

ESSENTIALS OF EVANGELISM

The Bob Jones University Lectures on Evangelism for 1958

by

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

HOW A CHURCH SHOULD CHOSE AND TREAT AN EVANGELIST

TEXT: “And he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11).

Notice in God’s Word among the five gifted men the Spirit of God has placed in the church is the evangelist. We should remember that the evangelist is a God-called, God-gifted man placed in the Body of Christ to do a special work for the Lord.

In the previous discussion we tried to suggest some things which might be helpful to churches in preparing for a revival campaign and the coming of an evangelist for a special series of services. Again, we repeat, as we said in the previous discussion, we do not assume the step of a Know-It-All. I’m sure there is much about evangelism and church revivals that we do not know, and we are learning as we go along. However, I have felt definitely impressed of the Lord to pass along to my preacher brethren, students preparing for Christian service, and the churches at large a few helpful suggestions which I’ve picked up along the way. I have made a good many mistakes myself along this line and have learned a few things by trying the wrong method first. I would like to discuss the matter under five headings.

I. THE INVITATION

First of all, I will discuss the invitation to an evangelist. We can thank God that across the country there are a good many capable, Spirit-filled, unselfish, God-called evangelists who are doing a great work for the Lord. I count many of them among my personal friends and pray for them and for their successful ministry in winning the lost for Jesus Christ.

When a church and pastor consider inviting an evangelist to hold a revival campaign, they should first of all prayerfully select and invite an evangelist who has the interest of the church on his heart, who endeavors to win souls to Jesus Christ but will not leave the vineyard in worse shape when he leaves than he found it when he came. An evangelist ought to be a blessing not only to the church and be used of God to the winning of many precious souls, but he ought to be a help and blessing and source of encouragement to the pastor himself and should leave the church not only with souls saved but also in better condition in every way than it was before he came.

He should not do harm to the church that would cause undue worry and concern and burden to the pastor after he is gone. Churches and pastors, I say, should be very prayerful about the selection of an evangelist.

Evangelists should be contacted well in advance so as to work out the most agreeable date for both the church and the evangelist.

II. THE ACCOMMODATION

I know that God-called evangelists are unselfish men. They are not looking for a life of ease. They are not looking for luxuries or comforts. If they were, they certainly would not be in evangelistic work. It would be more comfortable and more luxurious for an evangelist to be home with his family than it would for him to be traveling across the country as a tramp preacher, staying in hotels and homes and places where many times he is not very comfortable.

In order to have an evangelist to be at his best, he should be given a private room in a reputable hotel or motel. I do not think it best under ordinary circumstances for an evangelist to be asked to stay in a home. I know that he would be willing to, but he needs privacy so that he can pray and study and rest and be at his best when the time for the evening meeting comes.

It has been our experience that many times evangelists placed in homes are so busy entertaining and being entertained that they do not have the proper time to study God's Word, to pray, and to rest; and, consequently, they are not at their best and often the meeting is hindered. It is our recommendation that an evangelist be placed in a reputable hotel or motel with a private room so that he can be alone, because much of the time he should be alone if he is to be successful in his ministry.

III. COOPERATION

We have sometimes seen pastors who take the attitude when the evangelist comes, "Well, you are here now. Let's see what you can do." Sometimes pastors do not help and cooperate and work shoulder-to-shoulder with the evangelist. I thank God for those good pastors for whom I've held revival campaigns in the past who were busy during the meeting trying to win every soul they could. They did personal work in the meetings. They stood by the evangelist. They encouraged him. They earnestly prayed for him and with him. They did everything to make him feel welcome and happy and wanted and appreciated. Do not insist that he always do things "your way" or "as it has always been done in the past."

IV. CONSIDERATION

There are a number of small items that ought to be taken into consideration when an evangelist is asked to come to a meeting. Remember, he is away from his family and spends many lonely hours. He should be allowed the privilege of calling his home at least once at the expense of the church. He should be allowed to eat his meals when and where he so chooses. Many of the men of God are carrying such heavy burdens and have been in the work so long that they cannot eat many of the things they are expected to eat.

They should be allowed to select their meals in a good restaurant and eat when and where they would like. It is our personal opinion that an evangelist should not be asked to be calling every day along with the pastor. This does not mean that an evangelist is not willing to do personal work, he is. He will speak to people he meets everywhere about their souls. Many pastors take an evangelist from morning till night and expect him, in a week or two weeks' time, to help them to do the visitation work that the pastor should have been doing all the year. This is not considerate. An evangelist does not come to do pastoral work. He comes to win the lost; he comes, to edify and encourage the believer.

V. REMUNERATION

This is a touchy subject with many pastors but it should not be so. The Bible says “**A laborer is worthy of his hire**” and “**Muzzle not the ox that treadeth out the corn.**”

Many pastors are most inconsiderate in the matter of remuneration for God-called evangelists. For instance, if an evangelist comes to your church to conduct a revival campaign and starts on Sunday and closes on Sunday, holding an eight-day meeting, he has given you two weeks of his time. This should be taken into consideration. He should have a generous offering, for it is his only income. These men of God are dependent upon the churches for their livelihood.

It is our conviction that many times churches have been most inconsiderate of these God-called evangelists. Their traveling needs, their hotel expense, and their food should be taken care of by the church over and above the love offering. An evangelist has many needs and expenses that the average Christian has never thought of, and the church should do everything in its power to give a generous and liberal offering for the evangelist. It has been our experience that God richly blesses the pastor and the church that will go all out to care for the needs of the evangelist, that kind of church is blessed and prospered and experiences growth.

On the other hand, I have seen churches that have been stingy with evangelists remain small and struggle for their needs and have trouble of all kinds.

Sometimes pastors feel envious of an evangelist for securing a love offering which often amounts to more than the pastor's weekly salary. This ought not to be. No pastor should be jealous for what a servant of God gets in his church for a week or two weeks of revival services.

Sometimes pastors, by their attitude toward the evangelist in being stingy with him, teach their people to be the same. That is why many pastors do not have their needs supplied by the church. Through the years they have been selfish and little in this matter of remuneration for God's itinerant servants, and thus they have unconsciously taught their churches to deal with them the same way.

Remember, Jesus said, “**It is more blessed to give than to receive,**” and “**Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over shall men give into your bosom for with the same measure that you meet withal it shall be measured to you again**” (Luke 6:38).

Some of the things to remember in the matter of remunerating the evangelist are:

1. His traveling expense in coming to you should be cared for by the Church.
2. Any time the evangelist takes off during the year to be with his family such as at Christmas time, etc., he will be without an income.
3. Any unavoidable cancellations of meetings during the year leave him this time open without income.
4. His operating expenses are usually greater than those of the pastor by nature of his type of ministry.
5. God's people usually want to give to an evangelist and they respect their pastor for respecting the needs of God-called evangelists.
6. Remember, dear fellow pastors, jealousy on our part of the income or popularity of an evangelist is usually detected by our people.
7. Prayerfully put yourself in his shoes and him in yours and ask yourself, "How would I like to be remunerated and treated if I were an evangelist?"

~ end of chapter 11 ~

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