

## The Evangelist

### Introduction

After Jesus became the corner stone for building His church the first foundation stone is laid by the evangelist. This is what Paul did in Corinth (I Cor. 3:10; II Pet. 1:16-21). He preached the kingdom of God (Luke 4:43; Acts 19:8). The preacher's conviction and relationship with the Holy Spirit will be next "of first importance." I Thess. 1:5; II Tim. 2:1-7. Some questions an evangelist or preacher should ask himself:

Do I plan to make preaching my profession or my Christian vocation (Eph. 4:1; I Tim. 4:15, 16)? All Christians should select their Christian vocation from the options offered us in Romans 12:4-8.

Do I plan to preach to get support? Paul complained, "Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit." II Cor. 2:17.

Am I interested in making disciples for myself or Jesus Christ (I Cor. 1:12, 13; 3:5)?

Do I plan to create a future nest for myself and my family or do I plan to move on to new evangelism fields (Rom. 15:19-22)? The church will always need teachers (Gal. 6:6). The church needs elders who preach and teach the gospel to the lost (I Tim. 5:17). An elder must be prepared to teach the church. In this lesson we are studying about an evangelist who identifies as a preacher of the gospel.

Will I attempt to prepare elders and deacons for the church I co-opted with Jesus Christ to build, or do I plan to keep control over the church (II Cor. 11:19, 20)?

Is my leadership mentality, the towel and wash basin or am I seeking "the chief seat" to attain power over people? Please review Part I, Lesson One. The preacher's motive for preaching will surely impact the success or failure of the building of the Lord's church.

In this final lesson we will study the churches where Paul and his team planted the word of God to build Christ's church. We will view these churches Paul wrote to before he accomplished his goal to preach the kingdom in Rome (Rom. 1:13; Acts 28:30, 31). By reviewing the letters he wrote to the churches, we can learn about the function of an evangelist.

An excerpt from a book entitled, "The kingdom of God," by this writer. See Part V, Lesson 13..

A study of the following scriptures and words will enlighten us on the subject of the preacher and evangelist. Because some supported men identify as a minister, we will also consider this word.

Preacher - KERUX - proclaimer (I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11; II Pet. 2:5).

Preacher - KERUS - To cry or proclaim (Rom. 10:14).

Preaching - KERUSSO - to cry, or proclaim (Matt. 3:1; 4:17, 23; II Cor. 1:19).

Preached - KATAGGELO - to tell thoroughly (Acts 4:2; I Cor. 9:14; Col. 1:28).

Evangelist - EUANGELISTES - one who announces good tidings (Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; II Tim. 4:5).

Minister - DIAKONES - laborer, ministrant, deacon (I Cor. 3:5; II Cor. 3:6; 6:4; 11:23).

Minister - HUPERETES - an under rower, assistant, helper (Luke 1:2; Acts 13:5; 26:16; I Cor. 4:1).

The meaning of the above words should tell us where those who do the great work of preaching belong. In order to do their work they must have much contact with the lost. We must **send** them to the lost or bring the lost to them.

**End of Excerpt.**

### Lesson

We will find classic examples of the role of an evangelist, or preacher, in all the letters Paul wrote to churches in the Acts narrative. However, his letter to the Thessalonians reveals the original engagement of an evangelist and the people he evangelized. Paul made two definitive statements in the introductory chapters of his first letter:

**"For we know, brothers loved of God, that He has chosen you." 1:4.**

**"You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure." 2:1.**

Following each declaration he delineated the evangelist's role and the church's response. This is how he sought to validate both postulations. Paul knew God had chosen the members of the church. How? One, his evangelistic team brought the gospel to them in words and with the power of Holy Spirit. The preachers were deeply convicted by the same gospel they preached; therefore, they walked their talk (Thess. 1:5). Two, the members had "welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit." I Thess. 1:6.

His argument for the claim the evangelists' visit to Thessalonica was "not a failure" gives us an emotional picture of a competent preacher in action. Please make your own list of a preacher's role in an evangelistic effort that did not fail. With pencil and paper in hand please read I Thessalonians 2:1-12. Note they preached in spite of strong opposition. They were transparent. This meant they had no impure motives, no tricks, no flattery, no greed and no praise from men.

They worked with their hands to supply their own needs. The church at Philippi had sent some supplies to Paul in Thessalonica (Phil. 4:16). Preachers and teachers have the privilege of being supported; however, support was never offered to a person as employment. Evangelism is not a profession (I Cor. 9:7-18). Preaching and teaching is a Christian's vocation, or calling, which they may choose to serve in the body of Christ.

We have no record of a preacher in the Bible being paid to preach. Evidently some did preach to get paid, and some may do it yet, but the Apostle Paul warned the church about these people (Rom. 16:17-20). Support came after the teaching and preaching was performed (I Tim. 5:17, 18).

The attribute of the preacher that will surely contribute to the success of a mission is their quality of love for the lost. This quality is parental love which is synonymous with love (agape). Paul served the new converts as a mother and a father (I Thess. 2:7, 11). However, even this quality of love will not produce a saving faith. If the word of God does not find its way into the hearts of the hearers all the love Jesus gave will not save them (Rom. 10:17).

In order to make sure one's evangelistic efforts do not fail, it will require a follow up period of teaching that which has been preached. The same kingdom of God messages preached to build the church will need to be taught over and over again (Acts 20:25). A teacher brings the teachings down where the members can apply them to their lives. Paul was appointed to the office of an apostle for the Gentiles. He functioned as a preacher and teacher (I Tim. 2:7).

In the sense a preacher begets sinners from the world with the gospel, he takes on a fatherly role while the converts are in the "baby stage." I Cor. 3:2; 4:15-17. Although applying love (agape) to evangelism may bring many heart aches, it is a part of the calling. Paul gave this quality to his evangelism work for Jesus. It was very stressful but it is a part of "preaching with success." Listen to the following excerpts from his letters to the churches Paul worked with Jesus to build by preaching and teaching the kingdom:

*We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. As a fair exchange – I speak as to my children – open wide yours hearts also.* II Cor. 6:11-13

*My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you, how I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you!* Gal. 4:19, 20

*But, brothers, when we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you. For what is our hope, our joy, or crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when He comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.* I Thess. 2:17-20

Paul had the notion that the success of his evangelism related to his relationship to Jesus when He reappears. If an evangelist is able to maintain this vision of his ministry, it will produce a zeal equal to Paul's gusto for preaching.

Indeed, there is a great risk in deciding to love someone who is lost from life with God. An evangelist must decide to love these people or choose another vocation in which to serve in the body of Christ. Since loving someone who may not love in return is the only way Christians become love, every Christian will need to be a part of Jesus' mission in some way. A Christian who does not have love as a part of our self will be in the same condition as those who are to be evangelized (I John 4:16). Evangelism is an act of love to save the lost and keeps the saved safe.

We recognize the apostles and other spirited gifted Christians in the first century had an advantage over a preacher who has only himself and the written word to offer. Still, the principle of evangelism is the same. Jesus is still the king over His mission to seek and save the lost. We are members of His team. The message of the kingdom of God and Jesus Christ must still be preached (Acts 20:25). This message must be preached to the public in an "out of the church building" exercise:

*You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.* Acts 20:20, 21

The principle of saving the lost is the same today; sinners must "turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus." Evangelists cannot heal a crippled person in order to create an audience; however, God has allowed

mankind to understand the use of the frequencies in the air. We have the best communication means mankind has ever known and it is getting better year by year. We have more people to evangelize than has ever lived on earth at one time. We have more church members to do and, or, support the evangelism program of Jesus Christ. We have the full gospel provided to us by Jesus through the Holy Spirit in written form (John 16:13; II Tim. 3:16, 17). So what is holding the church back from producing the fruit of the kingdom of God (Matt. 21:43)? The evangelist and the whole mission team, the church, must endure the pain of suffering for Christ (II Tim. 3:5).

A Christian who did not accept suffering in his or her body as a part of the new covenant "is not done with sin." I Pet. 4:1. Suffering is a key part of developing fruit for God's kingdom (Heb. 12:4-11). A preacher who will not suffer the pain of going to the world, probably, will not preach God's new covenant for developing sons of God.

Paul worked this out for the Corinthians and us in II Corinthians 1:3-11. His point is that comfort and suffering is one and the same program. We can't have one without the other. A preacher who will not grieve and suffer for the fruit of his evangelism is not described as a preacher in the New Testament (II Cor. 2:2-5; 4:15; 5:11, 12; 7:8, 9).

While Paul was suffering for the Corinthians, he worked with his hands to support himself (II Cor. 11:7-12). Was he crazy? No he was a preacher, an evangelist as they are defined by God's word (I Cor. 9:15-18; II Cor. 5:13). The ox receives the fruit of its work (I Cor. 9:9). This is the divine principle for anyone being supported in the "last days."

The pain of suffering an evangelist may endure becomes painless when our hope in the rewards of Jesus' mission is strong enough to put our faith into our deeds (Rom. 8:17, 18; I Pet. 4:12-14; Jas. 2:14).

### Questions for Discussion

#### A. Introduction.

1. After Jesus became the cornerstone for the purpose of building His church, who will usually lay the foundation Jesus has provided?
2. It is very important for correct doctrine to be taught for laying the foundation. What is important about the character of the preacher?
3. What is the difference in preaching the gospel as a profession and preaching as a vocation? See Eph. 4:1 for the use of the word vocation.

4. When a person who preaches speaks of "my church" to whom may he be seeking to make disciples?
5. In what sense is the "myth of the preacher" prevalent in many churches?

#### B. Lesson.

1. What are the two statements Paul made in I Thessalonians that he validated by making two lists? What was presented in each list?
2. Why was it necessary for the people on both lists to be effective and productive?
3. When Paul presented the gospel in a new location why would he work to support himself if a church from another location did not give him support?
4. Name the church who gave some support to Paul.
5. Even though the person who evangelizes does everything according to the example the apostle Paul set that will not save the person being evangelized. What can save him or her?
6. Why does teaching require more skill and wisdom than preaching, if indeed it does?
7. Paul was an apostle, a preacher and a teacher. Which one was an office? What were the other two?
8. How did the churches in Corinth and Galatia break Paul's heart?
9. What does a Christian need to decide about the lost before he starts to preach to them?
10. How does a Christian's own participation in the evangelism of lost people work to keep himself saved?
11. What are some advantages preachers have today that Paul and others did not have?
12. What may be the reason individual Christians are not willing to do evangelism?
13. What were the two words Paul presented in the introduction of II Corinthians that always function together?