

ESSENTIALS OF EVANGELISM

The Bob Jones University Lectures on Evangelism for 1958

by

Tom Malone, D.D.

Copyright © 1958

CHAPTER EIGHT

EVANGELISM AND SOUL-WINNING A DAILY BUSINESS

TEXT: “And daily in the temple, and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” (Acts 5:42).

Christianity is a daily business, a seven day a week job with no time off. The greatest tragedy of modern-day, twentieth century Christianity is that it has degenerated into a matter of Sunday church attendance rather than a daily living for Jesus. Jesus said, **“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me”** (Luke 9:23). When one reads the book of Acts, he is convinced that soul winning or personal evangelism was the main business of the early church and not just a matter of secondary importance.

A study of the word **“daily”** as it is used in the books of Acts is most stimulating and heart searching. The early church in Jerusalem, which won souls, overcame opposition, defied kings and kingdoms, brought fear and conviction to the hearts of multiplied thousands and made Jesus known everywhere, was a church with a daily ministry. They had a daily fellowship, for **“they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness, and singleness of heart”** (Acts 2:46). The church grew daily, not just when revivals were held or during special seasons but daily for the record says **“the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved”** (Acts 2:47).

Notice how that early church grew with no radio, no television no buildings, no newspapers, no Sunday School literature, no busses or cars, and no committees but with a Spirit-empowered program. Three thousand were saved in one service, and that number grew until immediately there were five thousand men alone. That group grew so rapidly that it was referred to as **“the multitude of them that believed”** (Acts 4:32). There were miracles wrought, prayer meetings held, persecutions endured and lying church members slain by the Holy Spirit, and the next account of the growth of the early church is given in Acts 5:14 where we read, **“And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,”** no longer a multitude but multitudes.

This apostolic church accepted the challenge of the daily needs of lost humanity, for Peter and John on their way into the temple to pray saw a **“certain man lame from his mother’s womb . . . whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called beautiful”**(Acts 3:2).

Where did we ever get the idea that people need the Word of God on the Lord's Day only and that people can get saved on the Lord's Day only? Souls are perishing daily. We must be challenged by the daily needs of a lost and perishing people. The early church also carried on the "**daily ministrations**" (Acts 6:1) of material necessities for the saints of God which necessitated the appointment and election of seven Spirit-filled deacons.

As a result of this daily demonstration of Christianity, we begin to read of "**churches**" plural instead of the "**church**" singular. These early Christians went everywhere preaching the gospel. They launched an all-out campaign to evangelize the known world in their generation, and as a result, "**the churches were established in the faith and increased in number daily**" (Acts 16:5). The church today doing God's work in God's way and with God's power and by God's scriptural methods should produce other churches in needy communities.

These early Christians "**searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so**" (Acts 17:11) and daily went out to publish abroad what they found. Paul "**disputed . . . in the market daily with those that met with him**" (Acts 17:17) in the city of Athens and "**disputed daily in the school of one Tyrannus**" (Acts 19:9) in idolatrous Ephesus.

Now you say to me, "How did that church grow with such miraculous rapidity?"

I believe that the answer to that question lies in one thrilling and challenging verse. That verse ought to be the theme song and battle cry of every individual believer and every fundamental Bible-believing church throughout the world. That verse sums up in nineteen words the miracle of the early church; it was the "dynamic" of that successful group of believers. It describes their mode of operation.

That verse is Acts 5:42, "**And daily in the temple and from house to house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.**" This verse put in practice by any group of sincere Christians, large or small, in any community, city, or rural area will win souls, bring revivals, get results, cause miracles to unfold and produce a strong, powerful, and militant church "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." One such center of scriptural church evangelism will bring a revival to our nation that will honor God, vindicate His Word, win the lost by the multitudes and put the armies of modernism to flight. Let us carefully and prayerfully examine the program of evangelism of this early church.

I. LET US SEE THEIR PERSISTENCE "DAILY"

These Christians were persistent. They were not sporadic or spasmodic. They were "**instant in season and out of season**" in their soul-winning and witnessing. It was not just a Sunday business with them but a daily business. Any church which expects to grow and reach multitude of men and women and children for Christ must have a daily ministry of evangelism. The church must have a daily calling and visitation program. Unsaved people must be visited not once, not twice, but dozens of times if need be to reach them for Christ. We must compel them to come in out of the highways and hedges that the house of the Lord may be filled.

On one occasion when one of the men of my church and I were visiting in a home, we had the wonderful joy to sit down around the kitchen table and lead the mother of six children to Christ. As we were leaving the home, I asked the man who was with me, "How many visits do you suppose the people of our church have made in that home?"

He replied, "I don't know but I will try to find out."

You see there was a child or two in that home which should have been in the Junior Department of our Sunday School and one or two in the Intermediate Department and one or two in other departments, and workers from all these departments had been visiting in that home for several weeks. In a day or two this man came to me and said, "Brother Tom, I have checked with the superintendents of these various departments, and I have found that approximately forty visits have been made in that home by the various workers of our church." Now you think of it; thirty-eight visits did not win a soul; thirty-nine visits did not do the job; but forty different visits won a precious soul to Jesus Christ! It takes persistence, sticking to the job, never giving up, and going day and night to win souls to Christ.

Some time ago when a group of our workers had gone out visitation work and were testifying in an after meeting as to the blessing of God upon their ministry, one lady said, "I have something to tell the group." She told this story.

"Tonight we went into a house where various workers of our church have been visiting for a year or so. I have been in the home number of times myself. When we went into the home tonight, the man of the house was trying to look at his favorite television program. When he saw who we were and realized we were from the Emmanuel Baptist Church, he said, 'Now listen, ladies. I have had my favorite television program interrupted every Monday night for more than a year. I get so nervous every Monday night that I can't enjoy myself. I have been sitting here shaking like a leaf and wondering when you would come to the door. I promise you,' he said, 'if you just let up on me a little and let me have one Monday night without being disturbed, I'll be in church next Sunday and have all the family with me.'"

We must not be afraid to bother people. Our business is too important. It cannot wait. The souls of men are at stake. God help us to be persistent.

II. LET US SEE THE PARTICIPANTS

This was not just the work of a group of preachers. These early Christians did not say, "Let the beloved pastor visit all the sick, win all the lost, and do all the work. Is that not what we hired him to do?" Every born-again person is to help in the winning of the lost. The deacons of the early church, men like Stephen and Philip, were soulwinners. Pastors who do not charge their people with their solemn obligation to win souls and then teach them how to do the job, grieve the Holy Spirit, fail to reach multitudes, and violate the plain teaching of God's Holy Word.

Let us see this truth in Ephesians 4:11-12.

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting (or equipping) of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

Every choir member, every board member, every Sunday School teacher, every church member should be taught to go out after souls and bring them into the house of God to hear the Word and be saved. The tragedy of our weak, anemic Christianity of these days is that many preachers, missionaries, and evangelists do not win souls. A Christian who will not win souls is an enigma! He is like a barber who refuses to cut hair and a clerk who refuses to sell goods and a salesman who never sells anything.

III. LET US SEE THE PARTNERSHIP “TWO BY TWO”

We believe these Christians went out **“two by two.”** Jesus called two brethren to leave their fishing nets and follow Him. John sent two of his disciples to question Jesus, and Jesus sent out the seventy **“two by two”** and taught that in the mouth of two or three witnesses a truth would be established.

Notice these Scriptures,

- **“And he called unto Him the twelve and began to send them forth two and two”** (Mark 6:7);
- **“He sendeth forth two of his disciples”** (Mark 11:1);
- **“And after these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither he himself would come”** (Luke 10:1).

There were two heavenly messengers at the empty tomb on the morning of the resurrection of Jesus, and two men in white apparel were sent down from heaven when He ascended from the Mt. of Olives to go back into the presence of His Father. In Ecclesiastes 4:9 we read that **“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor.”**

Yes, we believe that God’s divinely appointed way to win the lost is for the church to go out two by two daily to witness for Christ. In the church where I have now served as pastor for almost sixteen years, we see large groups of people saved every Sunday. It matters not who is preaching; it matters not whether the sermon is a good one or a poor one, souls are saved just the same. People have been going out two by two during the week to win them to Christ, and they walk forward with them on Sunday mornings and Sunday evenings as they come to make a public profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I have known one man and his wife to have as high as fourteen grown men and women come to be saved in one single service. Jesus was never too busy to win souls, and He was a personal worker. If we are too busy to go out two by two to win the lost, then we are busier than God ever intended us to be.

IV. LET US SEE THE PLAN — “FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE”

These early Christians went from house to house. They did not wait for the world to come to the church.

They went to the lost and won them from house to house and brought them to be baptized and take fellowship with the local church. Sometimes preachers fail to go from house to house, claiming to be too busy in their studies and offices. Paul was not too busy or too unconcerned to go from house to house. He testified to the Ephesian elders that he had “**served the Lord with all humility of mind and with many tears**” . . . and had “**kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house**” (Acts 20:19-20). The “**house to house**” ministry is just as important and perhaps more so than the public ministry. In fact, the lack of results in much of the pulpit ministry can be charged to lack of effort and tears in the “**house to house**” ministry.

The other day I read a fine article in a Christian periodical on “How often should I visit?” The article was written around a recent survey that was made by the National Retail Dry Goods Association. It revealed some figures that throw a lot of light on this problem. Many teachers and workers wonder how often they should call on prospects and absentees. Perhaps this report might help you:

48% of the salesmen make one call and quit.
25% of the salesmen make two calls and quit.
88% of the salesmen quit after one, two, or three calls.
12% of the salesmen keep on calling.

The 12% who keep on call do 80% of the business.
The 88% who quit by the third call do only 20% of the business

Are you included in the 12% or the 88%? We are to go from house to house to visit the sick, the lost, the bereaved and the delinquent. This is God’s way, the Bible way, the only way.

V. LET US SEE THE PLACE — “IN THE TEMPLE”

The evangelism of the early church in the book of Acts was church-centered evangelism. It was an evangelism which had as its base of operation the local church. I am for any type of evangelism which is not unscriptural, whether it be union or cooperative evangelism, child evangelism, or missionary evangelism. The Scriptures teach that churches in the New Testament days were great centers of evangelism. Pastors are wrong who say, “My job is to teach the saints, and I will leave the winning of the lost to the evangelist.” Paul told Timothy to “**Do the work of an evangelist.**”

He also complimented the church at Thessalonica saying, “**For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything**” (I Thessalonians 1:8).

Scriptural church evangelism is important because people not only need to be saved but they need to be baptized and unite with a fundamental, Bible-believing, soul-winning church. They need to be taught the Word of God, the great Christian doctrines, the importance of tithing and soul-winning; and this is the responsibility of every local church.

VI. LET US SEE THE PREACHING — “THEY CEASED NOT TO PREACH AND TEACH JESUS CHRIST”

The apostolic, evangelistic, soul-winning church of Jerusalem did not preach a program but they preached a Person!

- They did not deal in abstract theories and philosophies, but they lifted up and magnified a real and living Saviour.
- They did not deal with technicalities while their generation rushed on to hell, they majored on the message of life as is found in the Son of God.
- They did not preach to please everybody and offend nobody, they preached with the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit and brought conviction and fear to the heart of the ungodly.

They lifted up Jesus and magnified Him in all His glorious attributes.

You no doubt have heard the simple yet wonderful story of the young, highly-trained pastor who went to his new appointment intent on impressing his flock with his education. After a few sermons delivered from the head and not from the heart, after the sheep had come a few times to feed and found nothing to eat but chaff, he found a note on his pulpit. The note contained these words, “**Sir, we would see Jesus.**” It angered him at first but later convicted him and brought him to his knees to cry out in prayer, “Oh, Father, help me so to preach that the people will see Jesus.”

Recently one of our young preachers in the Seminary met me and said, “Brother Tom, pray for my church. I want to see people saved, and the hunger of my heart is to make Jesus known to them.”

He was so moved with emotion he could hardly speak; his lips trembled and his eyes swam with tears of love and tender compassion. I promised to pray, and as I walked on my way the thought came to me, “He won’t have to wait long to see people saved. When Jesus is preached from a broken heart, when sermons are bathed in tears and saturated with prayer and backed up by a holy life, men and women are going to come to God.”

The following Monday morning I met the same young preacher, and I saw a strange light in his face! “Brother Tom, yesterday nine people were saved in my church!”

You can be a soul winner; you, too, can win the lost. God give us the compassion, the power of the Holy Spirit, and faith to do God’s work by God’s prescribed methods.

~ end of chapter 8 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
