

# Using Our Gifts

## Introduction:

Thank you for joining us for our final lesson in this week's study of evangelism.

As we recap, in this series we noted the joy that we are to possess as Christians and things we need to remember to keep that joy renewed in our hearts. We also discussed how that possessing and experiencing that joy should motivate us to want to share the source of it with others.

We observed from Scripture how that the majority of people are lost and how and why they need the Lord.

We pointed out how that by design God has chosen to use us, His people, to share the gospel with others so they can be saved. And we showed that if we go to the Scriptures and follow exactly what the early Christians did, we can and will restore New Testament evangelism.

All of this has been designed to exhort us to reach out to the lost; to join God in His great work and to help turn people to the Lord.

This is something we can do and is in fact something we must do – God expects it and the souls of those who are lost depend upon it

So, if God's word has indeed touched our hearts and we want to do all we can to help lead others to Christ, we may be thinking, "I want to help, but I'm not sure what I can do or even if I can do it."

If this describes you, then may God bless you. May He open your eyes to see how truly important this is and what you can do to help Him save the people you know and meet.

So, what can you do? I hope this lesson tonight will help answer that question.

## The Evangelistic Nature of the Church

Before we speak about specifics let's note first how that God designed the church to be evangelistic. The church is to be evangelistic by its very nature.

Ephesians 3:8-11 – The church is the fulfillment, the accomplishment of God's eternal plan. It manifests His wisdom in that He rescued us from the power of Satan, washed us of our sins in the blood of Christ all without compromising His holiness and justice.

Acts 2:47 – You see, the church that manifests God's wisdom is His group of saved people.

Matthew 28:19-20 – It is a group of people who have been saved and whose main mission is to help save others.

Ephesians 3:20-21 – In this effort, along with all other aspects concerning the church, our goal, our purpose is to glorify God.

Romans 12:4-8 – To help us accomplish that goal, we need to realize that we all have a part that we can do, that we are expected to do.

So, again we ask, what can we do?

## **Distinct Roles**

Ephesians 4:7-16 – There are different roles that need to be filled and each must do his part.

The roles of apostles and prophets have served their purpose and no longer exist in the church. Yet the roles of evangelists, pastors, and teachers do exist and are greatly needed. Those who faithfully fill these roles are cherished by God and will be greatly rewarded.

But there are other roles, other works that must be done which are not mentioned in this passage, and this is where many Christians can find their place.

## **Subtle Roles**

Before we discuss those specific works, let's look at some examples of "behind the scenes" workers and consider some of the lessons we can learn from them.

Andrew – Reaching out to those closest to you (John 1:35-42).

Philip – Conviction that cannot be intimidated – note also that he did not become irritated and defensive when challenged (John 1:43-46).

Samaritan woman - Excitement of a sinful woman who found hope (John 4:27-30,39-42).

Cornelius – Concern for the souls of loved ones (Acts 10:24-33)

Legion – Sharing what God has done for us with others (Mark 5:1-20)

## **Seeking Our Role**

Titus 2:9-10 – Be devoted, holy, loving, kind, honest, dependable. Be what a Christian should be and set a good example.

Attend the services. Worship God, genuinely. Love the Lord. Love the church – the congregation here. Greet others with love and joy. Help create an atmosphere that the Lord is pleased with, that you cherish and are thankful to be a part of and that you are well pleased to invite your friends and family into.

And invite. Invite people to services, special efforts like gospel meetings, singings, small group studies. But first, if possible, invite them to your home, invite them out to eat. Let them know you care about them and that you're not just trying to "sell them on Christianity."

Hand out invite-cards to everyone one you meet.

Talk to people you love. This may make you feel uncomfortable, but these are the people you have the most influence upon. Use it to set up a visit or a study with someone who is capable (if you are not ready or able to conduct the study).

Babysit for someone who is studying.

Mail out letters, personal cards, to people you know and love. Almost everyone loves to get mail that is not junk mail.

Offer correspondence lessons. Coordinate correspondence courses for the congregation.

Pray for the congregation. Pray for open doors. Pray for more laborers. Pray for and encourage those who are evangelizing.

Now I want to share with you what I have found to be the most successful ways that congregations evangelize and grow. People love the Lord and the congregation they are part of. They talk to people they love and meet. They invite them to the church, make them feel welcome, and after three or four visits the person who invited them along with someone who is capable and has agreed beforehand to teach them the gospel, asks for a Bible study. The percentage of those who obey and remain faithful are very high in this scenario.

We can and should use all honorable and expedient means available to us, but none has proven more effective than this.

## **Conclusion:**

So, what will you do?

We cannot say there is nothing. If we are able to understand the things we've talked about we are neither too young nor too old. We have witnessed young people including our own children convert their friends from school, and elderly members I have worked with have been instrumental in bringing many others to Christ.

Matthew 25:14-30 – We cannot bury our talent in the ground.

God is going to hold each one of us accountable for what we have done with our talent.

Are you willing to find and do your part in the work of evangelism?