

Sermon Outlines

Principals For Evangelism

Bible Reading

Mark 6:7-13

In keeping with our message on Sunday morning on John the Baptist as a model for evangelism, here we have principles for evangelistic service. The Lord Jesus sent "the twelve" out to minister the gospel. They did not always sit at Jesus' feet. They were sent out to reach the lost for Christ. Being sent and given power, the Lord gave them instruction on how to conduct their ministry. From this we learn these principles for service.

1. **A plurality of service.** They were sent two by two. This is a method that has served the Lord's church well in every age. We can hardly find an apostle in the N.T. who worked alone. Paul had his Barnabas at first, then Silas and Timothy on his missionary journeys. This going forth "two by two" is:
 - a) First, **a safeguard.** It keeps the evangelist from situations of temptation and enables him to maintain his testimony.
 - b) Second, **it is to encourage.** The lone worker may well grow weary. To have a companion of like-minded vision to help makes the work lighter and so much brighter. One to help in prayer through times of discouragement is vital. One man missions are subject to diversion and distraction but where there is a companion or two will be a plan, a review of the work and more determination to finish the task.
 - c) Third, **for accountability.** The plurality of service is God's way of keeping His servants honest, and above reproach in this fallen world. Lone workers should pray for a helper in the work of the Lord. This principle applies to evangelism, missionary work, Sunday School ministry and the government of the church by the plurality of elders. In the Lord's church power should be delegated to a committee, not an individual.
2. **Power must be given to God's servants.** As they were sent the Lord "gave them power" (v. 7) In all ages and in situations God's servants need power. They are not to rest in their own own strength. They must receive power from the Lord. The church of Christ must continually pray for power for the ministry of the gospel no matter the context of ministry. Specifically, in this case, the power was to overcome "unclean spirits." (v. 7). This was realized in the ministry of the seventy that were also sent out, for later they returned with great excitement that the devils were subject to them, "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name" (Luke 10:17). The Lord transferred his own power to His servants.

Here is a vital point of prayer. There is a need for conviction of sin and conversions in the gospel church where souls are brought out of the kingdom of Satan and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. For this we must pray earnestly, wrestling continually until the Lord gives us His power. Then we shall see the devil's kingdom spoiled and the Lord's kingdom extended.

3. **Trust God for provisions.** (v. 8-10). These disciples were to pack lightly and depend on their hosts to provide their needs. Going forth to minister the gospel of Christ was, therefore, an act of faith. It meant hospitality-responsibility by those who receive the message of the gospel. The host was to allow the Lord's servants to abide and refresh themselves in their homes. Writing of the same account, Matthew recorded, "The workman is worthy of his meat" (Matthew 10:10).
 - a) **God provides.** He will always finance His own will and raise up the support to advance the gospel. Where it is God's will to evangelize the support will materialize. Where hearts are open to the gospel their homes will be open to the messengers of the gospel. The church is indebted to the kindness and generosity of God's people for their support for the cause of Christ. One evangelist stated it to this effect, When God changes the heart the first place it will be noticed is in his wallet.
 - b) **The church that is in blessing will be marked by its generosity.** The gospel will be all important and given priority over material things. Who could go forth in faith to minister the gospel if God did not bless people with the spirit of hospitality?

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4. **The hearing of the gospel brings responsibility.** Verse 11 shows that not all will receive the message of Christ. Not all will have an ear to hear the message of salvation. Indeed, men will reject it in spite of all attempts to win them to Christ.

This brings great responsibility upon the hearer. The consequences of this rejection is fearful. The Lord could not have chosen a more fearful illustration than to rehearse the event of what happened to souls in Sodom and Gomorrha.

The judgment day will bring great condemnation to those who have heard the gospel that was brought to their homes and their hearts for the salvation of their souls.

Dr. J.C. Ryle stated, "Thousands . . . do not see that one of the greatest sins a man can commit in the sight of God, is to hear the Gospel of Christ and not believe it - to be invited to repent and believe, and yet to remain careless and unbelieving. In short, to reject the gospel will sink a man to the lowest place in hell."

And yet it is right that the gospel goes forth to sinners. The apostle Paul stated, "To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? (2 Cor. 2:16)

Let us remember the serious business we are about in gospel ministry. We may not expect all to be converted, but we must lament and mourn each time someone falls into the category of Christ-rejector. We must never cease to pray with a burden for souls to whom we bring the gospel that it becomes a saving message leading them to eternal life, and not eternal damnation, and a deeper damnation at that. Those who know these things will know the importance of the call to pray for sinners who sit under gospel preaching.

5. **Faithful gospel preaching must include repentance from all sin** (v. 12). The very thing that God uses in the conversion of sinners to lead them to faith in the gospel is called repentance unto life. This is the essential component required in any presentation of the gospel to bring sinners to faith in Christ.

Without the message of repentance, there can never be right views of the holiness of God, the heinousness of sin, nor the antichristian nature of the world where the devil seeks to reign and rule over men's hearts. Repentance cannot save a sinner's soul but without it, the soul cannot be saved. Repentance is not meritorious but is the essential predisposition for a sinner to be saved.

Our Westminster Confession of Faith states, "Although repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's free grace in Christ; yet is it of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it" (Chapter 15 Section 3).

As a congregation, we need to focus much on the grace of repentance in our ministry of the gospel.

The preacher must so preach to show sinners the vileness of their sin and the consequences of departing from this world unrepentant, yet it is the Holy Spirit who convicts of sin. It is His ministry which must supersede the ministry of the pulpit working repentance in the sinner's hearts.

See this truth clearly laid out in John 16:7-11. For gospel preaching to be effective, it is imperative that the Holy Spirit minister repentance to sinners. Only then can we expect true conversions to Christ.

Let us spend much of our time in prayer for this blessing of the Spirit for the sake of sinners.

. . . . Ian Goligher