

If You Teach, the Church will Grow!

INTRODUCTION.

- A. In the beginning of the church, the growth of the church was staggering.
 - 1. On the day the church was established, 3000 lost souls were converted to Christ. (Acts 2:41)
 - a. Imagine our impression if one Sunday morning, this auditorium was filled, requiring additional seats, and people standing anywhere there was room.
 - b. You look around and realize that you have at least 50 to 100 visitors at the service.
 - c. Then, during the invitation song 75 people answer the gospel's invitation. How would you react?
 - d. Now, try to imagine what it must have been like on the day of Pentecost.
 - 2. Some days following the establishment of the church, the number of lost souls converted was 5000. (Acts 4:4)
 - 3. According to Acts 5:14, "multitudes of both men and women" were added to the church. (Acts 5:14)
 - 4. In Acts 6:1 we read that the "number of the disciples was multiplied."
 - 5. Nearly 30 years after the church of Christ began, the gospel had spread to all the known world. (Colossians 1:6,23)
- B. Why did the first century grow so rapidly? Consider the five following reasons:
 - 1. The members of the church were totally committed to the truth.
 - 2. The members of the church lived the truth in their lives.
 - 3. The members of the church went everywhere preaching the Word. (cf. Acts 8:4)
 - 4. The members of the church possessed the same purpose as held by Jesus: To seek and save the lost. (cf. Luke 19:10)
- D. If we want the church to grow as it did in the first century, then we must be willing to work as the Christians did in the first century.

I. SIX REASONS TO EVANGELIZE.

- A. Reason #1: You should fulfill this need because the Lord has commanded you to do so. (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16)
 - 1. The command to go and teach is important. While the Lord did not specify the method, He did issue the order to go.
 - 2. Let us all have the same attitude as did the apostles in Acts 4:19-20.
- B. Reason #2: The Gospel is the power of God to salvation. (Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12) So use it!
- C. Reason #3: You should fulfill this need because you love your neighbor. (Matthew 5:43-48; 22:36-40)
- D. Reason #4: You should fulfill this need because of the value of the soul.
 - 1. Every soul should be of extreme value to you. There is truly nothing worth more than the soul. Jesus asked, *“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”* (Matthew 16:26, NKJV)
 - 2. Your soul is viewed as being so valuable that you *“were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ.”* (1 Peter 1:18-20, NKJV)
- E. Reason #5: You should fulfill this need because of the terror of the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:11)
 - 1. Regarding Mark 16:16, we should believe both the part of being saved and the part about being condemned. Let us teach the lost so that they will not be condemned because of their unbelief.
 - 2. You should continue to remember that it *“is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”* (Hebrews 10:31) You must do what you can to help people avoid falling into the punishing hands of the living God.
- F. Reason #6: You should fulfill this need because of the joy. Remember the words of Jesus in Luke 15:3-10.
- G. While there are other reasons we could give to fulfill this great need, the above six reasons should be sufficient to make known to you what God desires of you.

II. PREPARE YOURSELF.

- A. Develop a desire or zeal.
 - 1. Repentance from sins, turning one’s life to God, should provoke a strong zeal or desire to obey. (2 Corinthians 7:10-11)

2. Our zeal should be so great that it provokes others. (2 Corinthians 9:1-2)
 3. Let us be zealous for “good works.” (Titus 2:11-14)
 4. Teaching the lost and restoring an erring brother are “good works.”
- B. Study your Bible to gain knowledge of God’s word. (Hebrews 5:12-14)
1. We must increase in the knowledge of God and His word. Consider Paul’s prayer for the brethren in Colosse. (Colossians 1:9-11)
 2. Increasing in the knowledge of God will allow us to teach others.
 - a. We can admonish one another. (Romans 15:14)
 - b. We can take God’s word to the lost. (1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:2)
- C. Maintain persistence or patience.
1. Christians must have patience in serving the Lord. (Hebrews 10:36-39)
 2. Christians are to run with endurance, even in the area of teaching the lost. (Hebrews 12:1-2)
 3. Although not everyone will receive the gospel, we must never give up. (Luke 8:15)
- D. Let your light shine before men. (Matthew 5:14-16)
1. The world must see righteousness within our lives.
 2. If the world perceives us as hypocrites, then our efforts to teach the lost will be hindered.
 3. Live consistently as a child of God.
- E. Continue to teach the new convert.
1. After a person obeys the word of God, we must continue to teach him. (Matthew 28:18-20)
 2. We must not be like the Pharisees and scribes. (Matthew 23:15)
 3. If a babe in Christ falls away, then the end will be worse on him. (2 Peter 2:20-22)

III. METHODS OF PERSONAL EVANGELISM.

- A. The command to “Go” (Matthew 28:18-20) is a generic command.
1. This means that Jesus did not specify any particular means to accomplish the command to “Go.”

2. In other words, the methods which we use are left up to us and can neither be bound nor forbidden, unless they violate other Bible principles.
- B. One of the best means of personal evangelism is one-to-one contact.
1. You talk to people whom you know and they know you.
 2. You invite them to services.
 3. You offer to arrange a Bible study.
 4. You tell friends about Jesus Christ.
 5. Be sure to carry something with you which contains the meeting times and location of the local church. Tracts and pamphlets are an easy means of leaving information with an individual.
- C. Other means and methods with the “mass” approach. Each method has its own “pro’s” and “con’s.”
1. Direct mailings - Reach a wider audience, but high cost and typically low returns.
 2. Radio programs - Reach a wider audience, but unless you receive feed back, it is hard to gauge its effectiveness.
 3. Bulletins - A good way to deliver truth to those subscribed to the mailing list.
 4. Website - A good way of providing information about the church and the word of God.
 5. Going door-to-door - Cheap way of advertising meetings and informing others about the church. However, do not expect total strangers to be willing to engage you in a Bible study.
- D. While no one can bind on any member a particular method of evangelism, every member must be taught to evangelize.

CONCLUSION.

- A. Church growth is vital because it comes through the process of saving souls and self-growth.
- B. If a local church is teaching, growing, and remaining strong, then the church is functioning as Christ intended.
- C. If a local church is not growing due to its own faults, then the congregation as a whole, as well as each member individually, must address the problem and make the necessary changes.
- D. The lost of the world need us to take the gospel to them and to convert them to the

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Lord and Savior. Let us all work together towards that end.

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