

The Evangelist

by Don Courville

The evangelist is a gift to the church, with a distinctive ministry of winning souls to Christ and proclaiming the good news of the gospel.

Duration: 1:01:56

Scripture: Proverbs 11:30, Matthew 28:19

Topics: "Evangelism", "Salvation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the role of an evangelist in winning souls for Christ, drawing parallels to the passion and dedication required in sharing the good news. It highlights the importance of having a heart filled with empathy, a duty to preach the gospel faithfully, and a belief in the power of God's Word to save. The message encourages a deep longing for the salvation of all, urging believers to be like Jesus in reaching out to the lost with love and urgency.

Transcript

He's a soul winner. He that winneth souls is wise, Proverbs 11:30. And he's sort of like, I used to play softball back in my younger days, and if I wasn't pitching, I was playing a position called the rover.

You had your nine men on the team, but in softball, especially slow pitch, you had a position called the rover, and the rover could just play wherever he wanted, usually out behind the shortstop, and he can move over behind the second baseman. But the evangelist is sort of like that. He just roves around, and they're a special breed.

And so I'm going to talk to you about the evangelist. This word evangelist, evangelism, all comes from one root, one root. And so it's basically evangelist is just the teller of the good news, and the root of this word evangelize or evangelism, evangelistic or whatever you want to call it, there's just three words there, but all has this root.

It's the good news, glad tidings, and it's used for many times preach, and I don't want to go into, they come preach the gospel, they preach the gospel, they would preach the good news, proclaim the gospel is the good news, the tidings. It's very simple, and we know these things. The evangelist with a distinctive ministry.

An evangelist has basically one thing on his mind, and that's winning souls to Christ. And so I'm going to take you through, and this word is used, it's very prominent in the in the New Testament. It's used 125 times, but to refer to the evangelist himself, it's only three times.

And so I'm going to go through this. Somebody's doing the talking, that's an evangelist. Somebody's needing to hear, that's the unsaved soul, the evangelant.

The world needs the evangelant, Jesus Christ. That's what somebody called him. The world needs it.

It's the good news. Now I'm going to try to share with you something that I believe is very dear to the heart of God, and as far as how well I can do it, you just pray, because I don't think I can do it very well. But by the mercy of God, we'll trust that God will speak to us.

Some years ago, there was an evangelist in a crusade, and when he was done, he went back to talk to three young men, and he had a real burden on his heart. I mean, God has just put pain in his heart for these three young men, so he went back to talk to them back in the back. He noticed that their attitude was not the most spiritual in the meetings, and so as soon as he came up to talk to them, one of them said, hey, tell me, how far is it to hell? And the rest of them snickered and laughed, and then they got up and went out.

He said, wait, I'd like to talk to you. They didn't want to talk. They got in the car, and they peeled out, you know, how young men will do.

They, if they don't buy their tires, they don't care much about the rubber. Back in the days I was raised, anyway, I had one cousin that went through a new set of tires in six months. The last set, I think.

But listen, they went down the road, and in a few minutes, a state trooper came back to the meeting and said, does anybody know anything about three young men? They had a wreck down the road. They missed a curve, and they split their car in two. Does anybody know about these young men? And, of course, they all jumped in their cars real quick and drove down there, and they found three bodies of these young men.

Within a few minutes, they were in hell. How far is it to hell? Just two and a half miles is how far it was for them to hell. And God has put us on this earth for a purpose, and that is to share the good news.

Who is the evangelist? Who is the evangelist? Bunyan said this, he's a man who has his eyes up to heaven, the best of books was in his hand, the law of truth was written upon his lips, and he stood as if he pleaded with men. That's the evangelist. The interpreter said he's one of a thousand.

He's a rare one to find, and so we're going to study about the evangelist a little bit. I'm going to start off about his work, and I've been trying to sort of put some kind of outline together on things, like on the fear of God, I was trying to put things together so you can follow. But his work is pray and preach and pray and preach and pray and preach, and then in his spare time he's going to pray and preach some more.

God puts it into his heart to proclaim the gospel. Now he's a gift to the church. In one of the references in 2nd Timothy 4, 5, and I'll probably come back to this a little bit later, I didn't even mark it, but Paul told Timothy to do the work of an evangelist.

Not that he was an evangelist necessarily, but to do the work of an evangelist. The evangelist is a gift to the church. In Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 11 in the five giftings mentioned, he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists.

How many times have you stopped to check out on the old boy called an evangelist? And some pastors and teachers. So I thought it might be interesting to do a little bit of studying. He's really, he's a gift to the church, and he's given to the church to encourage us, and he's an itinerant type.

Eusebius said in the early church, he was an early church historian, he says that those occupying the first steps in succession from the Apostles set out on journeys from home and performed the work of evangelists and preached to such as had not yet heard the word of faith. Pantreas, another of Alexander, he said who journeyed, Pantreas of Alexander, who journeyed as far as India, being one of many evangelists of the word, after the manner of the Apostles. So the Apostles were evangelists.

A Hussite evangelist from Bohemia, he went over to Scotland, his name was Peter, and he was preaching the gospel over there, and he was rewarded by being burnt at the stake. So it can be a hazardous occupation. So he's a gift to the church.

It's also an office, which I think is very interesting because hardly have you ever heard of an evangelist being ordained, like they might do elders or deacons. I don't think I've ever seen one ordained to evangelistic ministry. They are just born and ordained by the Spirit of God, I believe, and they take off running.

They preach with pay or without pay, they preach in comfortable places and uncomfortable places, they preach on streets, they preach in cathedrals, they'll preach wherever they can go. There have been some great ones that we've known, and I've just listed a few to go over. These are well known, not that there's lesser ones, but here's some, George Whitfield and Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, McChain, Spurgeon, and some of these had to preach out the doors because the clergy, so to say, didn't like their style or they would not get their license or whatever, but they just preach.

It was a burning in their bones. And others like Finney and Moody and Sunday, Sam Jones, or James Stewart, in more modern days, James Stewart was a powerful man of God. I've got a book on this subject, I was looking at some of the things he said, and actually I could spend several weeks covering this topic, but I just plan on doing it today.

But you got others like James Kennedy coming along with his evangelism explosion techniques, and then some that maybe you don't know, but I know these men. These are men that I've had contact with in one way or the other, some quite a bit of contact, and some just to be there. Not all of them, there's a couple here I haven't really personally met, but like Bill Stewart, he is an evangelist, he's the man that a disciple made that's an evangelist to the servicemen over in Korea.

Mike Morris with CEF in Missouri here, Don Curran goes to the churches, Harold Vaughn, John Musser, the evangelist that was in our revival, is now evangelizing in India, going into places, researching and going into places that nobody's ever gone before to preach the gospel. A very difficult task, but God is rewarding him, sort of working in the way of Gospel for Asia with K.P. Yohannan and another one. Ralph and Lucitaire, working in the revival ministry, and Jules Loestrander, one of the men in our revival, has now got the burden of God to reach out to Muslims.

The pastor that used to cause everybody to tremble in the church that I worked with when he'd knock on the door, now he's just an apostle of love going, and that's the only thing I understand that a Muslim can't handle is love, and they say love them, they can't handle that. And then others, Lloyd Spear, Al Whittingham. Al Whittingham was with us over in Scotland back in, was that 07? And we were, I told you about this, we were at the Church of the Coveeters and looking that over, look at the graves and things, and there's a tour group there, and this tour guide was talking about this dog that stayed there with its master, and after the master died and they buried him and they let him stay in the graveyard, and she's talking about that, and Al just couldn't take it anymore.

He said, excuse me, could I say something? And he jumped in there and gave a little bit about the history, and then started preaching Christ to them, and let me tell you, they loved it. I'm telling you a lie, they didn't love it. They couldn't wait to get rid of him, but he couldn't, he couldn't stand it, he jumped in there, I loved it, it was great, my type of stuff, they're great, Al, and when they were getting very uncomfortable, then it was time to make our exit, but he took that opportunity.

Vernon, you would love Al Whittingham, he was a great, great preacher, and then there's others, Ray Comfort, we know about him, Mark Cahill, and Jerry Whitesell right here in Springfield, a soul winner, working the fairs here. Okay, they usually don't work in just a certain denomination, they look to God for direction and all of these different things. Somebody brought up in this area of the office is such a high calling of God that they are listed with elders, and so they would have the qualification of elders, and I'll say something about that in a minute.

But Paul, Spurgeon said Paul to Timothy was not calling Timothy to the office of an evangelist, but to the work itself, to make soul winning a part of his ministry, and I've got this little book here, I'm going to share some stuff with you, I want to get back, I'm going to take one of these evangelists today and really take you into his heart, and take you in, he's one of the greatest that probably ever lived in this world, and his name is Spurgeon. This was given to me by one of my lovely daughters six years ago on my birthday. It's C.H. Spurgeon on spiritual leadership, and there's a chapter here, when God was burdening me on this, I said, what did Spurgeon teach on this subject of the evangelist, and there's a whole chapter called A Passion for Lost Souls, and I want to take you into his heart on how he felt about this subject, and so I'm going to work my way towards the back and then share several things that he's shared, but let me keep on moving here and go through some things.

There's the responsibility of the evangelist, and that is to preach Christ, and the Holy Spirit is the one that puts that on him. Nobody really comes, okay, you have got the responsibility to be an evangelist and preach Christ. It's in their heart, they're going to preach with or without it.

Preaching, preached, and preaching, preachers, well the words preach and preaching are used many times. If you want to go to your Strong's, it's these three Greek words, 2097, 2098, and 2099. 2099 is the term for the evangelist himself, the gift in Ephesians 4.11, and then there is, I might as well mention the other references, Ephesians 4.11, 2nd Timothy 4.5, and then Acts 21.8, which is referring to Philip as the evangelist, but in there, responsibility is to help the church, to edify the church, and they might make us feel bad or try to make us feel bad because we don't do what they're doing, but I'm going to share something with you I believe that I've had a conviction of for many years, and that is that the whole church is to do the work of the evangelist, and that's probably why so few are just calling an evangelist, and you might question, is that true? Well, we'll go through here and we'll see if I've got any backup on that.

They are men that live with no selfish ambition. They're really, if they're true evangelists, they're not going to say, God has told me that you are supposed to take up an offering so I can buy me a new Rolls-Royce. They are not going to take advantage of poor widows and things like that.

They're wolf evangelists if they're like that, but they come along and they help the church. I remember when my evangelist friend Lloyd Spear, who I was around for many years, we went through Bible college and everything, he came to our first church and he asked me if I'd ever have seen God do something in somebody's life there in the preaching there, and I said, no, really. He said, we need to pray over this church building, and he did.

He prayed over everything. He prayed over the duck work, and he prayed, and he was there for services, and that night God the Holy Spirit moved amongst us and did some things, and so they come along to help us maybe get unstuck, and they have to pay a price for their preaching, and it's a price of suffering. It's a price of suffering.

2nd Timothy 4 or 5, if I should have marked this, but just listen to this, what he said. But watch thou in all things endure afflictions. Do the work of an evangelist.

Make full proof of thy ministry. So he said, endure afflictions. Generally they will probably have some pretty hard times.

I don't know if you know how much suffering Spurgeon went through. I was reading a little bit here in this back on page 112 about some things about his suffering, and we know that he was, he said this is a whole chapter that he wrote on a willingness to suffer, a willingness to suffer, and the things he went through, especially at first, I was sharing to one of my daughters as we was driving some things he went through, because when he started preaching, you may not know that, but the times when he started preaching there in London, just a young man of like I think 19, he started preaching back as soon as he got saved, but when he began to pastor this church, the church is in that town, the pastors are sort of like in competition to see who could be the greatest preacher and give the fanciest sermons and all of this and fancy words, you know. I knew a pastor one time when he spoke, most of what he said went over our head.

I had a Greek teacher like that too, just out of seminary, and when he spoke everything was going over my head for sure, you know. You got to bring it down. Spurgeon brought the gospel down to where the common people could hear and understood, and so almost overnight that church was just transformed with crowds of people coming in, because all of a sudden Christ was being preached without thrills and frills, and they could understand, and the Spirit of God could speak to their heart, and they could believe and get saved, and so he received a lot of opposition.

It was grievous the things that were said about him, and so this chapter goes into those things. I won't really, I'm not going to read much on this, but I'll say this. He said, I am content to be criticized, misunderstood, and misrepresented.

He wouldn't defend himself. I tried that one time, and it just goes from worse to worse to worse, and he said, the cost was counted long ago. The estimate was so liberal that there is no fear of its being exceeded.

I know whom I had believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I committed unto him against that day. And by the way, the man that wrote this book is Steve Miller, and this is a Moody Press book. It's a tremendous, tremendous thing on the life of, I count it one of my treasures in my books, and I'll loan it to you if you want to borrow it.

But he said, give me the comforts of God, and I can well bear the taunts of men. Let me lay my head on the bosom of Jesus, and I fear not to be, I fear not the distraction of care and trouble. If my God will ever give me the light of his smile, and grant his benediction, it is enough.

Come on, foes, persecutors, fiends. I, Apollyon himself, for the Lord is my son and shield. Gather ye clouds, and environ me.

I carry a sun within. Blow winds of the frozen north. I have a fire of living coal within.

Yea, death, slay me, but I have another life, a life in the light of God's countenance. And they slandered him, wrote about him, gossiped about him, and this author said, he didn't divide his energies between the Lord's work and defending himself. He preferred to stay wholly focused on his ministry, and leave the detractors in the Lord's hands.

And you know, God does do something to detractors. And so that was a little bit on paying the price of suffering. The evangelist has to suffer a great deal, but he has to pray.

Isn't it interesting that when the church is getting going, and in Acts, in chapter 6, in verse 4, they would give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word. Romans 12, 12, to continue instant in prayer. James Stewart, whom I mentioned earlier, he said, what a minister, he's quoting from John Owen, one of the great Puritans, what a minister is on his knees in secret before God, is that he is, and no more.

And so the evangelist's ministry is basically, or any of our ministry, is no deeper, and no farther, and no powerful, any more than our time of prayer. And out of our prayer will come the ministry. I remember when we had our revival 25 years ago, God came along in a powerful way.

That evangelist, John Musser, would spend hours praying. I never seen anything like that. And when he'd come out, his face would be glowing.

You spend hours all day even with God, and it will happen to you. But these men had to be men of prayer, and they had to be men of high integrity. Stewart said, the evangelist must be always on the watch, lest Satan gain an advantage over him.

Be very careful how he carries himself. The devil will get in there any way he can. So high integrity.

You know, Paul said he wouldn't even eat meat if it would offend. He wouldn't even eat meat if he would offend. In 1st Corinthians 9, he is so focused.

Just listen, let me read a few verses to you in 1st Corinthians 9. Of this focused evangelist, in verse 12, he said, for if others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather. Nevertheless, we have not used this power, but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. And it said in verse 11, if some have sown you spiritual things, it's a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things, trying to address an area of flaw.

But it goes on in verse 14, he says, even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. 16, for though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel. What is my reward? In verse 18, he said, then verily that when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge.

That anytime you hear the word gospel, this is the the term for evangelists. That I abuse not my power in the gospel. That is his theme, the gospel.

In 22 or 23, he says, and this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you. And he goes on, he's a man of high integrity. He wouldn't bleed the poor.

I'll tell you what, there's going to be a hot place in hell, I think, for a lot of these people that call them men, or even women that call themselves evangelists, that bleed people in their meetings for their finances. That's not the Spirit of Christ. I took, when I was courting my wife, we went to an evangelistic service.

There was a church down the street where I lived, and so we went down there one evening to see what was going on, and lo and behold, if we didn't get into a healer also, and my, this guy, he must have been a farm boy, because he was really trying to milk the people. And, and I think I've mentioned this before, I can't remember if it was a man or a woman, but it so impressed me what they did when they got back. But he said, who will pay five dollars to see so-and-so over there? And he's actually pointing over there, and I'm sitting behind him, beheld of their eyesight.

They were wearing glasses. Somebody said, I'll chip in five dollars to see that. And so that person come up there, and he prayed for him, and they were healed of their eyesight.

And everybody's, hallelujah, praise God and everything. Passed the offering plate to get the five bucks. They came back and sat down in front of me.

God had healed them of their eyesight, and everybody's rejoicing. They came back and sat down in front of me, put their glasses on so they could see the rest of the show. I told Vicki, let's go.

That's all I need to see. Oh, all right. What do people need? They need a Savior.

Listen, about Jesus, it said in Mark 12 37, and the common people heard him gladly. 12 37 and 35, it said, while he taught in the temple. While he taught in the temple.

Why did they gladly hear Jesus, and they didn't gladly hear most of what the Pharisees had to say? It's because the same thing with Spurgeon. He had some good news. Their message was, it's law, you do, or you'll die, you do, if you want to get to heaven.

And Jesus comes along and says, it's grace. You repent and believe, and you can have life. It's law, you do, or you'll die, you better do, if you want eternal life.

We're not sure you'll get it though. And Jesus says, repent and believe, and you can be saved. Ah, I need that.

And they flocked to Jesus. He had some good news. That's the gospel.

James Stewart said that he preached in Spurgeon pulpit before it was bombed in World War II, and he related a story that was given by Ms. Torrey. If you know, R.A. Torrey was the one that traveled around

with Moody, wherever he went. He wanted Moody to do his teaching on the Holy Spirit.

Moody had got a hold of this man that had an understanding of the Holy Spirit, would help people to receive the Spirit of God in their life in a powerful way. And so he had him teach that. And here's what Ms. Torrey said.

I think at this point her husband might have been already passed away, I don't know. But she talked of the times of revival in the British Isles, where Moody and Torrey came over there. And also Sankey would be traveling with him.

And I think Sankey was the only one that got to play his organ or something in the tabernacle there in London, in Spurgeon tabernacle. But here's something that she said that was very interesting about these evangelists that came there. They said the preachers had been expositing the Word to the people in such a way that when my husband and Moody come in, all they had to do was just draw the net, reap.

They had been expositing to the Word, and so the people were ready. So those that were not saved, it was easy, really. But here's what Torrey said.

He said, related by his wife, he said, and one of the last things he said, she said, quote, it was thus my husband's prayer in his last warning to the church that the gospel should be expounded in all its clarity and power. And before that, he had said that what was coming in on the church, as he could see, was modernism was coming in. And because modernism was coming in, they were not expounding the Scripture correctly.

They were not preaching Christ, and thus people were not getting saved. And he said what is going to be needed is for an expository evangelism to be preached, is what Spurgeon did. Wherever he went in the Word, he brought men to Christ.

But he said it was a warning, and it's come, and that was over a hundred years ago, and it swept in, and it's been a cancer in the church. Someone said Spurgeon was the greatest expositor of all times. Vast numbers were saved, and he said this himself.

He said he didn't believe there was a seat in the tabernacle where somebody had not been converted in that seat. Wow. So, do we need the evangelist? We do.

Now, his method of preaching, and I'm not going to go through the the covering of the message itself, his message was Christ, the preaching of the gospel. And that was, if I can take you, I'll just say a little something about the message of Christ himself. In Acts 17, in verses 2 and 3, listen, and Paul, as his manner was, do you know you have a manner of evangelism? If you are a believer, you have a manner of evangelism about you.

You got your own style, you got your own technique of sharing Christ. I've got mine. I've developed it a long time ago.

I've been in churches where they want you to go knock on doors. The people inside are terrified, and you're terrified outside. Whatever you want to do.

To me, it's not natural. I like a more natural way. And so, I decided long ago my technique, my manner, would be as I go.

As I go. I come out of Aldi's over here. Yesterday, we'd come over to, I come over to put some water in this tank, and I went over there to see if there's something I could buy, and did, and bought it.

But I come out and said, Lord, I've got a track that I needed to give to somebody. And, I mean, I'm fixing to get in the car and come home. And there's a lady that come out just ahead of me, and she put her buggy there, and I said, boy, looks like you messed up your arms.

She had a wrapper around there. And just like that, I worked and got in there and shared. I said, can I give you a little gospel track? It's, are you good enough to go to heaven? She said, I sure hope so.

I said, well, nobody's going to make it without Jesus. She said, that's right. She was a Methodist.

But that, my method is as I go. Sometimes it works out pretty good, and some people don't like it. But it's as you go.

Literally, I believe that's what the Greek has meant to me. As you go. Jesus, it was a command to go, and so you will develop your technique and your style.

But he said, and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them in three days, reasoned with them out of the Scriptures. His manner was to go to the Jews first everywhere, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ. Now, he's in Thessalonica.

He's going to move from there to Berea. He's going to move from there to Athens. Everywhere he goes, he's going to preach Christ, and he usually started with the Jews first.

Now, I want to go into the method of the evangelist, his method. His method basically is to follow his master, to follow his master. And the master's method was soul winning, and we're going to talk about that.

This comes, this method, this following the master comes from passion. Those that do not have passion for the Lord will not have passion for the lost souls that are around them. And I'm going to take you into the heart of Spurgeon now and share with you some things about his passion.

This passion, it's a drive. If I can maybe take something and share from Spurgeon that he said, this is um, he said soul winning is the chief business of the Christian minister. He, a lot of this I've got, he was given to the pastors, to the preachers, and he had a school there.

He said soul winning is the chief business of the Christian minister. Indeed, it should be the main pursuit of every true believer. Is it your pursuit? When you go through the day, are you plugged in with Jesus and you'd say, Lord, is there somebody today that I can share Christ with? He said, do you ever mourn over your heroes? He's talking to these preachers again.

As one that weepeth for the slain of his people, can you bear that they should pass away to judgment unforgiven? Can you endure the thought of their destruction? I do not know how a preacher can be much blessed of God who does not feel an agony when he fears that some of his hearers will pass into the next world and impotent and unbelieving. That's where that evangelist was with those three young men. The Spirit of God put a burden on his soul and they went and spoke to them.

He said we must, we must capture the hearts for Jesus by showing that we are of like passion with them and love them much. Love men to Jesus. That is the act of soul winning.

It's loving men to Jesus. Go on to win other souls. It is the only thing worth living for.

God is much glorified by convergence and therefore this should be the great object of life. You do not love the Lord at all unless you love the souls of others. You can't get much stronger than that.

And we need revival. I need revival every day because there are days I get up I don't love souls, I just love myself. I just want to do what I want to do and get done what I want to do.

And I'm not on track on that day. It will not count. When I was up in Victoria just a few weeks ago, it took me a bunch of tracks and we went moving around quite a bit and so there was a couple there from Australia there staying where we were and everywhere I went I was handing out tracks trying to talk to people to the Lord, get behind, they'd have to wait for me and different things and but they were sort of amazed.

That's the way we should live. As far as I'm concerned wherever we go as we go if we get an opportunity to share Christ, I'm going to share some things with you about Spurgeon. One thing was back when he's a young man he told his mother he said I go every Saturday and visit 70 people.

He said I just don't give them a track. I try to get them into spiritual matters. Every Saturday, 70 people.

While we probably wouldn't talk to 70 people, maybe some of us not even a whole year about Christ, maybe some of us not in 10 years, but every Saturday he purposely did that. That's pretty amazing isn't it? His method came out of his passion which is a desire. Paul said woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.

Acts 8. Listen to Acts 8. Was the Bible? Did it? In Acts 8, therefore, you know persecution came in chapter 8 in verse 4, therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere just trying to protect themselves and keep themselves from getting hurt? No. He said they went everywhere preaching the Word. In verse 5, then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ into them.

In verse 12, but when they believed Philip preaching of the things concerning the kingdom of God in the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. You just keep on going through. 25, and they when they had testified and preached the Word of the Lord returned to Jerusalem and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

It came out of a passion for Jesus. Do you have a passion for the Lord? My passion is so weak sometimes I feel ashamed, but then Philip in 35 opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus. You have a passion for Jesus? He'll bring you in contact with people that need the Lord.

He'll bring you in contact. In Acts 8, 35, then he preached unto him Jesus. In verse 40, Philip was found in Azotus.

God probably just snatched him away. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea. It was their business as evangelists to preach, and I believe God wants us to do the work of an evangelist.

We may not be able to do it full-time like most evangelists do, and not even all that do it full-time are full-time instead as they go to work. They evangelize everywhere. What was Christ's method? Listen to

this.

In John chapter 4, there's one of the most beautiful displays of the method of Christ of winning souls. This is the woman at the well. And let me just go through these things.

Number one, he came to this well, and he's thirsty, and he asked this woman for a drink. He made an appeal to her kindness, which shocked her. His Jews didn't have anything to do with Samaritans, and women especially.

This is his method though. He is going to get to this soul. He is going to reach her heart.

He came to seek and to save the lost, and this is one. And so he made an appeal to her kindness in verse 7. Therefore cometh the woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, give me the drink.

And it just shocked her. Then going on down in verse 14, he made an appeal. He made an appeal to her desire.

In 13 he said, whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. And he abated her in there. He said in 10, he appealed to her curiosity in verse 10.

There's one I missed. If thou knewest the gift of God, who it is that said to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. So that was an appeal to her curiosity.

Then he made an appeal to her desire when he said in 13, whosoever drinketh this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The Spirit of God coming into you will satisfy your thirst. And, wow.

Then she said, I want that. She said, sir, give me this water. Then he made a very important appeal, which we can fail to do with people because it gets very uncomfortable at this point.

He made an appeal to her moral condition. He said, go call thy husband and come hither. Now he's going to see if she's going to be honest.

And she said, I have no husband. Well, that's pretty good. She's just living in immorality.

Jesus said unto her, thou hast well said, I have no husband. For thou hast had five husbands, and he to whom thou now hast is not thy husband, but in that thou seest truly. So he made an appeal to her moral condition.

Then, okay, she needs to change the subject. Let's get on a spiritual subject. And so, she goes into this.

Where do we worship? That was a big argument. Where do we worship? In Samaria, in Jerusalem. Been going on a long time.

And he said, our fathers worshipped in this mountain. You say in 20, in Jerusalem, this place. So here's what he did in 21.

He said, woman, believe me, the hour cometh when you shall neither in this mountain nor yet in Jerusalem worship the Father. You worship, you know not what, we know what we worship, for salvation

is of the Jews. And then he moves in, and he shares to her about himself.

And then in 26, he makes, to make it a little bit shorter, he says, I that speak unto thee am he. He made an appeal to her faith, and she believed. She left her water pot.

That's how you know she left. She was going to coming back. She went to town to tell everybody she could.

Water pot was very valuable to a woman in those days. But she intended on coming back. She went to town and told everybody.

The disciples, we've talked about this many times, we don't know if they told anybody. They came back, they hadn't made much, and that's us. Shows our condition.

So an evangelist has a passion, a drive. He also has a duty. It's a duty of love.

For the Son of Man has come to seek and save the lost. Spurgeon said, soul winning is the chief business of the Christian. Indeed, it should be the main pursuit of every true believer.

I repeat that. Jesus' last command should be our first concern. Somebody said the mission field is, you know where the mission field is? They said the mission field is in your immediate vicinity.

You go somewhere, that's where it is. Wow, it's a love affair. Now I'm gonna just go through in closing up and just share some things from this little book on Spurgeon and what he said.

He said, in relation to love, he said we must have also intense love to the souls of men. If you are to influence them for good, nothing can compensate for the absence of this. Soul winning must be your passion.

You must be born to it. It must be the very breath of your nostrils, the only thing for which you count life worth living. That's pretty radical, isn't it? No, it's not radical.

It's normal Christianity. And the church, and we're no better than anybody else. We're not going to, you know, compare ourselves.

We compare ourselves with everybody else. This is what everybody likes to do. I'm pretty good.

But we compare ourselves with the Word of God and the Spirit of God and the truth. And he said, woe is me. You might have shared Christ with ten souls this last week, and that's wonderful.

But the Spirit of God would come along and said, listen, I gave you 50. What about the other 40? You backslider. He said we ought to have an intense longing for the salvation of all sorts of men, and especially for those, if there are any, that treat us badly.

We should never wish them ill, not for a moment, but in proportion to their malice should be our intense desire for their good. I wouldn't doubt that probably several of those men that attacked him so ruthlessly, horribly, maybe needed to be saved. He said, I hope it will never get to be your notion that only a certain class of preachers can be soul winners.

Every preacher should labor to be the means of salvation for his hearers. He's talking to the preachers again. The true reward of life work is to bring dead souls to life.

I long to see souls brought to Jesus every time I preach. It should break my heart if I did not see it to be so. There were over 6,000 people every week preaching to them.

Men are passing into eternity. Matter of fact, one time I remember reading a story how he had a message that when he got done preaching, and maybe I shared this with you, he thought it was a total flop. And I feel like that most of the time, just a total flop.

And he didn't give it very good, and he didn't, it just, he said, I'll make sure that doesn't happen again. And so the next week he got it all put together, it was all polished and everything. And then he made an experiment with himself.

He said, I'm going to watch and see the results of those two messages. And if I remember reading that correctly, the second sermon, I think he said that he couldn't find anybody that he knew of that had got saved. Now I don't know if that's true or not, because I believe he said another time that somebody got saved under every message that he preached.

But the first one that he was such a total flop, he had counted, I think, like 40 or more souls that had got saved from that message. That's because he was totally, and what do you say, unimpressive? Not maybe dramatic or however or whatever, but it was Jesus totally working through an inadequate vessel. And that's the way we think.

We got, do you think we have to know all kinds of scriptures? Do you know one of the most powerful things that you have for a lost soul, when you can't get into any other way, is your testimony of how God saved you? If someone asked you for your testimony, give it. If you don't give it, and they ask for it, do you have it? I mean, it's a treasure. Yeah, I've got two.

I got the one when I didn't get saved, and I got the other one, and really, God really did something with my life. Wow. This author of this book said the prerequisites for preaching to the lost is a reliance upon God.

He said Spurgeon cried out for the souls of men, and Spurgeon said this, as for you and as for me, what can we do in saving a soul from death of ourselves? Nothing, any more than the pen that lies upon the table could write the pilgrim's progress, just a pen. And yet, let a bunion grasp the pen, and the matchless work is written, so you and I can do nothing to convert souls. That's a good thing to understand.

Till God's eternal Spirit takes us in His hand, and then He can do wonders by us, and get to Himself glory by us, while it shall be joy enough to us to know that Jesus is honored, and the Spirit magnified. This is golden wages for a man who really loves his master. Jesus is glorified.

We'll never be adequate. We'll never be worthy to share the gospel, and that's where we should live. Once we think we got it put together, we've just lost everything.

An emptying of ourselves, this author had said. He's talked about an emptying of ourselves, and Spurgeon said, I've preached the gospel now these thirty years and more, and some of you will scarcely believe it, but before I... Do you understand this? Listen. This is the greatest preacher in the world, probably.

He said this, before I come to address the congregation in this tabernacle, I tremble like an aspen leaf, and often in coming down to this pulpit, I have felt my knees knocked together, not that I'm afraid of any one of my hearers, but I am thinking of that account which I must render to God, whether I speak His Word faithfully or not. On this service may hang the eternal destinies of many. Oh God, grant that we may all

realize that this is a matter of most solemn concern.

I just thought, what about if we got up every day with this spirit? We may not go into a pulpit, but we're going to go to work, and suppose God has three young men that are going to come to us, and they're going to ask, how far is it to hell? And this evangelist was tuned in with the Spirit of God to go, and he actually hollered out to them as they drove off, no, come back, come back! And they drove off into eternity, trembling. How much trembling do we do? The work of reaching the lost, a heart filled with empathy. He said, brethren, we shall never preach the Savior of sinners better than when we feel ourselves to be sinners whom He came to save.

A penitent mourning for sin prepares us to preach repentance. I preach, says John Bunyan, sometimes as a man in chains to men in chains, hearing the clinking of my own fetters while I preach to those who were bound in affliction and iron. Spurgeon went on to say, sermons wrung out of broken hearts are often the means of consolation to despairing souls.

It is well to go to the pulpit at times when God be merciful to me a sinner is our uppermost prayer. I think I live too much in a back-sitting state. How about you? I remember back in my early days when I had got plugged into this area of sharing Christ, and the devil tried to kill me.

But I would sometimes go to my room, and I would pray for hours that God would give me opportunity to share Christ. And it was an amazing thing how many opportunities I got. Don't you, we don't realize we get what we go for.

Don't we? Jesus came for lost souls. We're in bad shape. I think we just need to really, and I'm not giving altar calls.

You notice I don't give many altar calls. But I'm giving one to all of us today, that we would ask God, what are we really living for? What is my passion? It's a plea that loves and warns, and Spurgeon went on to say, we have to tell men of hell. We don't like to do that.

I have been rejected so many times, because when I share the gospel, they do not like to know that they're gonna face eternity, and face a God, and be judged for their sins. People don't like that. It's not how to win friends and influence people, to share the gospel.

It's really, and not only that, we have to get over the obstacle of ourself, of what are they gonna think about me? They're gonna hit me. They're gonna not like me. I'm gonna lose my job, and men do.

They cost. Spurgeon said, the vital truth of our Lord's expiation must be preached often, clearly, and with emphasis, and if it be not so, we have not correctly learned Christ, neither shall we successfully teach Him. To attempt to preach Christ without His cross, is to betray Him with a kiss.

And that's what we got today. We got a gospel without the cross, to tell men that when you surrender your life to Christ, you must repent of your sins. You're gonna enter into a crucified life.

Christ is going to come into your life. The devil's gonna hate you. You're gonna experience things that you've never experienced before, but you're gonna have peace with God.

You're gonna have your sins forgiven. If you're willing to repent and believe the gospel, you'll have reward of Christ, but the devil's gonna hate you, and God's gonna ask you to take up your cross. So Spurgeon

says, sometimes the sacred mysteries of eternal wrath must be preached, but for oftener let us preach the wondrous love of God.

There are more souls won by wooing than by threatening. It is not hell, but Christ we desire to preach, and I think that's a good point. Not to dwell on all of the doom, and the damnation of hell, and the fire, and the burning, and all of this, but to plead with them about the Christ, the lovely Christ that died for them to save them there.

It's what he's saying. And then coming down near the close, he said, we shall never persuade men if we're afraid to speak of the judgment, and the condemnation of the unrighteous. None is so infinitely gracious as our Lord Jesus.

And then he went into the things about Christ. He said, no preacher ever uttered more faithful words of thunder than he did. It was he who spoke of the place where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.

And he said, he who said these shall go away into everlasting punishment. He kept going down about Jesus, but then he said, make sure, make sure you dwell strongly on the propitiation of Christ. He didn't use that word, but he said, make sure the atonement is preached.

A zeal for one as well as for many. He said, Andrew proved his wisdom in that he set great store by a single soul. He bent all his efforts at first upon one man.

Afterwards, Andrew, through the Holy Spirit, was made useful to scores, but he began with one. Is it any wonder that George Mueller was such a winner of souls and such a powerful man of prayer? He would get a hold and wouldn't let go. He said, be content in labor in your spirit, even if it be small, and you will be wise.

Do what you can with what you got with where you're at. Don't compare yourself with anybody else. Just go to God.

I know of a farm lady. I heard about her. She couldn't get away from her farm, and so she'd say, God, would you bring somebody by for me to share Christ with? And the salesmen would come.

The people would come. They'd break down there, and she'd just pray, and God would give them to her, and she would be able to lead many to Christ. I knew a farmer, and I've shared this with you before.

Out in Wyoming, when I was pastor of my first church, he went to another church. He was a soul winner. He was an evangelist.

He just loved to share Christ, but he said, I got to stick out here on this track. I'd sit on this tractor most of my time. I've got to run my tractor.

So he just said, I prayed that God would bring him to me, and he shared with me the story after story how people come chomping around through the fields, out through the dirt to his tractor. It's amazing how God would bring them. Ask God to give you someone to share Christ with.

And close that last page. A belief that God's Word will bear results. Do you believe this is the Word of God? Do you believe the works? Believe it.

He said, Beloved, have a genuine faith in the Word of God and its power to save. Do not go up into your pulpit, preaching to the preachers again, preaching the truth and saying, I hope some good will come of it, but confidently believe that it will not return void, but must work the eternal purpose of God. Do not speak as if the gospel might have some power, or might have none.

We've probably all read this story about Spurgeon and the preacher who came to him, and talking about him, and complaining about how souls were not getting saved. And Spurgeon asked him, well, you don't expect people to get saved every time you preach, do you? And he said, well, no. He said, well, that's your problem.

He said, I do. I do. Expect God.

Believe God to use you. Believe God to use you. Now, the saving is God's business.

It was 16 years ago, God had to deal with me on leading people to pray to the Lord. I was, to the Lord, I was a certain, I was a, there's probably been hundreds that led, that really didn't come under conviction. I was just like a Kirby salesman.

I used to set goals even, of how many a year, 50 a year. I've got in my Bibles the list of all of those, most all of those, whatever Bible I had, that prayed to receive Christ. But then God convicted me 16 years ago of this fallacy of just leading people to pray a prayer.

Watch for conviction, and believe Him to save the soul, and don't push if there's no conviction to lead them to a prayer. But if they're ready, I was in the presence of a Chinese man just last month, that was so ready, when Gareth and I, he was in Gareth Evans house, he'd been, Gareth had been working with him for weeks, and he wanted me to share a little bit with him, and I shared, he was so ready to surrender his life to Christ, he was just, and so I put it back to him, I just, oh, he said go ahead, and he did, he gave his life to Christ, and he just was so happy. But he'd been bringing him along to have conviction, and to see that it was lost.

He didn't move in too soon, but so, till he was so full of conviction, in a sense of his need of Christ, that it was just really fun to watch this man be told, hey, you can do it right now, I can, yeah, surrender your life to Christ, he did. I'm going to close up with these thoughts. Spurgeon said, and when you see my coffin carried to the silent grave, I should like every one of you, whether converted or not, to be constrained to say, he did earnestly urge us, in plain and simple language, not to put off the consideration of eternal things.

He did entreat us to look to Christ. Now he is gone, our blood is not at his door, if we perish. And this author, Steve Miller, in the book, he said, as a fisher of men, he cast the net far and wide, always seeking new prospects, always trusting God to bear the fruit.

He cast the net differently each time, so as to avoid repetition or monotony. He kept his plea relevant to the text on which he was preaching, being careful not to abuse scripture in the course of presenting the gospel, and the wellspring of it all was a tender heart that earnestly wept for sinners to be reconciled to God. You know, I've been to London three times.

The first time I sat in the airplane, didn't get out, but if I ever get to go back again, last time we went to Spurgeon's Tabernacle, it's been remodeled, now it's different. The front of it's the same out there in the front. I'd like to go to his grave, I guess it was like 40 miles away, I would like to go to his tomb.

In London you can go to the tomb of John Wesley. You can go, we went to Whitfield's Chapel, we saw the grave of Bunyan and John Owen and Susanna Wesley and others, but I would like to visit his grave if I would ever go back there again. A great evangelist, a great evangelist.

Wouldn't you like to be a sower? Wouldn't you like to be a sower? I do not consider myself a great sower or anything, just nothing, but I do try to reach out for Christ and it's just weakness and failure all over. But wouldn't you like to be like Jesus? Let's pray. Lord, the Spirit of God should be bringing conviction on our hearts when you have given us in the word through the append of the Apostle Paul, through the message to Timothy, do the work of an evangelist.

Now some may be evangelists, Lord, that are here and that hear this message and they understand these things, they're driven, the passion and the drive and the desire and the understanding of duty and the love, but some of us, Father, myself included, we need to be reminded and prodded all the time that this gift of the evangelist, this gifting of the evangelist is to encourage us to be like Jesus, for he is a pattern of the great evangel, our Savior, the Lord Jesus. Lord, have mercy, pour out your Spirit upon us, speak to our hearts, may we not get over this, may we not get over it. Well, if we do get over it, we have to ask ourselves if we've ever really been truly been born again.

Lord, we're weak and we need to be encouraged. I pray that this message would be an encouragement. Your word convicts us, your word slashes and slices us, and the truth of this message brings a deep, sometimes, resentment in many lives when they say this is somebody else's duty to preach the gospel, but the truth of the matter is that you commanded us to go and to preach the gospel, meaning that you intended us all to be evangelists, to do the work of an evangelist.

Lord, take this poor, delivered message, rough around the corners, not polished, but may we catch the spirit of it. May our hearts be broken. God, when's the last time, Father, if we wept for lost souls, we have relatives, we have neighbors.

He that goeth forth weeping. Ah, there is probably a key for us to go home on. Will we go forth weeping? Father, I fear many times we go forth, but we haven't gone forth weeping.

Thank you for speaking. May we act upon what you showed us in Jesus' name. Amen.

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