

Bible Study on Evangelism – Handout 1
Developing Biblical Understanding

Grace Bible Chapel
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The Big Picture:

- **Eph 1:3-14** – The revelation of the overall plan of God for salvation from God’s perspective:
 - **Vs 3** – “blessed us with every spiritual blessing” – a divine plan already determined.
 - **Vs 4** – “chose us in Him before the foundation” – God has predetermined who will be saved.
 - **Vs 5** – “predestined” – the circumstances of our life to be adopted as His sons.
 - **Vs 6** – “His grace” – the plan is through grace (no earning merit possible).
 - **Vs 7** – “redemption through His blood” (Christ), and “forgiveness” (by grace).
 - **Vs 8** – “lavished” (means super-abound, or excel) – He did so in wisdom & insight.
 - **Vs 9** – “made known to us” – prophecy, types, promises of OT
 - **Vs 10** – “summing up all things in Christ” – the completion of the work.
 - **Vs 11** – “obtained an inheritance” and so “according to His purpose” – He planned and carried it out perfectly.
 - **Vs 12** – Our purpose – “the praise of His glory.”
 - **Vs 13** – Here is where evangelism comes in! “After listening to the message of truth” – the message of truth was predetermined (vs 11) as the means humanly to be drawn (in the power of the Holy Spirit).
 - **Vs 14** – the giving of the Holy Spirit.

Point: God has predetermined all this – it has and will happen! We fit into this great plan as those redeemed, and those giving the message of vs. 13. It is a great privilege. It is a responsibility. It is the perfect plan of God.

- **2 Pet 3:9** – a verse used by the arminians to state that God is attempting to save all men.
 - The “toward you” and the “any” of the context is who? See to whom Peter is writing (2 Pet 1:2; 3:1).
 - This by context, and by comparison with many other texts is a must reference to the elect – those who will come to faith (John 6:39; 10:26-28).

Point: We need to understand the big picture. God has determined the people, the plan, and the means of salvation. It is evangelism that is part of the plan.

The definition of evangelism:

Evangelism is the purposeful action, through presentation of the Word of God, to present to others the glories of God and how He has moved in history to provide Salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ, with the goal that they may become His followers.

What is our evangelism responsibility?

- **The Old Testament:**
 - Israel was to be a light to the nations (Isa 42:6; 49:6). They were to serve God as the means of presenting the true God to all the people of the earth.
 - David stating under inspiration the need to proclaim the glory of God to the nations during the time of the celebration of having the Arc of the Covenant in Jerusalem (1 Chron 16:24 & also Ps 96).
 - Jonah was specifically called to go to the Nineveh and preach a message of judgment from God for their great wickedness (Jonah 1:1-2), and when he refused God saw to it he completed the task.
 - The prophet Malachi condemned the priests for their apostate leading of the people in worship, and principally their doing the opposite of their purpose which is to glorify God among the nations (Mal 1:11).
 - The principle of the responsibility of a watchman who is accountable for warning those around him (Ezk 3:17-21).
 - The principle of and responsibility of declaring the truth of God regardless of the response of those around us (Is 6:8-10).

- Israel was destroyed along with their privileges as God's spokesmen removed because its religious leaders were leading the people against God. Instead of serving as a source of light and truth, they were leading people to destruction (Mat 23:15; Mat 25:37-39; Acts 13:44-48).
- **In the Gospels of the New Testament:**
 - The preliminary effort, development, and construction leading to the NT church (Mat 16:18).
 - Christ stated His purpose is to save lost sheep (Luke 19:10).
 - All persons that have been given to Christ by the Father will come to salvation (John 6:37; 10:27-28).
 - God demonstrates the importance, love, and commitment to saving persons from all over the world by giving His most precious Son to die on their behalf (John 3:16; 10:18; 2 Cor 5:21).
 - Christ proclaims (to those saved) that men are to be the "light of the world" (Mat 5:14).
 - Christ purposes the disciples as the founders of the church to be the extension of the work He began in calling the lost elect (Mat 4:19; John 15:16; Acts 1:8; Mat 28:19-20; Mar 16:15; Luke 24:47-48).
 - Christ states they will do more, in regard to drawing disciples, than He did during His time on earth leading to the cross (John 14:12).
 - The Gospel will prosper and grow the church in the world (Mat 13:31-32).
 - Christ promises the provision of His personal power, the Holy Spirit, necessary to complete the mission (John 14:16-17; 15:26-27; 16:7-11; Acts 1:8).
- **The Great Commission:**
 - What does the Lord tell His disciples to do (Mat 28:19-20)?
 - This is His last recorded command to His disciples and mirrors His words at His ascension (Acts 1:8). It is included in all three of the synoptic Gospels.
 - **"Go"** – to traverse, travel, move – the idea is purposeful action to take the message out.
 - **"therefore"** – accordingly, or as result of – what? He had just stated in vs. 18 that He has been given all authority. As a result of His position, they have the highest authority to do what He is commanding them to do. The revelation of His authority shows the importance of this commission.
 - **"make disciples"** – is really one word that means "become a pupil." The purpose then is not focused on the ability to save (as man has none), but making learners or followers of Christ. The salvation is understood to come along in God's timing on the path of following (John 8:31) and learning. The responsibility of the commission is to find those interested and willing to learn.
 - **"Of all the nations"** – the emphasis is not just upon Jews, but that God has His people (the elect) in every nation, race, and place on the earth. This is the meaning behind John 3:16 when spoken by Christ to Nicodemus. It is also reiterated in John 10:16 ("not of this fold" means not of Israel). There was a commanded responsibility tied back to the "go" to take the message of Christ to all areas of the world.
 - **"Baptizing them"** – the means God has commanded to initiate identification with His Son is through the ordinance of public baptism. This is subordinate to the main idea of "make disciples" or learners, but shows this as a part of the commitment associated with the whole issue of drawing God's own and building His church. As baptism is associated with a confession of Christ, repentance, and a transformation of life. It leads to the understanding that all of this effort is done with the idea of true conversion and Lordship commitment.
 - **"In the name"** – this is equivalent to these Persons (all three members of the Godhead). This is the idea of the purpose of a new association with the true God. They are no longer to walk according to the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2), but according to the One God in three Persons. Baptism is a commitment of life to the One true God who is in three Persons.
 - **"Teaching them to observe all that I commanded"** – this includes everything that Christ taught concerning Himself, the other members of the Godhead, all His discourses, expressed commands for love, forgiveness, truth, righteousness, worship, and faithfulness. The idea is to make the person grow in truth (sanctification) into Christ's very likeness.
 - How do we know this commission applies to us today?
 - We see the general purpose of the church forming and developing far beyond the years of the apostles. Paul addresses this in Ephesians 2:11-22; Col 1:24-28; Eph 4:11-16 with the on-

going development of the church (Mat 24:14). We also see not only the development, but the passing of the work on to others in the Pastoral epistles (Timothy and Titus).

- Even in the passage itself (Mat 28:19) we find the promise of Christ to be with His disciples “**even to the end of the age.**” The end of the age is a reference to the end of the church age which has now been in existence more than 2,000 years (Mat 24:3). Christ is with His own today. If the command of the great commission were not for today’s church, then neither would the promise of His presence.

- **The emphasis and commands given to the church in the epistles?**

- The Gospel is at its heart a proclamation of the Person and work of Christ to all men (Col 1:28), and the overall character, glory, and work of God (1 Pet 2:9).
- The believer is not to be ashamed of the Gospel (Rom 1:16), but recognize God has determined it as the means of securing salvation in those who will believe.
- We are commanded to be ready to make a defense – ie: present the Gospel (1 Pet 3:15-16).
- We have stated direct responsibilities to evangelize others around us (2 Cor 5:20; 1 Pet 3:15-16; Jude 22-23).
- There is a blessed responsibility of bringing the message to those who have never heard (Rom 10:14-15;17; Eph 3:8-12).
- Paul saw a priestly duty, which is true in all believers, in presenting the Gospel (Rom 15:16).
- A special direction of evangelism is stated to be given by God to some persons and is unique to them. They are compelled and sent by God to a specific people (Gal 2:7; 1 Tim 2:7).
- The gift of being an evangelist is given by God (Eph 4:11-13).
- Paul reiterates that the Gospel is to be made known in all the nations (Rom 16:25-27).
- Christians are exhorted to imitate the faith of those who “spoke the Word of God” to them – share your faith with others as it was shared with you (Heb 13:7).
- God’s people will be specially rewarded for their evangelistic efforts (1 Cor 3:8-9).
- Presenting the Gospel takes on a priority of importance (1 Cor 9:23; 15:3;58).
- The doors of evangelistic opportunity are opened by God (2 Cor 2:12; 1 Cor 16:9 – Rev 3:8).
- There is an accountability of presenting the Gospel in purity as in the presence of God (2 Cor 3:17).
- The Gospel message must not be altered (Gal 1:6-9).
- The ministry of reconciliation is a privilege and responsibility given to “us” which Paul calls the “word of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:18-19).
- Paul proclaims that “we” (accordingly all who are new creations – vs. 17) “are ambassadors for Christ” begging or pleading with people to be reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:20).
- For the Gospel to be effective it must be accompanied by the work of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 1:4-5) and therefore it must be done in God’s manner, prayerfully, thoughtfully and humbly.
- The method of conversion begins with presenting the truth to hearers (Eph 1:13; 2:17).
- Being personally prepared to go and take the Gospel is among the essential armaments for the Christian to live in the battle zone of life (Eph 6:15).
- There is an essential need for prayer in presenting the Gospel, as is seen by Paul’s requests. He knew that it required boldness and courage (Eph 6:19-20; Phil 1:14; 2 Thess 3:1).
- The presentation of the Gospel must be done within the accompaniment of a good testimony (1 Thess 2:9).