

God's Objective Evangelism

by Welcome Detweiler

God's objective in evangelism is to glorify Himself and bring sinners to salvation, making them worshipers instead of those who despise Him.

Duration: 42:07

Scripture: Mark 16:15, Mark 16:17-20, Revelation 4:10

Topics: "Evangelism Methods", "Christian Motivation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the subject of evangelism and God's objective in it. He starts by reading Revelation 4:10, where the elders worship God and acknowledge His worthiness. The speaker emphasizes the importance of having the right motives and love for souls in evangelism, rather than just going through the motions mechanically. He also addresses the overwhelming size of the task of evangelism and encourages not giving up, despite the magnitude of the job.

Transcript

Let me look to the Lord in prayer, please. Our gracious Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of coming to Thee once more, for Thy goodness, Thy kindness in bringing us together, and for the objective that is in our minds as we have come together to consider Thy precious Word and our responsibilities to Thee. Our desire is now that Thou wilt speak to us from Thy Word, so that we may return from this conference and be able to recognize something that will stand us in good both for time and for eternity.

We depend upon Thee, and we look to Thee for Thy blessing on this hour. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen. I deeply appreciate the privilege of being with you these few days.

It's a very high honor when a dairy farmer is invited to speak to such regal guests. I shall never forget this opportunity. In one respect, it's not a new one, because I am accustomed to speaking to a very critical audience, so that when all of you intellectualists sit before me, I feel very much at home.

I appreciate the fact that some latitude has been given as to the subject. The subject that I am supposed to introduce is God's objective in evangelism, but in some correspondence that I had, I was asked to include a few other subjects in one of the messages, and so our talk this morning will be on a number of subjects that will be somewhat related to the general theme of evangelism. I appreciate the suggestion the jury made that this will be an unstarched meeting, and I will feel quite comfortable about that.

When I am finished, it will be turned over to you, and I think perhaps you can very profitably turn it into a testimony meeting as well to see just what has been of help and what misunderstandings and what difficulties you have encountered because of being at the conference. Shall we turn, first of all, to the Revelation 4? Keep in mind the subject, God's objective in evangelism. The Revelation 4, verse 10.

The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne and worshiped him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. And for thy pleasure they are and were created. Hebrews chapter 2, verse 10.

For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through self-suffering, in bringing many sons to glory. Another familiar portion, Ephesians 2, and verse 7. Just preceding those two verses that you know so well, Ephesians 2, 8 and 9, verse 7. That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. There are a number of other portions to which we could turn.

In the 15th chapter of Luke's Gospel, you have the fact that there is joy in the presence of the angels in glory over one sinner that repented. In the closing verse of the epistle to James, there's a suggestion that if a soul is saved or saved from death, it also covers a multitude of sins. And thus there are a number of scattered portions of the scripture that relate to this overall subject, the God's objective in evangelism.

When the question is raised, what is the highest goal of man, the answer is given, to glorify God, to worship him. Can you think of anything higher than that? Heaven will be filled with worshipers. The new heaven and the new earth? Apparently, what little knowledge we have, one thing will certainly be true, all will be worshipping him.

Then when we ask the question, from whence come worshipers? The raw material from which worshipers are made, we come back to our subject, do we not? Sinners of Adam's race, groping around in darkness, and we have the privilege of not only bringing the message of the gospel, but the ultimate is they will be worshipers instead of those who despise God. From the negative point of view, we have this suggestion that it is not God's will. God receives no glory, no pleasure in those that perish.

Heaven is large enough, there was enough bloodshed on Calvary's cross, so that hell might forever be empty. And if sinners who have had the privilege of accepting the Savior, if everyone had availed themselves of that opportunity, the record could stand that all who were ever born trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, and are now in the choir singing his praises for all eternity. The first step then in producing this ultimate is that of evangelism.

We bring the message of the gospel. I would like to suggest that all of the world's ills could be solved very simply by this one word that we've been using, evangelism. Do we have difficulty with someone just below Florida, Cuba? What would solve the whole problem? Let it somehow come to pass that every Cuban, including Fidel, trusts the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, and the problem has melted.

Do we consider the Communists worldwide a tremendous foe, an international problem? There's no problem that evangelism wouldn't solve. Let every Communist be converted to Jesus Christ, and you have no more problems. In the letters that I received from the program committee, it was suggested that sometime during the program, I would speak on the race problem that has arisen in our country, and I can

answer this problem in a rather facetious way by saying, I've got the solution to it, and I feel sometimes like cranking up my Chrysler going to Washington and telling them the simple way to do it.

Let's convert every white man in the country, and then convert every colored man in the country, and I believe we'll have a happy relationship. This is the one, the main thing. And I think in relation to that, I should say to Christians, whatever interest you have in this problem, there is no tool that you can use that will be more effective than to get the gospel to those who are of other races or those who hate races.

Now, how are we going to accomplish that? We're going to live with it, and I don't think it's beyond the realm of possibility. In fact, the suggestion was made just a few days ago on a news program that it is possible that in days to come, the Communists will not be the number one problem. But the race problem could be a problem in our country.

It could be an international problem. The possibility of an international race conflict is not too hard to conceive. What can Christians do? What can local testimonies do in regards to this problem? This opens up a wide field, and it would be very unusual if we could all think alike on this subject.

I don't think I'm an authority on this subject, but I do feel that maybe I have an advantage being raised above the Mason-Dixon line and living there for a number of years, and then moving below the Mason-Dixon line and living there for almost the equal number of years, I have had the opportunity of observing some of the various ideas between the races. I do not have this advantage that some perhaps further south do, because in our own state, North Carolina, especially in the Piedmont section, I have found a very wonderful relationship between the races. You might not call it ideal, but I have found in the years that I've been there that the colored man is a happy man.

He is contented with what he has. The white man tries to show his appreciation for this and gives him a school that is equal to the white school every possible opportunity. And we have had some mild eruptions, but they have all been from outside agitators.

This does not help the cause. This enrages the southern white man when he realizes that for years we have lived with our neighbors and friends, our colored people. We have worked with them, and the moment they have raised something that was of importance, we saw their point of view, we met those conditions, and we have had a lovely relationship.

Now that agitators from other areas should come in and find a few uncultured sympathizers who will form the difficulty, this is not helping the problem. In a number of churches in Durham, there have been demonstrations of colored people coming in, mostly from the university, students who arrive at the door, maybe a group of 25 or more, to test this segregation problem. In some cases, they have ignored them, just let them come in and pay no attention to them.

In other places, they have driven them away, and I think from their point of view, they would prefer to get some publicity out of it. They are not quite satisfied to just let them ignore them. In one of the churches, about a dozen came in one Sunday and were by the ushers taken to a row that was empty.

The next Sunday they came back and they were ushered again to a certain few that was empty. But while the offering was taken, those colored people got up and scattered all over the church, one here, one there, one there, one there, one there, one there. And immediately, the motive of their coming was detected.

And that's where the trouble began. And the church board said, this is what we wanted to know. Have they come here to hear the gospel, to worship God? If so, we have allowed them to come in.

But if they have come in with other motives to cause trouble, then we are going to ask them to remain outside. We are looking for them at any time they might come. And if they do, for the present, our solution has been that the ushers at the door will meet with them outside and ask if they could arrange a meeting with us so that we might give to them our point of view and we would like to have their point of view.

We would like to have a meeting with them to discuss this problem and to set up some plans whereby we might be able to receive them. Thus far, they haven't arrived. But for the present, that is our plan.

Now, I don't think you can standardize on this problem at all because there are areas where you would probably have no difficulty at all. Our difficulty is not with the Christians. I do believe that if a colored man came to our assembly and said, I don't know of any assembly that I can go to to break bread.

I'm a Christian. I believe they would receive him and heartily have him in the service. But our problem is in the other services that are public services where unsaved people come.

And we have unsaved people who are still southern enough to say, the moment you do it, don't count on me. I'll never darken your doorstep. Now, the question is, shall we ignore those people and say, well, if that's the way you feel about it, you can go wherever you want to.

We have no more responsibility to you. Very quickly, you could come to that conclusion. But it amounts to this, that over a period of time, you are either going to preach to a colored audience or you are going to preach to a white audience.

And it's not likely that over a period of time, you will be able to do both of them in North Carolina. I'm looking forward to the day when this line of segregation, which is a universal one, but the difference is in certain areas the line is drawn over here and in the southern states it's drawn over here and it is merging and there are different points where that line is drawn. And I am happy over the fact that the line is moving.

And I would be quite happy myself if it did not hinder the work of the Lord to have an audience of 50% colored and 50% white. If it can be done without harming the effect of the testimony and we can still carry on, that would be impossible right now. Now, I don't know if anything more needs to be said regarding that subject, but I do believe that there are areas where at least the white southerner has taught his children to hate the colored man, to think of him as not being a human, perhaps half animal.

And this thinking is wrong, this teaching is wrong. On the other hand, I think the man who is kidding himself and says, I believe in 100% integration, I'd like to test that man. Because wherever he is living, if he can go to bed the day after a colored family moves into his lovely residential section and say, I didn't lose a wink of sleep.

I hope all the white ones move out. I'd love to be right in the middle of colored people. I'd prefer it.

When a man can tell me that, I say, now I have met a man who believes 100% in integration. Now, this is not our subject, but I was asked to bring it up and I simply want to say from the Christian's point of view, whatever opportunity we have and whatever bounds we can use in getting the gospel to these people is very important. I happen to know two colored evangelists.

One, an exceptional man, a graduate of Oxford University, a man who understands the colored situation and has done a wonderful work. He is preaching among his own people exclusively and he is telling his own people, forget about this segregation problem. You need something worse than that.

You need Christ. Push this aside and after you have Christ, if you still think you're interested in it, then take care of it. He's preaching the gospel.

The Southern Assemblies have observed that man and they've come to him voluntarily and said, you probably need some equipment because the wage scale of your people is below the average. We want to help you. And there stands in South Carolina a chapel that was built, I would say 80% money received from white assemblies who appreciate the fact that here is an opportunity and here is a man who understands the situation and is helping.

I know another colored evangelist who is doing the very opposite. He is trying to force the integration movement. He is pushing it so much so that the gospelists had to take a secondary place and he is doing tremendous harm and he is going around among white assemblies and scolding them for sending money to Africa and not supporting him in his trying to reach his own people.

After you hear him preach and after you see some of his literature, you will find that underneath he is tremendously interested in this integration movement. So much for that. Now let's turn over to Mark's gospel where I want to touch on this subject of evangelism and especially some of the hindering forces or barriers of evangelism.

Mark's gospel, chapter 16 and reading from verse 14. Mark 16, 14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be damned and these signs shall follow them that believe In my name shall they cast out devils they shall speak with new tongues they shall take up serpents and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them he was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God and they went forth and preached everywhere the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following Amen. I think reference has been made in our conference to the commission in Mark's gospel and other areas I do not remember maybe it was when I was asleep but the reference has been made to this gospel and the commission that is given here but I do want to draw attention to the verse that precedes the commission.

Verse 15 is the commission going into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature but verse 14 remember it's after the resurrection and the resurrection was a shock to the Christians he clearly told them before he went to the cross that he was going to rise from the dead how could they have missed it but it went right over their heads they didn't hear it and when he rose from the dead their hearts were filled with unbelief verse 11 of our chapter and they when they had heard that he was alive and had been seen of her believed not verse 13 and they went and told it unto the residue neither believed they then don't tell me that he rose from the dead I don't believe it I don't want to be annoyed at this time it's bad enough that he died but I don't believe he rose from the dead now

the Lord Jesus appears to them and he upbraids them for two things their unbelief and hardness of heart before we can go out with the message of the gospel and I think this verse is very fitting just ahead of the commission we've got to take care of this problem of unbelief it was the major problem in the nation of Israel what was the big thing that kept them from blessing unbelief there are a number of things that could be called the hindering forces of evangelism number one the devil himself he's out to protect his own property and he is doing everything possible he is doing it in a very subtle form we are told to be on guard because of the wiles of the devil I even think that the devil is interested that in our working for the Lord we shall be extremely scriptural ultra scriptural if

we can gain an advantage through it then the sinful nature of man here is a hindering force when you think of man enjoying his sins and there are some who are just honest enough to say I would like to be saved but I couldn't give up my sins when we think of these hindering forces and then associated with the one I mentioned before is tradition an unwillingness to change our methods because we must do the way we used to do because it worked back there and it's got to work now and even if it doesn't work we're still going to stick to it and I think these are some of the hindering forces of evangelism but more I think it's possible for us as we face this task there's a big world ahead of us the fields are white all ready to harvest and the Savior has sent us forth go out and preach I think

sometimes we could be overcome by the size of the task look at yourself in the light of the task just a little two by four and a great big world even if all the men of this conference got on fire and went out and preached the gospel even if every one of them could duplicate Billy Graham we'd never get the job done the size of the task is entirely too large and it is possible for us to be stopped right here and say we are overwhelmed let's give up you can't even make a dent in the big thing going the size of the task unbelief notices it faith in the message and the one who has sent us forth looks over the size of the task and says whatever I can do I want to do the enormity of the task shall not hinder me in at least making an attempt when the five thousand were fed Andrew perhaps timidly

suggests there's a lad here with five loaves and two fishes but he adds what are they among so many he was overcome by the task was he not but the demonstration was before him what are they among so many if they are in the hands of the Savior they are sufficient and let us learn the lesson from this question that Andrew raises what are they among so many if Christ is in it that's all we can do the second cause perhaps for a barrier or unbelief to be in our hearts is the hopelessness of the task I mentioned already the sinful nature of man the hostile forces that are in the world today when Paul is speaking in some of his writings the wise and the unwise unbelief would say you can't reach the wise they're above the gospel you can't reach the unwise because they're below the gospel they'll

never understand it they're too thick so what have you got left you can't the Greeks and the barbarians the Greeks are interested in philosophy they want somebody to tickle their ears they won't come down this doesn't mean anything to them the barbarians they're headhunters they're cannibals you can't bring it to them so you're out again I suppose that one of the shocking things that come to us occasionally is that we sometimes give up and meet a man that we write off the list and say he is impossible when the gospel center was built in Durham in 1945 there was a young plumber working and one day when he was carrying his tools out he said preacher I want to ask you a question something didn't bother me about divorce what does the bible have to say about divorce I tried to give him an

answer as best I could to an unsaved man but I could tell he was a rough man a hardened sinner you know after I answered his question I didn't bother to give him the gospel because just to look at him he

was a hopeless case there's no use this man is just so far down that you don't bother with those kinds every time I see him he rebukes me because he's been in the assembly for some ten years now lovely brother in the lord let's go back to apostolic days who was public enemy number one to the christians Saul of Tarsus did they pray for Saul of Tarsus I wouldn't even be surprised if they did lord tone him down take some of the spark out of him and lord save him while they were saying it couldn't happen Saul of Tarsus no he's that far gone he's stubborn he's bent he's against us write him

off you know the answer what an embarrassment perhaps to those apostolic christians who sort of prayed for Saul you know but didn't really believe it I'm afraid that we are guilty of this the hopelessness of individuals we give up unbelief is behind the whole thing then there is always the possibility of the devil using one more thing and that is that the task is being done for instance in the United States why should we go out and try to get our neighbors in to hear the gospel is it necessary could you find a man in Illinois in Wisconsin who hasn't heard Billy Graham at least once could you find one who hasn't heard Charles Fuller at least once that hasn't heard Dr.

DeHaan DeLaurette the back to the bible broadcast that haven't heard these fellows I guess you would say gee they'd be awful scarce and if they've heard them once the responsibility has been discharged and if they go to a lost eternity they have no excuse unbelief looks for some bush to hide behind to excuse ourselves and to say the job is being done they are without excuse belief says no with all of these things that have been done and they contribute to the whole it is still our responsibility to go out and reach them one by one I was glad to hear Mr.

Little tell us of the good of that little testimony and that for almost a year he was looking for someone to help him if we could look at a man that's walking on the street and say he's a hardened sinner unbelief says so belief says I believe he's just where Robert Little was a year ago he's walking around just wishing someone would come to him and tell him how to be saved he had a hungry soul most of the sinners in the world today have a veneer when you first meet them they've got it up once you can get behind that you will find that they are standard hungry souls and after you can get through that and find out what their need is the fields are white the individual hearts are white and ready for harvest one more thing that could contribute to unbelief and hardness of heart and that is perhaps we have lost confidence in our dynamite our gospel I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ for it is the power the dynamite of God and the salvation to everyone that believe it yes it was true many years ago when Paul wrote that but I wonder if he'd still say that if he lived in 1964 unbelief says there's a question of whether Paul would say it is this gospel fitted for the age in which we are living and if we believe what God has said it will always be fitting to meet the need of the human heart isn't it wonderful that we have the opportunity the field is before us the need is great and we have the exact message that the world needs you couldn't improve on it if you tried and our responsibility is simply to be the middle hand to get this message that will change lives for time and for eternity and that will enter sinners into the choir this is our great high and holy privilege if we raise the question after the commission is given did they do it or did they just hear him say it the answer is found in our chapter the last verse and they went forth and preached everywhere what a commendation that's a big order they went forth and preached everywhere the Lord working with them isn't that wonderful Dr.

Johnson in referring to John 21 gave us the contrast of right side fishing and left side fishing and I think this would confirm just what he meant by right side fishing the Lord working with them the condescending of the Lord to stoop down and to work with poor failures everything that we do for the Lord would come under the category of doing it in a stupid or a clumsy way did you ever try to teach an apprentice and he's

so awkward that you say step aside I can do it quicker myself than to show you how and if the Lord wasn't very patient he could say that the Lord working with them this is what we want more than anything else now it is possible to leave a conference like this and oh you get sort of a spiritual shot in the arm and you go home and you say the world will never be the same

from now on remember that the purpose of a conference like this is not to legislate or to set any rules or regulations simply for discussion and for mutual help and there is the possibility of us going home after a conference and being fired up on evangelism and almost start a revolution in the assembly at home let's try and prevent that let's go home and say I want to carry with me whatever I received from God that has been a blessing to me that I want to be an influence rather than a whole lot of talking I want people to see this we can provoke one another to good works you go home and work and someone by you will say you know I ought to get busy too and if we can do this we can accomplish a great deal the assemblies from which we come are in from various backgrounds and in various

conditions and we have to adjust to these I want you to do everything you possibly can in the way of evangelism in cooperation with your assembly if you can't accomplish as much as you feel the Lord could give you to do in cooperation with the assembly I don't think there's anything wrong to reach out beyond that I don't like the idea of evangelism being carried on entirely independent of a home base I think you need to be anchored somewhere in a company of Christians and I think out from that there can be the personal exercise of various methods and means that can be used but I believe it is necessary for us to at least not be independent evangelists or have an independent little work of my own and I have no harmony with the assembly in general regardless of how difficult the conditions

might be in the assembly there are still some good things there and I think when they get to even the worse condition you can still worship with those who are on the way to heaven if your views are different if your means and methods are different let's have some common ground on which Christians can meet and then from there on let's find these other avenues of working for the Lord in the suggestion that was made regarding fishing and how it is an illustration of our fishing for men the two speakers that were here admitted that they were not fishermen this makes me very happy because I can say I am not a fisherman the only way I would ever go out fishing and I've been out a few times if you can find a man who will pay you by the hour that's the only way I'll go out and the reason for it

is I don't have what you have to have to go fishing the best way to identify it is to call it the fishing fever I know people who have it at steak dinners if you want to go with me I'm going out to the lake but you've got to come right away alright steak dinner goodbye I'll go fishing why? he's got the fishing fever in order to win men for Christ all of the means and methods we have just talked about are worthless unless we have the fever and I think you have the next question where do you get it? you don't get it in a drugstore you don't get it at your trove you get it at the feet of the Savior follow me and I will make you fishers of men and that is he brought the disciples to himself and they saw the need of the world through his eyes, through his compassionate heart and if we keep

close to the Savior and we ask that our evangelism will not be a mechanical thing but a delightful pleasure occupation this will necessitate the spiritual fishing fever and in all of our endeavors to carry out this ultimate we should ask God above all Lord give me a love for souls so that I shall be delighted in meeting every circumstance of every individual and be able to help that person and bring him to the Savior this is still the most important thing, a love for souls and a love for Christ and a heart that goes out for him, without it we're going to make an awful lot of blunders the man who attempts fishing without the fishing

fever doesn't accomplish a great deal so let's be before the Lord in regards to the overall subject of evangelism and ask him that our motives shall be right

and that our love for souls shall be so that the mechanical way of doing things will be entirely erased and we shall win souls because we love him now I did talk longer than I expected but who is the chairman for this last discussion program Bob are you the chairman there are some ten minutes left perhaps Mr.

Dentwiner if you would just close this portion in prayer and then we might entertain some questions or some discussion from the group would you please

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