

# The Church and the Evangelist Relationship

by John Reuther

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of the church and the evangelist working together to proclaim the gospel and live in a manner worthy of the gospel.*

**Duration:** 42:41

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 10:32, 1 Corinthians 11:22, 1 Timothy 3:15-16

**Topics:** "Open-Air Preaching"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the pattern for an evangelist. Firstly, the evangelist must be called, as seen in Acts 9:15. Secondly, they must be sent, as exemplified by Paul being sent by the church in Antioch in Acts 13:2. Thirdly, the evangelist must return and report to the church, as mentioned in Acts 14:26. Fourthly, they must be nurtured and equipped, as stated in 2 Timothy 2:2 and 2 Timothy 4:5. Lastly, the evangelist must be held accountable, as emphasized in 2 Timothy 2:5. The urgency of evangelism is highlighted, and the speaker encourages the audience to proclaim the gospel to the nations. The sermon also touches on Paul's passion for ministry and his instructions to Timothy regarding Christian ministry. The theme of the Christian church and practical directives for meeting the needs of widows are also discussed. The sermon concludes with an early Christian hymn or confession of faith, emphasizing the manifestation of Christ in the flesh.

---

## Transcript

Thank you, let's pray. Our gracious God and Father in heaven, we are so grateful, Lord, to be here today. Lord, we are so grateful for your great salvation and also, Lord, for this desire that you have placed in so many of our hearts to bring the gospel to the people where they are.

Lord, continue with us throughout the whole day. Bless your word as it is preached throughout the day and again tomorrow and the ministries on the streets, our fellowship, O Lord, and help us, Lord, to be further equipped to do your work. We pray this in the name of our matchless Lord and King, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Forty years ago, Michael Green wrote in his excellent book entitled *Evangelism in the Early Church*, and I quote, most evangelists, he said, are not very interested in theology. Most theologians are not very interested in evangelism.

And then I added the note, I am deeply committed to both. And I'd like to propose a further question, that is, are evangelists interested in the church and are churches interested in evangelists or evangelism? And

I would ask you to turn to 1 Timothy chapter three, where we will take up this subject of fulfilling God's design for church and evangelist in just three verses here at the end of Paul's third chapter, 1 Timothy chapter three, verses 14 through 16. And here Paul says, I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long, but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness. And here we have an ancient Christian hymn, as I'm sure most of you know, he who was revealed in the flesh was vindicated in the spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. Now, if we had the time to flip through the letter to Timothy, this first letter, we would notice that in the context of these words, in chapter one of this book, we have an emphasis on the Christian ministry.

Remember how Paul speaks in chapter one of how thankful he is, how God considered him faithful, putting him into service. So very briefly and broadly, the theme of chapter one could be called Christian ministry. The theme of chapter two in this letter is evangelism.

It is in that chapter that Paul speaks about himself as being appointed as a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles. And then in chapter three, as you can see right before you, here you have a church setting in which the offices of elder and deacon in the church are laid out. The standard is set forth for the people as they seek to discern who among them is qualified for these offices.

Then in chapter four, broadly speaking, we return again to the ministry, where Paul says in verse six to Timothy, in pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. So here he's giving Timothy instruction concerning Christian ministry. In chapter five, we return back again to the theme of the Christian church, where Paul gives practical directives regarding the benevolence and meeting the needs of widows, which was always a great concern in the early church.

Way back in Acts chapter six, as you remember, that situation that arose there and which then became the seedbed for the creation of the office of deacon. And then in chapter six of this book, Paul goes on to speak about the Christian life and godliness. He says godliness is a means of great gain if accompanied with contentment.

He tells Timothy to fight the good fight. So Christian life in chapter six. So here is just a broad overview of the letter.

Christian ministry, Christian life, Christian church, evangelism, offices in the church, church life, street evangelism life, we might say. But in chapter three, the verses that we're looking at this afternoon, you have crystallized two things. In verse 15 speaks of the church and verse 16 speaks of gospel evangelization.

And it's not hard to see, is it? Verse 15, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in inside of the household of God, which is the church of the living God. And there's nothing in that verse about evangelism. But in verse 16, verse 16 is all about evangelism.

It's about God sending his own son. It's about Christ being proclaimed among the nations. And that's what we're here for during this conference, to speak about, to learn more about, to be encouraged in the work of the proclamation of the gospel all the way out to the nations, to take it out to the people.

Now notice the sense of urgency in Paul's writing here. He is urgent and passionate about everything, of course. Paul is a passionate writer, a passionate preacher, a passionate missionary.

He's passionate about shepherding the flock of God. Just about everything in Paul's life was important to him. And here in this case, it's an urgent matter because he wants to be with them, but he can't be with them.

And he needs to communicate certain things to them about life in the church of God. So he says, these things I have written to you, hoping to come to you before long, but in case I am delayed. And Paul was often under the delays of none other than the archenemy of God, Satan himself, as he speaks about that in letters to the Thessalonians.

He hoped to see them soon, but this matter was so important that in case he was delayed, he must write to them so that they would know. And here's the issue here, that they would know how to conduct themselves in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. So the emphasis falls there on the conduct, and we'll be talking about that in a few minutes.

But let me just say, many Christians think that it just doesn't matter how they live in the church. It doesn't matter how they behave in the church, because the church really isn't that important to them. But clearly it was important to Paul.

It's important to the Holy Spirit, and that's the whole point of verse 15, that they would know how to conduct themselves in the household of God. In whatever church you are part of, my friend, do you often think about your conduct? Do you ask yourself, how is my behavior in this particular body? Or do you just think that it doesn't matter? I hope that that is not the case. Paul speaks about the household of God, the church of God, the pillar and support of the truth.

These are majestic designations, which require a consequent or a parallel lifestyle, which is obviously supportive of the gospel preaching in verse 16. The transition from verse 15 to 16, I think, is very concrete. It's not haphazard or just a happenstance.

For if you notice at the end of verse 15, he speaks about the church being the pillar and support of the truth, and then moves right into this phrase by common confession. And what's the concrete connection? Well, the truth is something that you confess. The truth is that which we confess, because it's real and it's active and it's alive.

So we believe the truth, but we also speak the truth. We confess the truth. So what is found in verse 16 is the fact that the gospel has been proclaimed into the nations by the preaching of the gospel.

Notice the fourth line of the hymn. It was proclaimed or preached among the nations. As Paul said in Colossians 1 and verse 23, crucial gospel text, Paul said, as he summarized his work, the gospel was proclaimed in all creation under heaven.

And so we want to think about the three main parts of this passage here this afternoon. We want to think about our calling, number one, and then our conduct, and then our confession. So think with me now about our calling as you see it here in verse 15.

In verse 15, everything points to the word ecclesia, which is translated church. He calls the church the household of God. Now that's a familial term.

It means that the church is like your household, like our homes, where we find all love and joy and family there. And God's church is like a household, and a family order is in place in God's household. But not only is it a familial designation, but he calls it also the church of the living God.

He calls the church the called out ones. So that what constitutes us as a church is the fact that God has called us out by the preaching of the gospel. So we're dealing with two things here.

We're dealing with a noun, a designation of the church. It's the called out ones, and we're dealing with a verb. How did we become to be the called out ones? But that God called us out.

The entity is the noun, and the evangelism is the verb. It was through evangelism that we were called. The gospel was preached.

We heard the gospel, and God effectually called us by that preaching to be part of this entity called the church. It was a deliverance and a rescue for the apostles preached in Acts chapter 2 and verse 40. You remember those powerful words, be saved from this crooked and perverse generation.

Salvation is not just a nice thing. Salvation is an absolute necessity. We are to be delivered from a perverse and wicked generation.

Has there ever been a generation that has been otherwise? So it's a deliverance and a rescue, but it's also a transfer or a translation. You remember how in Colossians 1 and verse 13, Paul spoke about how we were transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, taken from one realm, the realm of death, the realm of darkness, and just totally removed from that realm and placed sovereignly and powerfully into this realm of the kingdom of God. The world is our enemy.

The world sucks us in and takes us down even to final judgment and eternal condemnation, and it does this through deception. It deceives people. The world is in the grip of the demonic under the spell and the power of the God of this world, and it is the gospel of Jesus Christ that has taken us out from the bondage and the darkness and the inability, for we were not able to respond to the message.

We were not able to rescue ourselves. We needed a divine sovereign rescue, and we received that in the gospel. Jesus said in John 15 verse 19, I chose you out of the world, and it's for that reason that the world hates you.

So this is our calling, brethren. It's a calling out of the world into the kingdom of light, a transfer, a deliverance, and in addition to this, we're called to a whole new radical lifestyle. We're called to a lifestyle of faith, hope, and love.

Often the scripture puts those three things together. Now abide faith and hope and love, but the greatest of these is love, but we're also called to a life of prayer in which we trust in God, and we pour out our hearts to God, and we're not trusting in ourselves, and we're even trusting him to meet all of our needs, and so prayer and trust and worship. We worship our God, and worship is not only adoration and praise.

It's also service. So in our service, we discipline ourselves as true disciples to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. We've been called to this kind of lifestyle.

It's a radical new lifestyle, but a wonderfully blessed lifestyle, and it's all within, you see. It's within this entity called the church. That's what church means.

I believe that a church should be called a church and not a chapel or a fellowship or a worship center or anything else like that. I mean, there maybe is no great sin in those things, but it doesn't approximate the language of the New Testament, and it doesn't deal accurately with the language of the New Testament. It's a church.

We're also called to family life, to true motherhood, godly fatherhood, mentoring, meditation, Bible study, evangelism, missions, hospitality, fellowship. Sometimes it's overwhelming. As a pastor, I think of all of these things, and sometimes I'm just overwhelmed with the work.

Lord, you want me to communicate this lifestyle to your people? Lord, how shall I do it? All at once or just a piecemeal, just a piece at a time? But you see, it is in this composition as household of God. Notice back again in verse 15. In this composition as the household of God, the church of the living God, that the church is the pillar and the support of the truth.

So now all the lights focus on the word truth again. The pillar holds up the edifice. The support holds up the pillar.

But what the edifice is, is the truth. So it is God's revealing, saving truth that the church supports. Now reasoning backwards.

The church supports the truth. The believers are in the church. Their conduct constitutes the stability of the church.

So it's our conduct that supports the truth. Now the truth is the truth that we proclaim. The truth that we proclaim is the truth that the people who are lost need.

The truth that we proclaim, which they need, is the truth that only alone can save them. What will they do out there without the truth? And what will they do without a preacher? They must hear. And how will they hear without a preacher? And how will we have preachers unless they are sent? So here, brethren, is the calling aspect of this great passage, 1st Timothy 3, verse 14.

Now think secondly about the conduct and this phrase that one ought to know how to conduct himself in the household of God. Philip Towner, in his commentary on the pastoral epistle, says that the description of the church as God's household, quote, introduces a reflection on the theology of the church that calls forth a unique manner of behavior. End quote.

And let me repeat that. Quote, introduces a theology, a reflection on the theology of the church that calls forth a unique manner of behavior. In other words, when I think about what the church really is, and if I truly give myself to meditate on this, to think hard on this, to think spiritually about it, to ask the Holy Spirit to guide my thoughts and my heart in this matter, so that I won't think of church as just something I go to or as the world thinks of church, then something's going to happen.

As I meditate upon church, a unique behavior is going to begin to come from me. Now this word, Greek word anastrophe, which is translated here behavior, is found in four or five other contexts. So let me speak for a moment here about conduct and behavior.

First of all, our past behavior, the behavior of our former life outside of Christ, before we came to Christ. Paul spoke about this in Galatians 1. Remember how he spoke, he said, you heard of my conduct when I was still in Judaism. Wretched, blasphemous conduct.

Paul called himself the chief of sinners because of his conduct. You know my manner of life. And Paul set himself forth as a proof of the resurrection, as a proof of the Christian gospel's power.

You know my former manner of life. You're familiar with Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 22, where Paul again speaks about the believers and their former way of life, their pre-Christian way of life. First Peter 2 and verse 12, the way of life handed down by your fathers, the life that we renounced, the life that we hated, the life that we have given up to receive this new life in Jesus Christ.

That was what our conduct was all about. But now in four places in the New Testament, we find the reference to our conduct. The first thing I want you to notice is in first Peter chapter 1 verse 15.

And if you would please turn there. First Peter 1 and verse 15. But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your conduct or behavior.

Same Greek word. Now here you notice that a holy conduct is rooted in or related to the being and nature of God. What would you call that? Well, you would say that's the highest motive for holiness and for the regulation of my conduct.

And you would be right. That's the highest motive. The being and nature of God.

It's a simple equation. God is holy, you must be holy. Without any reference to the church.

God is holy, you and I must be holy in all our conduct and behavior. Now if you turn over to Philippians chapter 1 and verse 27, you'll notice another reason is given for holiness. Philippians 1 verse 27, Paul said only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel in no way alarmed by your opponents.

Now notice here a different reason is given for the regulation of our conduct. And here it is the gospel itself. Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel.

The gospel that is preached. The precious gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord. The gospel that saved us.

The gospel that the world needs. The gospel that alone can save. There is a conduct required for believing and preaching that gospel.

Because our conduct either commends the gospel or it condemns the gospel. It either strengthens the gospel or it either, let me put it this way, I guess I'll stick with my word commend. It either commends the gospel or it undermines the gospel.

That's what I'm trying to say. It either commends the gospel or it undermines the gospel. Now notice this is another reason why our conduct must be unique and special.

Now if you turn to 2nd Timothy chapter 3 and verse 10 there's a third reason given for the regulation of our conduct. Same word is used 2nd Timothy 3 and verse 10. Now here Paul says you followed my teaching conduct.

There's the word purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra. What persecutions I endured and out of them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

But the point here is that holy conduct is connected to the imitation of worthy men. It's mind-boggling isn't it? First their conduct is connected to the holiness of God but then it's also connected without any reservation, without any hesitation, it's also connected to the life and the godliness of worthy men, gospel men. Men like Paul who are out there preaching the gospel.

Men who are called by God and so God is not ashamed to tell us to look to good men. And it doesn't undermine the sovereignty of God and his exclusive working. We say often well God can God can do his work without us and there's a sense in which that's true.

But there's another sense in which it's not true. There's a sense in which it's not true. You can't say well God will accomplish it through someone else.

He could do that and we say well he doesn't need men he could do it with angels. But the truth of the matter is he's not using angels and the truth is that he has called us to do it. So that when we do it we also set ourselves before others to imitate our conduct.

You don't need to turn to it but the same is true in Hebrews 13 and verse 7. Remember those who led you who spoke the Word of God to you and considering the result of their conduct imitate their faith. And I've been in the ministry 25 years and I have met many people who just some of them will just say to me I don't follow any man and they mean me too. Well they say it in a nice way and they're still there.

But notice the Spirit says remember those who led you who spoke the Word of God to you consider the result of their conduct imitate their faith. So even if you're a gospel preacher even if you're a street preacher this also in a sense applies to you. You cannot be a street preacher and say it doesn't matter how I live because I'm out in the street and the people that I speak to don't see me.

They only see me once and they don't see me again. You know I'm like the meteor that comes on their street and then I'm gone. My friend nothing could be further from the truth.

Holy conduct is once again related to the imitation of holy men with specific emphasis on their conduct which is born of faith. And then for interest in the interest of time 1st Peter 1 17 yet a fourth reason for the regulation of our conduct. If you address as father the one who impartially judges according to each man's work conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay here upon the earth.

It's like staying in a hotel. You know we're staying in the hotel of this world and someday we're going to check out and that's it. And judgment is going to come.

So holy conduct here is related to the judgment to come just as it is in 2nd Peter 3 and verse 11. Since all these things are going to be destroyed in this way what sort of people ought we to be in holy conduct and godliness. Same word used in 1st Timothy 3 verse 15.

So you have five there are five issues or five areas in which our conduct is connected. The being of God, the gospel itself, gospel men, worthy men and that would include women also and the judgment to come. But here it's the church.

Here you notice in 1st Timothy 3 15 that our conduct and lifestyle is connected to the the nature of the church and what the church is and what it means to live in the church. I love the way Paul framed this here because you notice how he is very careful to call it both the church and the household of God. By calling it the church he's rerouting it in the gospel message.

The gospel is a calling out of sinners out of the world harvest and a planting of those sinners out of the world harvest into this entity called the church. But it's not just the church, the gathering of the called out ones. It's something much sweeter than that.

It's something much more special than that. It's a special household and family and you know how it is if you have a family or when you were born into your family you know how your conduct, if it wasn't right, if it wasn't good, if it wasn't pleasing, if it wasn't sweet, if it wasn't obedient, that you were severely disciplined and sometimes disliked by some of your own family members. I wish he wasn't like that.

I wish he wasn't like that. I wish my sister wouldn't be like that. What a wretched existence we have because of this one.

We know that that destroys family life and that's the kind of thing that Paul's talking about here. If you think of who were the worst offenders as far as conduct in the church, right, you would say the Corinthians. They were the worst offenders.

Remember I just a few examples. You remember 1st Corinthians 10 verse 32. Do all things to the glory of God.

Give no offense, he said, to the Jews, to the Greeks, or to the church of God. No offense to the church of God. Their conduct at the Lord's Supper.

1st Corinthians 10 verse 32. When you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in your eating, each one takes his own supper first.

One is hungry and another is drunk. And then he speaks with total incredulity. He says, what? What? Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? You see, to Paul, that kind of behavior was not fitting for the church of God.

1st Corinthians 14 verse 40, he says, all things must be done euskamos. Beautiful Greek word means, simply means beautiful form. A beautiful form.

Everything that you do has to have a beautiful form, a beautiful shape to it. You say, it doesn't matter how you do it, as long as you do it. It does matter how you do it.

Beautiful form. And then another word, Greek word taxis, which means good discipline. In the Colossian Church, Paul rejoiced to see their taxis, their good discipline and the stability of their faith in Christ.

That's Christian conduct in the church. So we've seen our calling. Secondly, our conduct.

And now thirdly, our confession. Our confession. Notice verse 16.

Here you have an early Christian hymn, an early Christian confession of faith, what the Christians believed, what they loved, what they lived for. It's very brief. It's short.

It's summary form, not like our hymns. We have so many hymns for which we're thankful. And they're full of devotion.

And God inspired so many hymn writers over the centuries to give us such encouraging examples of devotion and love. But this one is very simple. And it helps you to see the basic things that the Christians

rejoiced in, the things that they lived for.

A lot of debate as to how to divide up the six lines, some discussion as to the order of the six lines, that maybe, well, they're not exactly in the right order and so on. William Hendrickson views it in the form of a chiasm, you know, X's like this, in which you have two parts or two threads. The first thread is that Christ was manifested in the flesh.

He was proclaimed among the nations and he was believed on in the world. And then you have the other thread. He was vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, and taken up in glory.

So you have a kind of an earthly thread and a heavenly thread. And that could very well be. Or you could view it as three couplets, that the hymn is speaking, first of all, of the revelation of Christ, then the proclamation of Christ, and then the reception of Christ.

But this was their confession of faith. However you organize it, it shows you that the Christians were filled with Christ, as we heard earlier. And they were thrilled at his proclamation.

And they were humbled, no doubt, at the mystery of his reception and the tremendous spread of the gospel in that first century. Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus were later on in life, so a lot has happened. That's the Colossians 1 and verse 23 passage again, where in past tense, Paul says that the gospel was preached to all creation under heaven.

Now the heathen, they had their confessions. Remember what theirs was. Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.

But what a confession that was. That was what we would call an empty, meaningless, vain confession of faith. Artemis of the Ephesians.

First of all, there was no history in this supposedly divine goddess. No history, therefore nothing real. Just empty words.

There was no theology in the theology of the goddess Artemis of the Ephesians, who had a prominent place in the temple of Diana in the great city of Ephesus. No history, no reality, no theology, no power. But think of the Christian confession in light of a heathen confession like that.

The Christian confession is a verity. It's a verity. It's a truth.

Because there is saving history in it, and there is saving reality. We point to the intrusion or the coming of God into human history as a great fact of our faith. And that saving history becomes saving reality for us.

But there is also in that saving theology. Everything that Christ is, and everything that Christ did, contributes to this great salvation theology that we have of Christ. And that saving theology becomes proclamation, as our brother was saying earlier today.

Preach that Jesus is the Lamb of God. Preach some of these passages. Then some of the deepest passages of the New Testament, Colossians 1, Hebrews 1, which speak about the deity of Christ.

Preach those passages on the street as well. The confession is a verity. And that's what they did.

And that's what we must do. Now, hastening on here, hopefully we've had just a basic exegesis of this text now in the time that we've had. A Christian's calling, his conduct in the household of God, and our confession.

Now we want to relate this passage to the subject that is actually before us in this hour, the one that I would like to, that I'm seeking to address. And that is the strengthening of the ties between the church and evangelism, or between pastors and evangelists, however you want to look at that. And the gap, or the ties, must be bridged from both sides.

Now most of you men here, I believe, are street preachers, are evangelists. That's what this conference is all about. Some of you may be pastors.

Some of you may have been pastors. I consider myself a pastor and kind of a restored street preacher. I don't have the time to tell you that story, but I think when we meet with some of the men at the Jeremiah Crabb Ministries, they're going to hear about that little story of my life.

A restored street preacher. What I'd like to talk about now in the closing moments of this message are the roaming evangelists. And I don't mean that in a bad way at all.

Roaming evangelists and reluctant churches. Ooh, he said. Nice.

Roaming evangelists and reluctant churches. Now Michael Green is the one who actually used this phrase, roaming evangelists. And also J.H. Bavinck in his classic book, *An Introduction to the Science of Christian Missions*, which I'll quote, hopefully, in a couple minutes.

He calls them unofficial preachers. It's the idea that, well, I'm a Christian. I love Jesus.

I love the gospel. I have a heart for sinners. I want to see the lost converted.

So I'm just going to go and preach the gospel. Now that is a noble work. And that is a noble desire, if you have that desire.

I'm not here this afternoon to tell you that there's something wrong with that. Just go and preach the gospel. It's a noble desire to go forth and preach the gospel.

That's what the early Christians did. You may be thinking of Acts chapter 8 and verse 4, that those who had been scattered went about preaching the word. You could say, well, I have a mandate from Jesus.

He went about in all the land and he preached the gospel. And you would be right. Now this phenomenon of the roaming evangelist was noted by Eusebius, the 4th century historian, who speaks about the roaming evangelist on page 125, if you have the nice Paul Meyer edition with the glossy pages and all.

Here is a quote from Eusebius. Quote, many others beside them were famed members of the first rank of apostolic succession, eager disciples of great men, who built everywhere on the foundations of churches laid by the apostles, sowing the saving seed through the whole known world. Many of them, smitten by the divine word, first fulfilled the Savior's command by distributing their property to the needy.

Then, leaving their homes, they took up the work of evangelists, eager to preach the message of faith to those who have never heard it. As soon as they had laid the foundations of the faith in some foreign place, they appointed others as pastors to tend those newly brought in, and then set off again to other lands and

peoples. End quote.

This is an important piece of Christian history, as you're probably aware, that Eusebius is one of our major sources for the apostolic period. Now Michael Green, looking at what Eusebius said about the roaming preachers in his book on evangelism in the early church, gives us a sense or an opinion, I guess you might say, or an interpretation of what Eusebius was getting at, what he was trying to say. And Michael Green says Eusebius, in the beginning of the 4th century, gives us broad generalizations about the work of roaming evangelists, though it is obvious he gathered every scrap of information that he could.

So the roving missionaries went out. They were sent out by the churches and supported by the gifts of the faithful, Michael Green says. And then he goes on to say, Paul is aware that this wider category of apostles, apostles of the churches as he called them, and aware too of the dangers they represent.

Quite unsupervised in their teaching, they could go seriously astray, doctrinally or ethically, and could involve whole churches in their weaknesses. These are the men he has in mind when in 2nd Corinthians he arraigned them as Satan's messengers. J. H. Bovink also says this, we gain the impression, quote, that an intense role was played in the missionary activity of the early church by many men and women who held no other office than that of a believer.

To the extent that these lay preachers were on their own, they were in danger of becoming involved in all sorts of confusion. And as a matter of fact, this is just what happened. It is, however, the great strength of Paul that he did not suppress this spontaneous spreading of the gospel, but he utilized it and he organized it instead.

And that's an interesting statement by Bovink. We don't have the time to talk too much about it. But here's what I would like to say in the few minutes that I have left.

Here's the pattern, I believe, for the evangelist. One, he must be called. And if you're taking notes, you don't have time to look at these verses, but you would look at Acts chapter 9 and verse 15.

Go, you are a chosen instrument of mine. He must be called. Secondly, the evangelist must be sent.

Acts 13.2, Paul was sent by the church in Antioch. Third, the evangelist must return and report. And he returns and he reports to the church.

Acts 14.26. Fourth, he must be nurtured and equipped. 2nd Timothy 2.2, 2nd Timothy 4.5. He must be nurtured and equipped. And finally, he must be held accountable.

2nd Timothy 2 and verse 5. Errol Hulse says, gives us a warning. He says, the evangelists are not subject to the authority of the churches. Their abilities, energies, and resources are not channeled into churches, but into separate organizations.

Their lives, their thoughts, and their practice are not molded by the realities of church life. They are responsible for their doctrine, their practice, and their methods to no one but themselves. They do not have to face basic issues at the local church level.

They are independent of the churches and can act as they please. Brethren, it should not be this way. And just a few thoughts about reluctant churches.

Churches must also do their part to work with the evangelists, to work so that we can work together, as we're seeking to do even now. Get behind the evangelists and work together, and so that we can fulfill the design of God in this work. And I wanted to give just a personal word or a personal testimony about my own relationship to men like Pat, well to Pat and to Jeff over the last year.

God heard my prayers. I was praying that God would do something great and do something new for me a year and a half ago. And then I met Pat Nicarado a year ago.

And I'm so thankful to God for him and for what God has done through him. And then of course Jeff rose and here we are. And one of the things that we're trying to do together is we're trying to strengthen the ties between the church and evangelists.

And as Jeff said today, it's certainly true. There are concerns about the churches. And I have concern about our church, and I have concern about the churches already.

I said amen to some of the things that he said this morning. The way that sometimes the evangelists are received in the churches. But I want to help.

As a pastor, I want to help. The pattern for churches is as according to Ernest Riesinger said, simple. Go, preach and teach the unconverted.

It's that simple. But we must work together. Here's my plea.

It's a two-fold plea. Let's say from coming from our church, Covenant Baptist. Our church must strive together for the faith of the gospel.

I would ask the evangelist to help us. That would be my request. Help us.

We need you. Challenge us. Lead us.

Show us the way. Lead us out into the world. Convict us.

But our evangelists must root themselves in the church and in the gospel. And they should do the same thing and say to the church, help us as we go out. We need you.

It's a simple mutual reciprocal kind of relationship. We need you. You need the church.

Street preaching, remember, is Christian ministry. Don't divorce it from Christian ministry. Don't divorce it from missionary activity.

There's a fine line between all of these things. It's Christian ministry. It's not just street preaching.

It's true Christian ministry. And my time is up. What does that mean? Oh, two minutes.

I thought this means two minutes. Street preaching is Christian ministry. As our brother said this morning, 2 Timothy 4 or 5, fulfill your ministry.

That even applies to men in the homes. Fulfill whatever ministry God has given to you. It applies to men.

It applies to women. It applies to street preachers. It applies to pastors.

It applies to missionaries. It applies to us all. Christian ministry is really of a piece.

It has all these different facets to it. So we need, from church perspective, we need the evangelists. We need Jeremiah Cry Ministries.

And the evangelists need to be rooted in their churches. And as he said, it may take, one of the brothers here said, it may not be easy at first. I guess we're blessed because it's been easy for us.

The convictions that these men have shown to me as evangelists, as a pastor, have just endeared my heart to them. And the respect shown has broken down all the walls of suspicion that were talked about earlier this morning. And that's the way it needs to be.

We just need to pray that that will happen so that we can move forward, so that we can strengthen these ties. And I'm certainly looking forward to the future. I don't know what the future holds for any of us, really.

We're sure we've lots of plans, but only God knows the future. But if we are rooted in Scripture, and I encourage you to be rooted in this text and the connection of verse 15 to 16, I believe God will bless us. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, Father, for giving us this great opportunity to gather at this conference. Thank you, Lord, for each of the passages of Scripture that have already been exegeted and will be in the day to come and tomorrow. Lord, please use us mightily.

Help us to do things biblically. Help us, Lord, to overcome every obstacle with prayer and love. And help us, Lord, for the sake of those who are lost and dying and needing, in need of the gospel.

We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/22/SID22600.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-reuther/the-church-and-the-evangelist-relationship/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**