

Get involved. Don't be a bystander

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We all love to talk about the things that matter most to us. But do we love people enough to tell them about the things that matter eternally? Christians have a Biblical mandate to reach out to people of all cultures and ages. As Christians, we must take action to share our faith. If we truly love God and truly love others, we will want to lead everyone to Christ. John Wesley said, we have nothing to do but to save souls. Sharing the good news of Jesus Christ is not an option for believers, it's an obligation, so get ready to begin a life changing experience of sharing the message of salvation found only in Jesus Christ. What I want to talk about will encourage you to take an active role in evangelism.

Often, Christians see absolutely no reason to get involved with anything having to do with evangelism, even to the point of not sharing their faith with friends and family. The Bible has a lot to say about evangelism and if we look through Scripture, we'll discover that not only does God have a lot to say about evangelism, but also that He has given us clear mandates concerning our involvement.

Two specific instructions can be found in Mathew 28: 18-20 and Acts 1:8:

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Mathew 28: 18-20).

⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8).

Those who read these passages and only apply them to the early disciples have missed the fullness of the point Jesus was making.

Jesus didn't declare 'Acts 1:8 and Mathew 28:18-20' just to the eleven disciples or to a particular group. He said it to all those who were there. Why? Because God only had and still only has one plan. You can't limit what Jesus said in 'Mathew 28:18-20' and 'Acts 1:8). He didn't say that to only the eleven disciples because the work could never be done with few labourers as the harvest is great. He said I'm sending you to make disciples of all nations.

And who is a disciple maker? A disciple maker is the person who shares the truth of the gospel, who shares the truth that Jesus has told us and shares the truth that the apostles and other disciples have told us. And we pass that on to others. That's why He said go and make disciples of all nations. That's why He said be my witnesses. He didn't simply say; you go and do the job and when you finish it's all over. It didn't stop there because it was His desire and plan that those apostles will teach others.

Another passage that applies to Christians in the evangelism arena is Mathew 9:36-38, which says,

³⁶ "But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest" (Matt. 9:36-38).

The occasion stirred deep and sincere emotion within Christ. His passion for lost souls was so great that He was moved with compassion for them, when He saw that they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. The great ambassador from heaven, Christ Jesus, was on occasion moved to literal tears over the plight of sinners (Luke 19:41).

Let me ask you a question, would your neighbours be likely to characterise you as a person of compassion, whether or not they know you well? Do the people who know you and watch you where you work and where you live, will they describe you as a person who is compassionate in your heart? Or do they see you as a person who is insensitive and unconcerned about other people?

The first sign of a person who is walking in Christ is a heart of compassion. We are going to be excited about sharing our faith when our hearts are burdened for lost souls, for lost family members, for lost friends and colleagues.

Do you want to have Godly compassion? In what ways can you work to integrate compassion as you share the good news of Jesus Christ with those in your immediate locality? It is a result of cultivating a caring heart for lost people. If you want to have a heart of compassion, be sensitive to people around you, build relationships, and start seeing people as God sees them.

The apostle Paul's compassion for his Jewish brothers and sisters was so great that he would have done anything to see them receive Christ as their Lord and personal saviour. He said in Romans 9:2-4 that, "***I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites.***" This is Paul pouring out his compassionate heart to his Jewish brothers and sisters. How deep is your compassion for lost souls? The depth of your compassion is a measure of your usefulness in God's plentiful harvest field.

Friend, sinful souls are like lost sheep who need a shepherd to lead them to safety. Labourers are few but there is a great number of souls to be saved. It's not good for the church and Christians to be unconcerned about lost souls. Meeting people's spiritual needs will require more labourers (verse. 37).

There is plentiful harvest of souls for salvation. Christ instructs us to pray for more labourers to be sent into his plentiful harvest field. He says that "*Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest,*" He wants us to pray "*the Lord of harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.*" Note that He specifically pointed out that the people were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. We should pray for the needs of those who have spiritual and physical needs to be met. And that will require more shepherds to come to their aid.

Why would God place such a high priority on praying for more labourers? Verse 37 goes on to answer that question: "***³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few."***" Believers' prayers play a part in the fulfilment of God's plans for salvation. Pray that God will send more labourers into His harvest.

Also, when we begin praying for a cause - whether it be missions, reaching the lost, or witnessing - we become inclined to want to get involved in that cause. This is God's strategy to attack complacency.

Years ago, I prayed that God would send me as a labourer in His plentiful harvest field, and I'm grateful for any way He has answered that prayer. We are to work in His field and also to pray for more labourers to win souls.

Many believers are only concerned about Jesus' second coming and take no regard for what Christ has asked us to do. But before He comes; *the gospel must be preached* to all nations. "***And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matt 24:14).*** And so, we need to preach, we need to win souls and we need to disciple people.

Ever since the early church, each generation has genuinely believed that it would be the one to see Jesus return. Christians all over the world are anticipating His return in their lifetime. Yes, indeed our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. But while it's good to be looking forward to the day of Jesus' return (Phil. 3:20-21), the Bible also makes it clear that "*you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.*" (Matt. 24:42). Again, Jesus said, "***But of that day and hour no***

one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (Matt. 24:36). So, we need to do the work that God has asked us to do while waiting for His return.

Therefore, instead of looking into the sky and watching if Jesus is coming, we need to follow His command to *“occupy till I come”* (Luke 19:13). We must be about the Father’s business of building His kingdom on earth, which includes winning the lost, and making disciples of all nations.

One reason we don’t share our faith with others more often is that we just don’t care. If we truly care about people who don’t know Jesus and believed that they were on their way to hell which is life without God forever, we could not be silent. We will talk to them; we will spread the good news and save their souls.

Soul winning is a God-given responsibility as stewards of His kingdom. He has blessed us and honoured us by giving us His Spirit and power and placing us on this earth where we have the power to win souls and transform lives. This power to reconcile souls to God does not come without responsibility. Luke 12:48 says, *“For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.”*

Friend get involved and play your part in the making of disciples of all nations. Pray and seek God for guidance on how to get involved. Pray that God may burden your heart for lost souls. Ask God to give you unquenchable love and burden for people in your spheres of life in which you spend most of your time, including your place of work, school, college, or university who are lost and heading to destruction.

By getting involved you can play a part in helping us take the gospel to the whole world. We are all ambassadors for Christ. We are all His missionaries. You may say you are not but yes; you are. You may not act as one but yes you are. Why do I say that? Because you have the gospel, and the Lord says that we have to share our faith and support other people to share their faith. Therefore, you are one whether you act like it or not. Yes, it’s true that not everybody can travel the world as ambassadors when it comes to going. But we are all ambassadors. We need to ask God to give us a burden for souls. This should be a part of your daily prayer life, “Lord, give me a burden for people. Give me a burden for souls. Make me sensitive to those who don’t know Jesus. Open my eyes, Lord, that I can see people who need you.” May we never walk past opportunities to share our faith.

Jesus is the only saviour of this world. Have you received Him as your personal saviour? Put your trust in Jesus, and if you will, you may pray this prayer after me, saying every word from your heart,

Dear Lord: I recognise that I am a sinner and need to be saved.

I understand that Jesus died in my place and suffered the judgment of all of my sins.

I believe that Jesus rose from the dead and He is at the right hand of the father.

Lord Jesus, I surrender my Life to you.

Come and Live in my heart and be my Lord and saviour.

Thank You for saving me. Amen!