6,7,13). The people saw miracles and signs that caused them to pay close

attention to Philip's words. *"And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did"* (Acts 8:6).

A sign is a supernatural act from God that reveals Him as real and powerful. Though signs and miracles are promised to every believer in Christ, evangelists in particular often have signs and wonders as they preach the Gospel (read Mark 16:15-18).

An evangelist was recently preaching in a jungle village. He told the people God had sent him with a message. He told them How Jesus suffered and died, and rose again on the third day; and that Jesus offers forgiveness of sins. Then the evangelist said, "To prove to you that what I say is true, we will now pray for sick people, and ask Jesus to heal them". He began to pray for the sick and they were healed. A witch doctor repented and fell to the ground as the demons were cast out in Jesus' name. When the people saw these things, they believed on Jesus. Over twenty village men received Jesus Christ that day!

There are many other examples of these kinds of signs and miracles. In Africa, in a Muslim village, a group of women were given permission to tell the Gospel. There had been a severe drought for several years. Each time the evangelist spoke, it began to rain! Everyone in the village, even the chief, admitted that God was sending a blessing because of the rain.

Evangelists tell the Good News and miracles often happen as they pray and speak. Jesus said, *"signs will follow those who believe"* (Mark 16:17).

As an evangelist, **you can ask God for miracles**, and pray until they begin to come. Pray for the sick in Jesus' name as you preach, and trust God to heal people.

So many miracles and signs happened in Samaria that the entire city knew about it. The Bible says the city was full of joy (Acts 8:8). Wherever the Gospel goes there is joy and gladness. When the Gospel is preached and believed, sins are forgiven and new life is given. That is God's miracle power at work! Oftentimes, there are additional miracles, such as sickness and disease being healed, demons cast out, and people delivered and transformed. The Gospel is powerful!

Not long ago, an evangelist preached in a certain city and a little boy who was deaf and dumb was healed as they prayed. His mother went back to her neighbors, friends and family and they all saw that he could hear and was beginning to speak. The next night the crowd was much bigger, and the mother stood on the platform and told how her son had been healed. That night many more surrendered their lives to Jesus, including the little boy's mother. After the Gospel message, the Lord gave many other healings. Many people believed because they saw the little boy healed, and the crowds grew each night. Hundreds of people were saved in three nights! This is similar to what happened when Stephen went to Samaria!

PHILIP WAS OBEDIENT

Jesus knows where people are ready to hear the Gospel. He sent Philip to Samaria. Then Jesus sent Philip away from very successful evangelistic work to speak to one person in the middle of the desert.

Acts 8:26: "Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, 'Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' This is desert."

An evangelist must spend time developing sensitivity to God's will and desire, and then obey God's leading. Good planning might have told Philip to stay in Samaria, where he was getting good results, and many were receiving Christ. But the Lord spoke to Philip to go and speak to one man.

We can learn important lessons from this story. **We must obey God.** He knows best. God knew that the Ethiopian who met Philip would believe and take the Gospel message back to his country in Africa. He was an influential man (an official in the court of the queen). This one man was important to God. Bringing him the Gospel was strategic. The Ethiopian could speak to a nation, and God sent an evangelist to speak to him.

An evangelist must be humble, just as willing to speak to one person as preach to a large crowd. Speak to the outcasts, to the seemingly unimportant, even to one. One person ignored by the world may be very important to God. God may be choosing a new Christian leader of influence when he sends you to one person.

Evangelists must be obedient to the call God has placed on their lives even when it is difficult or when no one understands. To obey God's instruction is

vital for an evangelist. Obey God's command to go and preach even if others talk against you, or it doesn't seem to make sense to you. God is wise and powerful and blesses those who obey Him.

READY TO GO

An evangelist must be ready to go wherever God sends him. God may send him to a strange and new place. God often sends us to people unlike ourselves. The Samaritans were not like Philip. It may have been strange and uncomfortable for him. The Ethiopian was not like Philip. But Philip was ready to go when God called. Evangelists must be ready to sacrifice and to go when God sends them.

One evangelist tells how he went to many villages to preach the Gospel. In some villages he was beaten; in others he was shut out of the houses. But still he went. Many people chose to believe in Christ. What would he say to Jesus if he had not gone to the villages and the people had not heard the message? Many people today around the world are perishing without the knowledge of Christ because no one is there to share the Gospel with them.

This evangelist praised the Lord that God had counted him worthy to suffer for Jesus – and praised God that so many would now be in heaven!

Suffering rejection, hardship and evil response from people is sometimes part of the evangelist's calling. Every believer will face persecution when desiring to live in godly obedience (2Tim 3:12). But God will help you, protect and guide you, and give you great satisfaction and reward in the midst of hardship.

Philip had true success.

Because Philip obeyed God and preached the complete Gospel, many people were saved. Every Christian must obey God. Don't look for success in the eyes of people; instead, always try to please the Lord.

SIGNS AND WONDERS AND THE EVANGELIST

REASONS TO ASK GOD FOR SIGNS AND MIRACLES

1. They are promised by Jesus to those who believe in Him (Mark 16:17-20; 1Cor 12:8-11; 13:28).
2. Jesus said those who believe in Him would do even greater things than He did (John 14:12,13).
3. Christ disarmed the works of darkness and demons at the Cross (Col 2:15). He gave believers His authority over the demonic realm (Mark 16:17; John 14:12,13). When an evangelist uses Christ's authority to cast out demons, the demonic rule over a person is broken and the person becomes free. People held in bondage to demon powers need to experience the power of Jesus to be set free. Those exposed to demonic forces need to know that as Christians, they are no longer subject to demonic forces and have no reason to fear.
4. Signs and miracles display the very real power and authority of Jesus Christ.
5. Signs and miracles help reinforce the Gospel that is being preached.
6. Paul saw many miracles in his ministry (Rom 15:18,19; 2 Cor 12:12), as did Philip. Peter also saw miracles happen when he preached about Jesus. Many evangelists and ministers throughout history and around the world today see God do miracles as they pray for others. As a disciple and minister of Christ, you should also believe God for signs and miracles as part of your ministry.

MIRACLES MAY BRING TROUBLE

Miracles give people reason to rejoice and believe in the Gospel. John 20:30,31 says, *"And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."*

But miracles done in Jesus' name may not always bring a positive response. Jesus was opposed when He performed miracles (Matt 12:9-14). Paul had much trouble when he preached the Gospel and miracles took place (read Acts 19:9-12, 23-41). Satan opposes the Gospel and anything that truly glorifies the risen Christ; unredeemed people often do as well.

Pray and ask God for His protection. God will help you each time you preach and pray for the sick and confront devils. Always listen to the Holy Spirit and do exactly what the Holy Spirit tells you to do. Do not try to copy another man

or woman's ministry style. You do not have their ministry. You have only the ministry that God gave to you, and it can become a powerful one through Christ. Act in faith on what the Lord shows you.

HOW TO BEGIN TO SEEN MIRACLES

One: Obey God. Preach the Gospel where God sends you. Tell people that Jesus can heal and then lay your hands on people and pray in Jesus' name; anoint the sick with oil, according to the Scriptures (Mark 6:13; Jas 5:14).

Remember, it is not you or your gift that heals people. It is the power of God that heals, as you are obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Two: The Word of God is powerful and living (Heb 4:12) and is backed up by God's authority. Memorize verses or chapters of the Bible often as part of your Christian discipline. Then, when you are praying for others, quote the verses of Scripture that the Holy Spirit may bring to your mind.

For instance, if you are praying for someone who is sick, you can say, "Jesus, Your Word tells us that 'the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up'. So right now, we agree with Your Word and ask you to heal and raise this person up!" There is power in the spoken Word of God!

Three: Have faith in Jesus Christ that He is truly all that the Bible declares Him to be – the One with ALL authority and ALL power! As we walk in obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, Christ will work through us in His power and authority to perform His will (Matt 18:18-20; Mark 16:17).

Four: Ask for the gifts of knowledge and wisdom, and for discernment (1 Cor 12:8-11). Is someone sick because of demons, disease or both? Is there transgression in the person's life that is opening him up to sickness? Has the person or his family been involved in witchcraft? Rely much on the Holy Spirit to help you discern the reason for the sickness or problem, so that you can address the true problem in prayer. Don't be in a hurry. In some cases, fasting and extra prayer will be required (Matt 17:21).

Five: In your prayer time, ask the Lord for His encouragement to get you ready to see signs and miracles. Pray in tongues and edify yourself, building up your faith (Jude 20).

Six: Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you about miracles as you read the Bible. Ask God to provide others who can also teach you and help you grow in this area.

When you are preaching or sharing the Good News with others, ask if there are any sick people present. Ask them if you can pray for them. Tell them that Jesus can heal the sick. Pray and believe God to do miracles. Then share the Gospel and pray with them to receive Christ.

When you are praying for the sick, be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Listen to Him as you minister. It is important to bring sick or demonized people to salvation through Christ, because they have power against further demonic activity only through Christ (Matt 12:43-45; Eph 6:10-18; Jas 4:7; 1Pet 5:8,9).

SIGNS, WONDERS, AND MIRACLES OFTEN ACCOMPANY EVANGELISTS

In the previous section, we learned that Philip preached and prayed in the name of Jesus. Unclean spirits came out; people who were sick were made well. These were powerful signs to show the people that Philip told them the truth. Then the people were excited and joyful (Acts 8:5-13).

Read Acts 8:5-13 again, asking the Lord to teach you. If you are an evangelist who is obeying God and preaching the full Gospel message, then believe God to give you miracles and signs following!

A group of evangelists in Africa prayed, and felt led by God to go to two villages to preach the Gospel. They went there and preached the Gospel; many people accepted Christ. The village asked the evangelists to pray for rain, since it had not rained for many months. After the group left for the next village, it rained for three and a half hours! The village sent runners after the team to tell them this news. God had given a sign to the whole village that His power was real and that what the evangelists had spoken was true.

Miracles took place wherever Jesus went. Miracles took place wherever the disciples went (Rom 15:19, Acts 6:8). Philip was a disciple, and you are also a disciple. The world has changed, but God has not (Heb 13:8). Ask God for and receive with faith the gift of miracles to confirm His power and the Gospel message.

REASONS MIRACLES MAY BE ABSENT

One: You have no faith or you struggle with unbelief. One must have faith in Jesus and who He is in order for His miracle power to be displayed (Matt 17:14-20; Heb 11:6).

Two: You don't believe God does miracles, or that He can use you to pray for miracles. God did not promise His power just to the intelligent, the rich, the educated, or to the best speakers. Jesus promised His power to all *"those who believe"* (Mark 16:16,17).

Three: Your life is not clean. You have disobeyed God or are caught in a sin. Or you may have an unclean motive, desiring God's miracle power to glorify yourself and not Jesus Christ (Acts 8:14-23). You must repent and go to a brother or sister and confess your faults and ask them to pray with you and for you (James 5:16; 1John 1:9). All ministers of the Gospel must do their utmost to live in a godly and holy manner (1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6).

Four: Someone has taught you that miracles do not happen today. You have the wrong information. Determine to study the Word of God and learn the truth about what Jesus did and said regarding miracles. It takes faith to believe in God and His Word. Remember, we serve an unchanging, risen Savior: *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever"* (Heb 13:8).

Jesus Himself said, *"And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover"* (Mark 16:17,18). Of Paul and Barnabas, it is said: *"Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands"* (Acts 14:3). Ask God for these works of power for your ministry so that God will be glorified and the Kingdom of God will grow.

Five: You may be undisciplined, or perhaps too proud. You don't spend time reading and studying the Bible or building up your faith in God. You seldom go to preach or talk to others about Christ. You want special invitations for you to preach.

Of these things you should repent! You must determine to be a faithful disciple, praying and studying. You should be willing to go wherever God sends you to preach – and to whoever has not heard! When we are faithful in the small or lowly things, God then releases more (Matt 25:23).

It can take time for your faith to grow in a way that you can truly believe God for miracles. Study your Bible to learn well the Gospel message. Study this section of the article several times, and other reliable material that you have regarding miracles. Begin to believe the Word of God, and tell God you believe Him. When God gives you opportunities to share the Gospel, pray for the needs of the person or people you are sharing with. Ask God to guide you and direct you, to teach you. Soon you will begin to see miraculous things take place. Be obedient to all God shows you, and you will grow in understanding and being used by the Lord Jesus.

BIBLE PASSAGES ABOUT SIGNS, WONDERS AND MIRACLES

Take time to read, study and pray over these verses from Scripture that tell about God's power and about miracles, signs and wonders:

- Job 5:9
- Jeremiah 32:21
- Micah 7:15
- Matthew 12:28
- Mark 16:16,17,20
- Luke 5:17; 10:18-20
- John 4:54; 6:14; 12:9-11; 14:12
- Acts 3:16, 4:7-10,16,22; 4:29,30; 8:5-13; 10:38; 14:3; 15:12; 19:11,12
- Romans 15:19
- 1 Corinthians 4:20; 12:9,10,28
- 2 Corinthians 12:12
- Ephesians 1:18,19
- 1 Thessalonians 1:5
- Hebrews 2:2-4

PREACHING A CLEAR GOSPEL MESSAGE

It is God, by His Holy Spirit, who draws people to Himself (John 6:44). So we must pray much, asking God to draw those to salvation who do not know Him.

But we are much mistaken if we do not heed the full counsel of God's Word and Christ's commands: Though God must draw people, we must obey God and go and preach the Gospel and tell people the Good News!

"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!'" (Rom 10:14,15).

Yes, the Holy Spirit must draw people to salvation. But as this passage so boldly states, people must hear about Jesus before they can believe in Him!

Jesus commanded His disciples: *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"* (Matt 28:19-20); *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"* (Mark 16:15).

If this was not a vital part of people receiving salvation, it would be a useless exercise. **We must go; we must proclaim!** People are perishing daily who have never heard the Gospel. It is God's desire that NONE should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance (2Pet 3:9). Christians must obey Christ, following His example – calling people to repent and believe, preaching the Gospel to every creature as Christ commanded us to do!

As we preach this Gospel message, it needs to be clear and simple. It must make sense to the hearers. The Gospel message must be understood, so that people are sure about the decision they are making.

A good evangelistic message is unique in that it will be about who Jesus is – and not about how to pray, helping others, or how to be good (those are teaching messages). When an evangelist preaches, he/she tells others about Jesus Christ and calls people to come to Christ in repentance. Many preachers do not know how to preach an evangelism message. Evangelism messages should be about Jesus and why people need to receive Jesus.

CHOOSE A RELEVANT BIBLE TEXT

Choose a Bible text to preach from that helps illustrate the Gospel message and that will make sense to those who hear. Here are a few examples of good Bible passages to preach from that will help people understand Jesus Christ and the salvation He offers to them:

- The lost sheep (Luke 15:4-7)
- The lost coin (Luke 15:8-10)
- The man whom Jesus delivered from demons (Mark 5:1-15)
- The woman who reached out to Jesus for her need (Luke 8:41-48)
- The invitation that was refused (Matt 22:1-10)
- Is your name in the Lamb's Book of Life? (Rev 20:12-15)
- Jesus will be your Shepherd (John 10:2-4, 26-29)
- Two roads in life (Matt 7:13,14)
- Calling out to Jesus in times of trouble (Rom 10:13)

There are many different passages of Scripture that can form a basis for presenting a clear Gospel message. Ask the Lord to give you insight into the Bible and into people's lives so that you can preach in a way that they can understand.

LOVINGLY PRESENT THE GOSPEL

Some evangelists begin their message with: "You must be saved! You will go to hell!" They repeat these types of words again and again. This kind of preaching beats down the people and imparts condemnation. After a while they will stop listening and go away.

Your words must draw people. The Bible teaches that it is the goodness of God that leads to repentance (Rom 2:4). Can you tell people why they must be saved? Can you tell them of God's great love, and Christ's great sacrifice for them? Can you tell them the joy of knowing Jesus? Tell them what they will lose if they reject Jesus. Tell them what they will gain if they receive Jesus Christ!

Here are some examples to help you understand good evangelistic preaching:

Some Preach...

“You are all sinners and will die!”

“You must be saved!”

“You should become a Christian!”

“Don’t be a sinner, come to church.”

“You will go to Hell!”

“You should be good!”

“You should change your life!”

“I know a lot about God!”

“Listen to the powerful man of God!”

Better Preaching:

“We have all sinned. God’s judgment upon sin is death. Christ took that judgment upon Himself. If you accept Christ and His sacrifice for you, He will forgive your sins and give you life.”

“Sin separates you from God and His love. That is why you need Jesus – He died to pay for your sins.”

“You can know God through accepting Jesus as your Savior.”

“Are you tired of sin and separation from God? Only Jesus can forgive your sins and cleanse you of all unrighteousness, and heal you of sin’s damage.”

“Those who accept Christ will be restored to God and spend eternity with Him. Those who reject Christ will spend eternity separated from God, in hell. God wants you with him, but you must make a choice.”

“We have all sinned against God. But Jesus died on the Cross to forgive those sins. We cannot be truly good without Christ’s help.”

“Many of us want to change, but we are powerless to change ourselves. Jesus gives us the power to change, conquer sin, resist evil and love others instead of hating them.”

“Mental knowledge about God or Jesus alone will not save you. You must receive Christ’s forgiveness and accept Him as Your Lord and Savior.”

“I am no better than you. I am also a sinner. But I have accepted Jesus Christ. He has forgiven me and has given me His life and Spirit, and I can now know God. I am here to offer to you the same opportunity.”

KNOW THE PEOPLE TO WHOM YOU PREACH

With whom will you be sharing the Gospel? Are they businessmen? Women? Workers? Students? Officials? Muslims? Hindus? Buddhists? Get to know the customs, opinions and beliefs of the people. Try to understand them, and why they are as they are.

You can do this in two ways. First, learn what you can about these people. How do they live? What are their fears? What are their beliefs? What do they worry about? What do they hope for?

Second, pray and ask the Lord to reveal to you their needs. Wait on Him and He will direct you by words, with an impression, or through a picture in your mind. The Holy Spirit knows their lives already and will help you know how to speak to them. He will help you. Preaching to basic human needs is a powerful form of evangelistic preaching.

VALUE THE PEOPLE TO WHOM YOU PREACH

You will likely preach to men, women and children (even very young children can understand the Gospel and receive Jesus). You must speak with respect and with truth (1Pet 3:15). Evangelists are not called to condemn people (John 3:17). We must be humble and remember that every person (including us) has sinned and needs Jesus – no one is better than anyone else. Help people to recognize God’s love for them; call them into the hope found in Jesus Christ. If you show people compassion and respect, they are more likely to listen to your message.

SPEAK WITH CONFIDENCE

On your own you have nothing life-changing to say. But you should remember that Jesus sends you. You are a messenger who speaks the message of Someone far greater than yourself. You are the servant doing the will of the Master. He promises to help you. The more you preach, the more you will grow in confidence. Every evangelist makes mistakes, but you can learn from

mistakes to become a better preacher. When you do not do well, pray and ask Jesus to teach you how to do better. Over time and with practice you will become better at preaching the Gospel.

BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Jesus was our example of the Spirit-filled, Spirit-empowered life (Acts 10:38). Jesus preached with authority, casting out demons, healing the sick and setting captives free (Matt 4:23; Luke 4:14-19). Jesus was the perfect, sinless Son of God. Yet there was a specific time before His ministry began when the Holy Spirit came upon Him and filled Him (Luke 4:1; John 1:32,33).

Jesus made it clear that His disciples – who already believed in Him – also needed the Holy Spirit to come upon them to be more effective witnesses (Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:5,8).

The **baptism in the Holy Spirit** is given by Jesus (Matt 3:11). This Holy Spirit baptism had a tremendous effect on the preaching of Peter and the other disciples (Acts 2:14-47; 3:11-26; 4:23-31), and will also help you preach the Gospel more effectively.

When a person receives Christ, they are born again by the work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5,6). The Holy Spirit comes to dwell within them (Rom 8:9-11). However, Christ knows that we need His power to accomplish His will on earth. Thus, he promises us the overflowing infilling of the Holy Spirit (John 7:38,39) that we would be anointed for ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8).

This was experienced by the believers who had already believed in Christ as their Savior (Acts 2:1-4). This also happened later to others, who had received Christ and been water baptized, but who had not yet had the Holy Spirit fall upon them. *“Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. **For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit**”* (Acts 8:14-17).

Has the Holy Spirit fallen upon you in power? Do you wish to have more boldness when you preach and speak of Jesus? If Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior, then this gift of the Holy Spirit is for you (Acts 2:37-41). Power to

be a more effective witness for Jesus comes when you receive the baptism in the Spirit.

RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

How do you receive the Holy Spirit? First, make sure your life is clean before God. Confess any known sins and repent to God. Ask Him to search you, then prayerfully confess all that He shows you.

Then ask Jesus to fall upon you with the Holy Spirit and power. Begin to praise Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that you may begin to speak with another language you have never learned, like the disciples did in Acts 2:1-4 and 10:44-46. Do not be discouraged if you do not begin to speak at once. Take time to worship the Lord Jesus and ask Him for His Holy Spirit.

If you know someone who has experienced the Holy Spirit falling upon them, ask that person to lay hands on you and pray for you (Acts 8:14-17). God answers prayer! It is Jesus who told us that we need this impartation – so ask and receive, as He has commanded!

KEEP “BEING FILLED”

We need to continually be refreshed and refilled with the Holy Spirit. The Bible instructs believers to *“be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always...”*(Eph 5:18-20). These instructions are obviously not a one-time event, but a lifestyle practice. They are to be an ongoing occurrence. The original Greek for “be filled” is actually translated “be being filled” – a continual and renewed filling with God’s Holy Spirit.

We need the Holy Spirit to live within us as Christians – to comfort, guide and teach us. We also need the Holy Spirit to come upon us, and empower us for ministry. And we need the Holy Spirit to continually fill us – to refresh us and help us keep our hearts and mouths filled with edifying praise, melody and thanksgiving!

TRUST GOD – USE YOUR GIFTS

A good evangelist depends upon God's power and wisdom working through him. Effective evangelism is not natural ability or talent. God uses our natural abilities, but God wants you to trust Him – for only the Holy Spirit can bring conviction to people (John 16:8). The responsibility of the evangelist is to obediently share the Gospel. Then he/she must trust the Lord with the results.

God gives gifts and talents to people, and wise preachers will use them for God's glory (1Cor 10:31). God also expects us to use our talents to the best of our ability (Matt 25:14-28). God has made each of us unique. He has a purpose for creating us the way we are; no one can do exactly what we can do. It is unwise to copy other preachers; they have their own role to fulfill. You can, however, glean scriptural principles or ideas from other preachers and employ those in your own message, using your own style, as you share the truth of Jesus.

PREACH FOR REPENTANCE

It is important for an evangelist to tell men and women that **they must change direction in their lives**. They are walking the way to destruction; they must turn and instead follow Jesus (Matt 7:13,14). Call people to change direction (repent), from following their own way to following God's way. Preach to make it clear that people must decide whom they will follow. There are only two choices: receive Jesus Christ and walk in His ways of life; or choose their own selfish ways, which lead them to eternal destruction.

PREACH TO TOUCH THEIR HEARTS

Life is difficult, even brutal, for many people. The message of the Gospel contains the only true hope for peace with God and forgiveness from sins. People need to know that God will walk through this life with them if they will only turn to Him for salvation. Preach to offer the love of God, the salvation of Christ and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Preach to tell people how to follow Christ.

People also need to know that there will be judgment and punishment for sin. Describe Jesus' death on the cross, the nails in His feet and hands, the blood running down His body. Tell them how Jesus hung on the cross for hours in

pain, how He suffered – as a sacrifice for the sins of all, taking the judgment we deserve upon Himself. Tell of the events; draw a picture for them with your words. Let them see that this is not just a story – it is the Truth! Tell them that Jesus rose from the dead by the power of God and He is alive today. Encourage their decision to choose Christ!

PREACH TO REASON WITH YOUR LISTENERS

Another way to preach is to present a reasonable argument and come to a conclusion. The Apostle Paul taught this way at times (Acts 17).

You want to convince people of God's perfect plan through Jesus (2Tim 4:2) and the soundness of the decision to follow Christ. You reason with them to bring them to a decision about what is right.

You can tell them the spiritual benefits of choosing Christ (but people must not be told to follow Christ only for His blessings). There are good reasons to avoid eternal punishment; good reasons to choose Christ. A person may choose Christ to have the shame of his past and his guilt removed. Believing on Jesus with repentance takes away sin, and this is a good reason to choose Christ.

For example, if I knew that a man was about to enter into a dangerous and possibly deadly journey, I would want to reason with him about his decision. I would give him the reasons why he should not go: it will rain heavily and wash out the road, there are dangerous animals, there are robbers with guns – whatever the reasons for danger. I might talk about what he could lose on this journey, how his family would suffer, and so on. This is a reasoned argument.

It is the same when you are preaching about accepting Christ. The journey of life is dangerous and offers little protection. Bad and evil things happen when a man takes the road of sin. A man may lose what is precious to him and will eventually lose his eternal soul. Can you see how this reasoning leads a person to think about the choices he is making in his own life concerning Jesus Christ? You can also understand how this helps a man see clearly what his life is like when he does not follow God and His ways.

In this type of preaching you must expose false reasoning that leads people to think they can live without Christ. You must address their temporary security, whether it is in money, family, success or religious rituals. Emphasize that each person has a choice to make in their life, and that there is an eternal

result of that choice. If they refuse to make a decision, they have already rejected Christ by not receiving His offer of salvation.

USE PICTURES AND STORIES IN YOUR PREACHING

When you preach, you can use pictures from everyday life that are familiar to the people to whom you are speaking. Jesus did this when He spoke in parables. The word “parable” means to compare, to hold one thing next to another to show how they are alike.

Jesus spoke about farming, animals, money, eating dinner, working in the fields, children playing (Matt 11:16-19; 13:1-32; 20:1-16; 22:1-14; 25:14-30; Luke 15:4-7). When Jesus said, “I am the Door,”(John 10:9) everyone knew what He meant. They could imagine a door in their minds. Jesus was using a common item as a picture to represent that He is the only way to God.

There are many examples, stories and pictures in the Bible that portray for your listeners the love of God, the lost state of people and the truth about salvation:

- The lost coin (Luke 15:8-10)
- The good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37)
- The two houses (Matt 7:24-27)
- The wide and narrow gates (Matt 7:13,14)
- The woman caught in adultery (John 8:3-11)
- The thief on the cross who repented (Luke 23:39-43)

These examples and many more will help you preach in pictures and stories. They will help your audience understand God’s love and His desire to save people.

PREACH WITH COMPASSION AND PASSION

There are three essential things that every evangelist needs.

First, it is important to recognize God’s great love for people. God loves the people to whom you are preaching! He has made them for Himself, and chosen to set His love upon them. He does not want them to live in sin, to be

in darkness and pain, to serve false gods, and to be separated from relationship with Him in this life and through eternity. It is not His will that any of them perish (2Pet 3:9).

Let God's love for your listeners fill your heart. Jesus looked upon the multitudes with compassion, because He saw their lost and broken state (Matt 9:36-38). This is the compassion of God. Compassion is what compels the preacher to go to any lengths to help the lost. It is more than a feeling of pity. It is a sense of God's mercy available to all of us who do not deserve it. You need to have the same loving concern for people who are lost and perishing.

Second, you need the mind of Christ (1Cor 2:11-16). What does Jesus know about these people? He knows what they need, and what will help draw them to Him. Jesus spoke right to the heart of the woman at the well. He revealed her condition, and told her just what she needed to hear to bring her to salvation (John 4:7-42). Jesus will help you know what you need to say. He knows the people's needs and wants, their failures and their fears. Ask God for wisdom, who gives it liberally to all who ask (Jas 1:5).

Third, every evangelist needs the power and passion of the Holy Spirit (see "Be Filled With The Spirit" above). They need the strength and conviction of God in their soul to preach the Good News.

Passion is a driving conviction, an undying love and fiery zeal. Passion for God causes a believer to seriously pursue God and His purposes. This passion is fed like a fire when the evangelist takes time to pray and be in God's presence, and when he or she studies the Word of God.

When you are passionate about the Gospel, you become bold as you proclaim the truth about Jesus and about the world around you. You are fully persuaded that what you are saying is true and important.

The Holy Spirit will give power and life to your preaching, and fill you with God's passion for the lost. Seeking God's compassion for the people will help keep you humble and sensitive to the Lord.

At times an evangelist must speak boldly and with courage to declare to the people that they are lost and in sin. But always remember that God's grace and love touched you and saved you while you were still a sinner. Grace is God's favor that is not earned or deserved. It is given freely. Offer that same grace to other hearers of the Good News. Be bold, be confident in God, and ask the Lord to fill you with compassion for those who will hear you.

GIVE AN INVITATION

An evangelist preaches the Gospel, calling people to repent and follow Jesus. Always finish your message by encouraging your listeners to make a decision about what they have heard. This is sometimes called an appeal – it is an invitation for the listener to respond to the message of the Gospel.

A response may not always be possible; but if you can, ask those listening to decide if they will accept Christ. When preaching to a crowd or a room full of people, an evangelist might say:

- How many of you understood my message?
- How many of you want to ask Jesus to forgive their sins?
- Are there any here who will give their lives to Jesus, to live for Him?
- Who sitting here will repent of their sins and accept Christ?
- Who wants to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior?
- Who will choose to follow Jesus?

You can ask people to indicate their desire by raising their hands, moving forward, standing up, or telling their decision to someone near them. Ask them to take an action to show they are committing to Christ. The Bible exhorts believers to not be ashamed to openly confess their decision to follow Christ (Matt 10:32,33; Rom 10:9-13).

Men and women must understand that they are making a decision; they must know what they ought to do. Be very clear, so they are not confused and think perhaps they are merely joining a church or making some kind of religious offering. Explain clearly what it means to receive Christ as their Savior.

ALWAYS PRAY WITH THOSE WHO RESPOND

When people indicate that they wish to receive Jesus, to accept Him as Savior and Lord, ask them to pray with you. It is good to have them pray out loud, repeating your prayer. This may be difficult for some, but encourage them to participate. It is easiest for you to pray first and then ask them to repeat your words. Use simple phrases, and keep your prayer short.

Here is an example of a prayer you can pray with those who respond to your Gospel message:

“Dear Lord Jesus, I believe You are God’s Son. I believe You died on the Cross for me, to take away my sins. I believe that You rose from the dead. I am a sinner. I repent of my sins, and for living life my way. I ask You to forgive me, and take away all my sins. Wash me and make me clean. Save me, Lord Jesus, and give me Your new life. Come into my heart, and make me Yours. Thank you for saving me. I choose You to be my Lord, to follow You all the days of my life. Thank you that I can now know God. Thank you for giving me Your Holy Spirit. Help me to live every day for You. Amen.”

AFTER PEOPLE DECIDE TO ACCEPT CHRIST

Take some time to help people understand what they have done by accepting Christ. Tell them, “You now belong to Jesus. You are part of God’s family. Jesus will help you live this life. He is now very near to you every day. You can talk to Him by praying, just as we have done here. Make sure you get a Bible and read it every day. This will help you learn about God, and how to live for Him.

In some meetings or churches, after people have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior, it is wise to take time to pray for them. Have them repent in their own words. Have them renounce their involvement with evil things, activities or persons – such as witchcraft, worshiping demon spirits or practicing false religion. To “renounce” means to use words to give up obeying or following something. When people have renounced evil in their lives, you can then pray over them and command the powers of darkness to loose their hold on their lives, in Jesus’ name. Pray God’s protection over people’s lives.

Here are some sample prayers:

New Believer: “Dear Jesus, I renounce the sin of _____ (witchcraft or other sin). I renounce my connection to the powers of darkness and I choose to follow and serve only You as my Savior and Lord. Please set me free from evil right now as I call to You. Thank You, Jesus.”

Evangelist: “Father God, I use Your authority through Jesus to command every power of hell and the evil spirits to leave this person and their home, their family and their entire life. I speak that the blood of Jesus Christ has

made them free. I ask You to protect them in every way. Thank you, Father, in Jesus' mighty Name. Amen.”

After people receive Jesus, it is also good to pray for them to be filled with the Holy Spirit (see “Be Filled With The Spirit” above). As we have learned, the Holy Spirit comes to reside in every person who confesses Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. But Jesus also gave to every believer the gift of His Holy Spirit to come upon them in power to be His witnesses. Pray for people to receive this gift. They may begin to pray in a prayer language they do not know. Help them to know that it is fine to begin to speak out in this new prayer language.

WATER BAPTISM

The Bible also commands each new believer in Christ to be baptized in water (Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38). Encourage each person who receives Christ to also be baptized in water. This can be done at a church, or any place there is water (river, ocean, pool, etc). You may baptize them, or have a local pastor or church leaders whom you trust baptize the new believers in water.

A CHURCH FAMILY

Finally, you should help guide these people into a church that will teach and care for them. If this is not possible, you should teach them until a pastor or teacher can come. Paul did this in Acts 14:20-23. They will also need a Bible to read and learn from. Do your best to provide new believers with their own Bible, or at least a New Testament.

TRUST GOD FOR HIS RESULTS

Believe God that He will bring sinners into relationship with Jesus. The Lord said to Paul, *“Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent...for I have many people in this city”* (Acts 18). Trust the power of the Holy Spirit who is with you and in you. You can trust the truth and effectiveness of the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is living and powerful! Remember that only God can save, and you are simply a servant carrying His message at Christ's command. God desires all people to repent and believe in Jesus much more than you do! (2Pet 3:9)

When there seems to be little result, you can do two things. First, go to God in prayer and speak to Him about the situation. Take time to wait upon the Lord. Let Him prompt you if there is something He desires you to understand. Second, ask God to teach you how He wants you to present the Gospel. When God speaks to you, respond to Him! God will teach you, and will also give you teachers. When you are doing God's will to the best of your ability, trust Him for the results. When seeds go into the ground, they will produce fruit. You may or may not get to see results yourself. The important thing is to obey God and His word.

No matter what results you see, give praise and thanks to God. He is worthy of all our praise and honor, all the time! When people respond to your message, always give God the praise. It is God who gifts the evangelist; it is God's Word that brings life; it is God's Spirit who draws people to repentance. The evangelist is just the obedient servant to this great and mighty God! What an honor that God calls us to preach the Gospel and share in bringing the truth of Jesus Christ to others. Those who take glory (credit) for themselves are weak and ignorant, embracing the sin of pride. Only God can save a man, so give God ALL the praise! (Ps. 115:1)

HOW GOD PREPARES AN EVANGELIST

GOD DESIRES FULL DEVOTION

When Jesus Christ became the Lord of your life, He became Lord of everything. Your plans, your talents and skills, your thoughts, your feelings, your family, your body, your life – all these now belong to Jesus Christ, not to you. If you have not given Him everything, from your heart, to do with as He wills, then do this today. Tell this to the Lord in prayer.

Then every day, pray to be searched by the Holy Spirit, who brings conviction. Let Him show you the things that you need to freshly surrender to God. Confess and repent when you recognize sin or failure, selfishness or fleshly desires. Disciplining your flesh will make you a much stronger disciple of Christ. The Bible says to “humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God...” (1 Pet. 5:6).

Below is a list to help you examine your life. This is not about rules or outward conformity. This is a way to honestly evaluate your life and ministry, from the heart. These questions are meant to help you grow in your personal life and become a better tool in God's hands. Be honest with yourself; and above all, be honest with God. We cannot fool God. He knows what is in our heart, and He sees everything about our lives. It is always best to approach God humbly, asking for His help and grace so that we can grow into stronger and more faithful servants of His.

If some of these things are not yet true of you, but you want them to be, ask the Lord to help you. Then make time to actually **do** them! It has been said that we make time for what is truly important. If these things are important to you, you must begin to make time for them.

AN EVANGELIST'S GROWTH LIST

- Do I spend regular time in prayer and Bible study each day?
- Do I take time to listen to God, to wait for Him to speak and reveal His thoughts and plans to me?
- Do I ask the Holy Spirit to search my life? Do I confess my sins regularly?
- Do I study the Bible and plan carefully any preaching work I am to do?
- Am I trying to improve myself in speech, appearance, knowledge of the Bible and my skills?
- When I go to preach, do I have other believers with me?
- Have I asked God to attend the ministry He has given me with His anointing and power?
- Am I filled with the power of the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2?
- Do I have people who will pray every day for my ministry and for me, especially when I go to preach or share the Gospel with others?
- Do I pray for more boldness, in order to best preach Christ?
- Have I fasted and prayed this month?
- Do I know what the Bible says about praying and trusting God for finances, so that the provision will be there to provide for my family AND my ministry?
- Do I have a mentor to help me? Have I asked God for someone to train me?

- Is there a man or woman I should ask to invest time and work into my life and ministry?
- Have I prayed and asked God to show me other men or women I must train and help in evangelism? If so, what am I doing about it?
- Am I disciplined in my walk with God or am I lazy?
- Do I spend good, nurturing time with my spouse and children?
- Do I put things off or do I work hard, keep my commitments and honor my word?
- Is my thought life pure? Does my thought life belong totally to God?
- Do I read the Bible and other Christian books to help me grow?
- Do I work with pastors to help fill their churches or plant new ones?
- Have I read and studied – and do I follow – the qualifications in Scripture for those who are called to leadership in Christ’s Church? (1Tim 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9)

A COST TO BE AN EFFECTIVE EVANGELIST

It is not easy to be in ministry, but the rewards of obedience to Christ’s call far outweigh the hardships. Seeing people come to Christ is one of the greatest rewards we can have on earth. The Bible teaches that he who wins [brings] souls is wise (Prov 11:30).

There are eternal rewards awaiting all who are obedient and faithful to Christ. For those who influence others for righteousness, Daniel 12:3 states: “Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.”

The fruit of the Gospel and telling others about Christ is eternal fruit that will remain! God will both comfort and reward those who serve Him with faith and devotion.

Jesus understands better than any other the trials and opposition that we face in this life as His disciples. But we have His great example and can endure *“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”* (Heb 12:2). Christ’s joy included knowing that His death would bring us back into relationship with God, His Father – our heavenly Father! We believers are also Christ’s joy, His beloved

Bride for whom He anxiously awaits (Eph 5:25-27; Rev 19:7-9). Bringing other people to salvation through Jesus should be our joy, also.

Fulfilling God's call upon your life may cost you a great deal. There is a cost to every believer to give up riches, selfishness and fleshly desire and become like Jesus.

As you give up your life to live Christ's life of sacrifice, you will do more of what Your Father is doing. You will see more of God's power and presence with you. As you remain disciplined and faithful, you will become more skilled at winning souls, and in becoming a "fisher of men" (Matt 4:19). You will grow in wisdom, and be rich in the things of God. Serving God with our lives is well worth any cost to us! (1Cor 9:19-22)

PERSONAL LIFE OF THE EVANGELIST

An evangelist – like all believers – must strive to live pure and upright before God. He or she must have right relationships with their family and community. Fruits of the flesh, such as wrath or being judgmental, will reflect badly in your preaching. Treating your wife or children poorly displeases God, and affects the reliability of your witness to others. Cheating someone gives Christ, whom you represent, a bad name. Saying you will do a thing and then not doing it is dishonest and ungodly. Your sinful behavior must be dealt with in order that you represent Christ for who He is and for what His redeeming power can do!

An evangelist loves the Bible and reads it and studies it. He looks for opportunities to share the truth of the Lord, but he does not neglect his other responsibilities such as his family or work. An evangelist prays much – on the train, walking, in the company of others or alone, always praying and listening to God.

The heart of the evangelist must be soft and teachable. As you wait upon God, He will help you know Him better. As you grow to know Him more, you will be a better evangelist because you understand your Father. Jesus did only what the Father did, said only what the Father said (John 5:19; 8:26). Our goal as ministers is to know God so intimately that we are led by His voice and know His will.

If you are married you must treat your spouse the way Jesus would treat them, and love them as He loves His Church (Eph 5:25). Treat your wife with

gentleness and understanding (1 Pet 3:7). Treat your husband with honor and respect (Eph 5:33).

If you are not married, you must keep pure in mind and in body (1Thess 4:3-5). The Lord knows what you do in private beyond the eyes and ears of others. The single minister must strive for purity in both thoughts and actions. They must quickly confess any failure and keep themselves from bondage to sinful behavior.

Every relationship of business, family, church or friendship must be above reproach so that the work of Jesus is not compromised or spoken of in a bad way. Many of us have heard of someone resisting Christ's salvation because a believer they knew was unkind, untruthful or unfaithful. They have "stumbled" because of the believer's sinful actions (1Cor 10:32,33).

As a minister, you represent the King of Kings. Your words must be true; you must do what you have promised. If you do not live up to your words but instead make excuses, it may be a point of stumbling for another, causing them to resist Christ. You represent Jesus every minute of the day, not only when you preach, but through every action. Let your speech be encouraging, not foul or full of criticism (Eph 4:15,29; Col 4:6).

God desires us to be useful vessels of honor (2Tim 2:21). You would not serve your guests with dirty dishes. You would want to offer them food on clean vessels. God receives honor when you are clean and made ready as His vessel. If sin, evil speaking or bad habits dirty your life, you will not be as effective for God.

Take time now to ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart. When He speaks to you, confess, repent in prayer and allow Jesus to remove the dirty things. You will be free and much more useful to the Master. Repent before God often. Take the low place so that God may lift you into His higher purposes. Make repentance and confession part of your daily prayer: Ask God to search you; ask for His forgiveness; ask God to make you whole.

YOU MUST STUDY GOD'S WORD, THE BIBLE

The Bible is your source for Truth. You must daily read it, study it and memorize verses so that you can grow and mature, and then teach and preach well. You must never preach anything that cannot be fully supported by the whole counsel of Scripture. Much false teaching exists today. The Bible

warns that false teachers and false doctrines will arise in the last days, and many will be led astray. As you are learning, search the Scriptures daily to ensure that what you are hearing is from the Word of God (Acts 17:11).

A man who does not know the words of God cannot give the full counsel of God to people. The Lord directs, “be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth” (2Tim 2:15 nas).

There is an evangelist in India who memorizes verses from the Bible every week. His children also memorize verses weekly. He has memorized thousands of verses. When he is needed to preach or counsel, or when he needs wisdom, he has stored the Word of God within his heart. This man knows the power of the Word of God to transform people and to guard himself from evil (Ps 119:11).

YOU MUST BE A PERSON OF PRAYER

Prayer in the life of the minister or disciple of Jesus is not an option – **it is an essential command**, found throughout the Scriptures! You must discipline yourself for prayer.

Develop good prayer habits. Pray at a set time each day. Pray as you walk or sit. Pray continually, day and night (1Thess 5:17) Pray both in the spirit and with your understanding (1Cor 14:15). Fasting and praying breaks bondages over people and even regions.

One evangelist in Africa asks different churches to fast and pray together. These meetings help unify the churches in purpose, and multiply their spiritual effectiveness. The work of the devil is thwarted when people gather in prayer! The churches are transformed and many people come to Christ because the churches and evangelists pray and work together.

You cannot be the minister or evangelist that God intends you to be without prayer. In prayer you find freedom, forgiveness, strength and the guidance you need.

Also devote regular times to pray with your team or with another leader. Find intercessors and ask them to pray for you every day. Take time to pray with others, and to pray alone. Pray over the land and people where you will preach.

BE A CONTINUAL LEARNER

It may not be possible for you to attend a Bible college or seminary. Find God's will on the matter and follow it with faith. If possible, attend teaching seminars or Bible classes in your area.

Take opportunities to talk with other ministers and evangelists. Learn from them, and offer to serve with them or help them. If they are available, spend time asking them questions. Go to hear them preach. Listen, evaluate and learn.

Many effective men and women of God have not had a formal Bible education, but have still done great things for God. The best ministers are those who study their Bibles diligently, keep on learning whatever they can, and then keep applying what they learn. Learning is more than taking a class. Learning is something one does for a lifetime.

FIND A MENTOR IN CHRIST; BE A MENTOR TO ANOTHER

Pray and ask God to give you a teacher, a mentor in the Lord. This is someone who is mature in God, and who will help you grow. Mentors offer advice as they watch over your life. In many countries, a younger man asks an older man to be his "spiritual father". This applies as well to women who need "spiritual mothers".

The role of the older person is to guide and teach the younger, to be a helper who gives wisdom. Paul had this kind of relationship with Timothy (1Tim 1:2; 2Tim 1:2). It was obvious that Paul loved Timothy and wanted the best for Timothy. Paul was willing to sacrifice and take time to help and teach Timothy.

The younger should respect the gift and experience of the older. In this way the younger gains important knowledge through the experience and wisdom that was learned over many years. It is God's way to train a younger generation of leaders.

You should also begin to look for one or two others to train, who need the benefit of your experience and learning (2Tim 2:2). Pray and God will show you whom you are to train and mentor.

REJECTION AND TRIAL

The work of evangelists puts them in constant contact with those who will either accept or reject Christ. Those who reject Christ will often reject the evangelist as well.

Not everyone accepted Jesus and His message when He preached. Some people will be angry with you or hate you because you bring the Good News. Some evangelists will be beaten and threatened for preaching Christ. Even family members may turn against you. Jesus told us that we would be persecuted because of Him (Matt 10:16-20).

People may speak slander or make false accusations. It is important that you not let your hurt become offense or grow into bitterness, for that will defile you and others (Ps 37:8; Heb 12:15). Decide to not take offense when others wrong you. Neither should you seek revenge. This is not God's way to deal with hurt (Rom 12:17-21). Man's anger never produces God's righteousness (Jas 1:20).

You must forgive those who have wronged or hurt you (Matt 18:21-35). Come to God as to a loving Father who deeply cares for you and accepts you (Rom 15:7; Eph 1:6). You can pour out your pain to God and ask Him to heal you (Ps 42:4; 62:8). Let your heavenly Father comfort, shape and transform you in your trials.

If you do not let God take care of your wounds of rejection, the devil will try to use them against you when you are preaching the Gospel. You may be tempted to compromise your message in order to gain the acceptance of people. The Bible calls this dreadful trap "the fear of man" (Prov 29:25).

Beware also of the trap of success. Success in evangelism may lead you to begin to take credit and glory for yourself. You can easily fall into the sin of pride and begin to minister from fleshly motivation. Beware of pride (Prov 11:2; 16:18; 1Pet 5:5-9).

We must come humbly to God with our hurts, repent of our selfishness and pride, forgive those who have wronged us, and ask God for His healing in our lives.

When you allow God to heal you, you will have more of God's confidence and love. You will recognize that He loves you, and that you are valuable to Him.

You will then be able to love the people who reject and hate you from your position in Christ – a place of overcoming strength and unconditional acceptance.

HAVE A STRATEGY FOR MINISTRY

1) Vision

Do you know where your ministry is headed? Do you have a vision from God for your work in life? If you don't, you can ask God to give you His vision and direction for your life. If He has given you a calling and assignment for ministry, He wants to show you what to do to fulfill that call!

In a very unique visitation, Isaiah saw the Lord in a vision (Isaiah 6). Isaiah recognized his sinful condition and repented, and was changed. God called him as a prophet and revealed direction and purpose for Isaiah's life. This type of visitation was not common, and usually reserved for very specific people in Scripture for whom God had a unique calling (such as Isaiah, and Saul in Acts 9:1-19).

But God has called you for ministry. He has a purpose for you to fulfill. As you seek Him with diligence and spend time in prayer, God will help you begin to understand His desires for your life and ministry. He may give you dreams or visions. Or He may just quietly unfold His purposes as you trust and obey Him day by day (Prov 3:5,6; Matt 6:33).

Jesus did only the things His Father revealed to Him. He said, *"the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner"* (John 5:19,20). Jesus did the Father's will. He did not do or speak anything except what the Father revealed to Him. Jesus modeled for us our need to be completely dependent on the Father. God has revealed Himself and His purpose throughout the Bible. One of the best ways to discover God and His purposes for you is to study the Bible as much as you can. The Bible is a "light to our path" (Ps 119:105). It illuminates our way, helping us to see where to walk. Allow God to show you afresh the truths of Scripture to lead you in His ways.

God may also give you specific direction about ministry assignments. Do you want to reach a certain town for Christ? Have you prayed and asked God for His strategy? Have you asked Him if He has a specific way for evangelism to

take place, or how a church should be planted? God will sometimes give you very specific steps to take in order to do His will.

Let the Holy Spirit speak to you and guide you in making decisions – such as where to preach, what to say, who to work with. Do not be eager to build a following or get a reputation. Do not be eager to build your ministry or have “success”. We work for eternal fruit (John 15:16), not for reward on earth (Matt 6:1-4).

Be willing to go and work – when and where the Spirit directs you, for God’s glory. Each city or town is different; so the strategies for reaching each place or people group may be different.

The Apostle Paul had been given a strategy for his missions. He preached to the religious Jewish people first; then he went to the non-Jewish people. On His second mission trip, he wanted to go north and east; but God stopped him. He had a dream in which a man from Macedonia (Europe) was calling to him to come and help (Acts 16:9,10). Paul was trying to do the will of God but he was about to go in the wrong direction. God wanted Paul and his team to go east, into Europe with the Gospel.

In Macedonia, Paul met Lydia, who became the first convert in Europe (Acts 16:12-15). Lydia owned a business. She offered her house to Paul to use for his work, and it became the first church in Europe. This house also became a base for evangelism into Europe. Lydia and her network of contacts surely helped Paul in spreading the Gospel. God had a clear strategy, but Paul had to understand that strategy in order to fulfill God’s desire.

Wait on the Lord, praying and ministering to Him. Sing to Jesus; praise Him; pour out your heart to Him; and then wait to hear from Him. He will release His desires to you. God may give you specific vision or strategy, or reveal His will in mental pictures or by words and impressions in your mind. Write down and date what He tells you and shows to you. Pray over these things, and submit them to other godly people whom you trust. Then begin to step out in faith to do what God has shown you to do!

2) Mission Statement

Once you have a sense of direction or vision, it is helpful to write down a mission statement. A mission statement tells in a very short form what you are called to do. This statement is more useful when it is general rather than too

specific. For example, instead of writing, “We will plant five churches and two orphanages and hold meetings this year”, it is better to write, “We will spread the Gospel by planting churches and doing social works as the Lord directs so that Jesus is glorified.”

Separate the areas of work into specific goals and write them down. For instance, if God calls you to also start a school, include that in your mission statement as well.

3) Goals

After writing a mission statement, prayerfully describe in writing how you will make your vision and mission happen. Do you have a plan to carry this out? Write down the goals you are led to meet. This is the time to be more specific.

For example: “In two years we will train two pastors and plant two churches in this area; in five years we will have five more churches.” Or, “Our team will preach the Gospel to every village in this area – in one village a month, for the next three years.” Or, “We will distribute 10,000 Gospel tracts in this city in the next six months. We will also hold street evangelism meetings in all four areas of the city once a week.”

Making a strategy will help you be consistent in your work. **Through prayer and listening to the Lord, you will understand His strategy for you.** The Lord will also give you strategies to help the churches work together in evangelism.

Your mission statement and your goals should be very familiar to you, always in your mind, ready to be spoken to anyone who asks. You should pray over these writings often, and be willing to make changes and adjustments as they are necessary.

Hearing from God and then working out the details in faith will allow you to be effective in fulfilling God’s purposes for you. Others will also find it easy to understand and support you and your work.

BUILD AN EVANGELISM TEAM

Jesus built a team of twelve. And He sent His workers out by twos; they came back for more instruction and interaction, and then went out again. The

Apostle Paul built teams. He sometimes went alone, but he preferred to work with a team.

Each person on your team will have different gifts than you. These additions will increase your effectiveness in ministry.

One evangelist has a woman on her team who has the gift of healing. This person often sees the miracle power of Jesus heal people in the meetings. Many people are open to the message of the Gospel when they see Jesus heal people through this woman's ministry. Another man on this team has the skills to organize large campaigns (crusades) in cities.

This evangelist has also trained other evangelists on her team. There are three evangelists on the team who can all preach in the markets, visit prisons or hospitals, or do whatever else is necessary to share the message of salvation.

Raising up and encouraging workers who can help support your evangelism outreach will help you make a greater impact. A team becomes like a family where needs are met and the goals of the mission are accomplished.

BE A KINGDOM SERVANT

God does not call anyone to build his or her own ministry. God calls you for His purposes, and allows you to partner with Him as Jesus builds the Kingdom of God!

Some church leaders want to serve God, but they also want to build a big name for themselves. They despise and ignore other leaders and ministries. They are selfish, and do not serve other ministries as a partner. They think their ministry is the best one, and their work the only important work. How sad for the world and for the Church! This kind of leader is focused on himself – not on the needs of others, and not on God's true Kingdom work. This is not the Spirit of Christ.

Partnering with people and other ministries brings greater glory to God and more effectiveness to the work. Encouraging and helping other ministries brings God's greater blessing on your ministry. When you give, you will receive (Luke 6:38). When you lose your life (and desires) for Christ's sake, you will gain true life (Matt 16:25). When you take the "lower place" of serving other ministers and ministries, God will promote you (Luke 14:10,11).

Your vision should include working with other groups, churches and ministries. This is building the larger Kingdom of God, not just a single church, denomination or ministry. When ministries work together, people see unity in the Body of Christ and God's blessing comes (Ps 133:1-3). Evangelists who gather and work with many churches in a city bring great blessing to that city.

TAKE TIME TO REST

Many workers have "burned out" like old embers in a fire because they did not take time to rest. Their physical bodies became sick; their minds became tired; their spirit became weak and could not resist temptation. God commands that we spend a day each week to rest. We all need rest!

Every minister – and every person – must take at least one day each week to renew themselves in God and to rest the physical body, the mind and the spirit.

There may be times when your schedule will require you to give much more than should be normal. But you must make time to rest and find calming activities that refresh you.

When Jesus and His disciples were ministering, so many people were coming and going that Jesus and the apostles didn't even have a chance to eat. Jesus told them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while" (Mark 6:31).

Jesus took regular time away for rest and for prayer. He, as our example, helps us to understand that no one is exempt from God's command to rest.

A VESSEL OF HONOR

Remember, people will receive what you say far more readily if they respect who you are and how you live your life. Bringing yourself under the full rule of God's Kingdom is a lifelong process. You should always be growing, learning and submitting to God's transforming work and purpose for you.

Evangelist, God has called you to carry His message of salvation to others. You can be a living example of the transforming work of God in a person's life. Watch over your personal life as to its purity, focus and discipline.

God is committed to your transformation as you seek out His help. He will love and strengthen you for your work by changing you from the inside out. You must obey and follow His Word. Take time to examine yourself in God's presence and respond to His words and work in your life and family. You will then be an evangelist and minister of the Gospel who is a vessel of honor, fit for the Master's use!

THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

Your character – what you are becoming – is far more valuable to God than what you will do for Him. God is more interested in transforming you to become more like Jesus than in how much work you can do for Him.

Obedience and devotion to God are far more important to Him than successful meetings and numbers. The desire to see Jesus known for who He really is – in all His glory, power, majesty and splendor – should far outweigh, even replace, any desire to further your own reputation. Keep these thoughts in mind as you daily go about your ministry. These guidelines and teachings are meant to help you become a highly skilled worker for the Lord Jesus Christ. Apply yourself to these things and trust the Lord to use you for His sake and glory!