

Showing the Love of God

John 21:15... *Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*

Jesus wanted to make this important point to Peter. **If Peter really loved Jesus with all his heart, then he would dedicate himself to the ministry of the work of God and see the people of God grow.** Even though some say that Peter was called professionally into the ministry at this point, but the real idea is not this. Peter was already “a professional minister” before this teaching of Jesus. Jesus was not rebuking him for having abandoned this. **The idea is to reorder his own priorities and interests and carry out the work of God as his principle preoccupation.** In Mat 25 Christ gave some teachings related to this. First in **the parable of the 10 virgins.** (Mat 25:1-12), showing that **if a person is not vigilant and working he is not worthy to enter heaven.** In the following **parable of the stewardship of every believer,** **Jesus again indicated that if one is not working for the Lord, using what God has loaned him in order to “make gain” for the kingdom of heaven,** then equally he is not worthy to enter heaven. It is interesting that in **Mat 25:27** that he speaks of even the funding of true workers with your resources, so at least they can get the work done even if you yourself are not actually doing it. In the last **parable of the judgment of the nations** (**Mat 25:31-46**), Jesus shows that God is going to use a spiritual measure of how his true children live this love and burden in their relationship with other Christians as a factor to reveal that they are truly saved. All of this divine love shed abroad towards our brethren is very

important. We are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, but with that faith, it must live in our souls and lives, and this living faith is seen in how we love one another and reach the lost world for Christ.

The Gospel is the Heart Of the Work of God

Mark 13:10 *And the gospel must first be published among all nations.*

Mark 16:15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

God directly commands us to preach the Gospel.

There is nobody else that has this job except the people of God, nor could there be. If we don't do it, it won't get done, especially done correctly. Our “mission” as the saved is to promote and involve ourselves in the work of God, that is specifically evangelism (giving the true Gospel presentation), and the edification of the saved through local churches. Jesus said that it is a “necessity.” We have to dedicate ourselves to doing this **AS OUR PRINCIPLE THING!** We should saturate it in prayer, we should learn how to do it, and do it well. But in the end analysis, we have to get it done.

Rom 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. The spiritual point of pride for Paul was his gospel. He did not have any restrictions on announcing it. It was the beginning, center and end of his daily conversations with people.*

Rom 10:14 *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? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

All the work of God revolves around the announcing or preaching of the gospel. **Every**

church should dedicate its resources, time, and energy to evangelizing. Every believer should promote this personally. If you cannot do this, you need to learn, you should support it in prayer and money going to those that are doing it correctly and effectively, and encourage those who are trying to learn how, **but it is also valid to put resources (money, time, prayer, ministers) into this work in the form of missionaries.**

The NT Pattern

John 1:41 *He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. Andrew was the first evangelist of the disciples of Christ. The pattern was established in Andrew, which is **when a person accepts Christ as his Savior, he confesses Christ publicly, and then he tells others or invites them to Christ also (all one thing really).** It is amazing that so many Christian do not “**get**” this biblical pattern of Scripture.*

We have to follow this clear and central concept in our evangelism. We should “do” something with respect to this each week. We should witness, pray for the gospel outreach of our church, pray for the salvation of specific people, pray and give money to missionaries that are evangelizing. Not-with-standing how good or bad we are at witnessing, **we should have a lot of interest in it.** Simply put, we should have a lot of interest in this work of God, asking those in our church that are going out how things are going, how can I help? Are there special prayer requests? Especially if we are going out ourselves.

The focus in the local church should be to constantly win souls. Many times, the brethren say they don't know how to lead a soul to Christ. If these people are really interested in the Lord's work of winning the world, they would at least be praying earnestly for those on the front lines. They should be praying for the salvation of individuals, inviting them to church, or even arranging a meal with them and somebody

(pastor or worker) who can clearly witness to them. When there are interest and drive, anything is possible even though the brother himself doesn't know how to witness.

The Example of Jesus Christ

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. The pattern that God imposes on us through the example of Jesus Christ is that in every encounter with people, **Jesus was concerned for their soul**. For the unsaved, he communicated to them the gospel clearly, and for those under the burdens of life, he relived those burdens through the person and character of God. He showed the redeemed the love of God in taking care of and fighting for their well-being. But he always focused on his ministry. **If they were unsaved, he gave them the simple gospel. If they walked in sin, he rebuked them. If they were believers, they were comforted and edified.** Christians today seem to be ignorant, not thinking, not wanting to be spiritually engaging in other people's lives. Good Christians find a way to reach the unsaved.

The Slowness of the Jews

We should understand and mark as a warning that God undid his relationship with the nation of Israel **because they were slow and disobedient in doing the work of God**. They did every other kind of religious thing, but they didn't care about the souls of the world, and because of this God set them to one side, and today, the majority of the Jews themselves are not even saved.

Some Considerations

Churches grow because their members are engaged in doing the work of God, following the mission of Jesus, and wanting to obey God. Truthfully, it is so simple and so effective. The majority of newcomers stay in a church because **somebody invited them**, and **this person was friendly and concerned, showing them the love of Christ** since they made the first contact

with the church. In one study done by a denomination, they found the three most important factors in getting new members were: **1) an atmosphere of love and care, especially for children and youth, 2) friendly people that received visitors, 3) good churches that had members that participated in their church functions and activities.** So the great help of simply being friendly to everybody, especially those who are newcomers, or attending and participating are what helps new people to come and stay. When they see your interest, concern, love, and support, they "feel at home" and want to be a part of such a church!

The Love Factor

1John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. God himself says that **the church is an instrument or divine means by which God shows his love.** In the great judgment, perhaps we will see what damage not abounding with love causes. The work of God fails when there is no love. True believers identify a true church by the abundance of love in it, through its members.

The Lack of Taking Opportunities

Acts 8:29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. **30** And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? **31** And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The attitude of the first Christians was to seek and take opportunities to share their faith with others. We fail as a church because we do not engage with people.

The Prayer Factor

Rom 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. Paul showed us that his work in prayer for the salvation of others. We should do the same. God responds when Christians pray.



The Church is Built upon the Foundation of Evangelism

By David Cox

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Matt 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and **the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**

Jesus declared his mission to be building up the church, and nothing will stop that, nor will anybody stop it. He emphasized the importance of the work of God, represented by the gospel and the organization of the saved into local churches. There are two strings in this, evangelism, and then the building of the saints to do the work of God. Christ will do it with us, through us, or without us. We want to be used by God in this His most important work.