

## **Bible Study on Evangelism – Handout 5** ***Developing Biblical Understanding***

**Grace Bible Chapel**

**November 6th, 2011**

Pastor/Teacher Jim Bryant

This session we will continue the focus on the “where, when, and begin the how” of evangelism according to the Scriptures.

What does the Bible say about where and when evangelism should take place?

- The key verse to know God’s will concerning where evangelism is to take place is Mat 28:19-20:
  - “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations”- evangelism is to take place throughout the world. Literally it states “all the nations” in other words throughout every area of the world. This was specifically commanded to the disciples, but as these are the church founders it provides the command and will of God to the entire church.
  - In Luke 24:44-45 after Christ had risen from the grave He explained to His disciples how the Old Testament was all about Him, and then in verses 47- 48 that it was the intention of God that “repentance for forgiveness of sin be proclaimed in His name throughout the world.”
  - Acts 13:47 “For so the Lord has commanded us (Paul & Barnabas), ‘I have placed you as a light for the gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the end of the earth.’” Paul applies it to his role as an apostle, but broadens it because this is a quote from Is 49:6 where it was Israel’s responsibility to carry the Word to all the earth a responsibility they failed. This shows that the intent of spreading the truth to the whole world has always been God’s purpose through His people.
  - Mat 24:14 “This gospel shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations and then the end will come.” This is in the context of Christ addressing questions regarding the end of the age, and adds to the understanding that the Word will go into all parts of the world prior to the return of Christ.
  - Rev 5:9 “purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.” Here we see a prophetic event scene in heaven stated in the past tense that as a result of the Gospel being preached in all the world there are saved individuals from all places.
- There are many organizations distributing Bibles and evangelizing the world:
  - As an example of a key organization, “Gideons International (also known as Gideon's Bible) is an evangelical organization dedicated to distributing copies of the Bible in over 94 languages and 194 countries of the world, most famously in hotel and motel rooms” (from wikipedia).
  - Various organizations and denominations have translated the Bible and sent missionaries into all parts of the world. “The full Bible has been translated into over 450 languages, although sections of the Bible have been translated into over 2,000 languages” (from wikipedia).
  - Has the Word of God gone into or is it going into all parts of the world?
    - Because of radio, television, the internet, mission organizations, and the printed Word, etc.. – it can be stated that the Word of God is being sent into every area of the world.
    - That does not mean that the Word of God is going to every single person. However, we must conclude from the Scripture that all that God has determined to hear and respond are and will hear and respond (John 6:37; 39; 10:16; Acts 18:10; Rom 8:29-30).

**Conclusion:** It is the clear command and responsibility of the church to participate in evangelistic means of taking the Word of God to all parts of the world. It is further not the responsibility of the church to save people, but to carry the purity of the Word’s message by all possible means into every place that God through that Word might be pleased to save those He has determined to save.

- The “where and when” of evangelism is not just to the remote parts of the world. Included is a responsibility to all people immediately around us. This begins in our home (Eph 6:4). Additionally, there is a responsibility / command to evangelize those brought into our frame of reference (2 Cor 5:20; Heb 13:7; 1 Pet 3:15-16; Jude 22-23). Associated with that are these realities:
  - The doors of evangelistic opportunity are opened by God (2 Cor 2:12; 1 Cor 16:9 – Rev 3:8).
  - There is a need to be courageous (Rom 1:16).
  - There is a need to be prepared (1 Pet 3:15-16).
  - Presenting the Gospel is a priority (1 Cor 9:23; 15:3;58).

- Presenting the Gospel should be prayed, planned, and directed logically (Acts 13:14; 14:1; 17:1; 17:17; 18:4). Paul went primarily to those places where he could be most effective, and where the people should have been most interested.
- Should a person evangelize at the work place? The answer is yes, but with appropriate discretion:
  - Mat 22:21 – Christ states to “render to Caesar what is Caesar’s”- doing our job without causing any honest offense based on neglect of the job’s responsibilities is an essential.
  - Rom 13:8 “owe nothing to anyone” – the idea is fulfill all obligations.
  - Eph 6:5; 7 – we are to complete our responsibility to our employer, and therefore we need to be careful not to fill what should be work time with discussions about the Lord.
  - The apostle Paul worked hard at making tents (Acts 18:3; 2 Thess 3:6-8).

**Conclusion:** The Christian should make evangelism a priority, prayerfully asking God to open doors of opportunity, while at the same time using good judgment and discretion regarding the timing and place.

How should the Gospel be presented for evangelism?

- The primary focus of the Gospel most often used in modern evangelical churches is the idea of “*acceptance of Jesus Christ as your Savior.*” This idea comes from John 1:12:
  - This is a statement by John showing the contrast between the people of Israel at Christ’s coming and earthly ministry. The larger nation rejected Jesus as the Messiah, while a few received Him. It was not intended to be made into a mode of salvation.
  - The word “received” – *lambano* – is a verb meaning to get hold of or take to one’s self and is never translated accept. Accept on the other hand is a less involved word meaning to receive something including the idea of mere agreement, to assent to, or acknowledge. “Receive” (the word shown in this context) is an action that requires more than mere acknowledgement. The remainder of the statement in verse 12 and 13 clarify in significant detail what is included with and must accompany this definition of receiving as applied to salvation:
    - “He gave them the right” – “right” – *exousia* – means privilege with authority (in John 5:10 it is translated “permissible” - most often translated lawful) – the way was opened legally, permissibly – the idea is that is the starting point as entering through the gate (Mat 7:13-14).
    - “To become children of God” – not to remain as those in agreement, but true followers as a son.
    - “To those who believe in His name” – name here means all that He is as Lord & God.
    - “Who were born...of God” – this means those who are truly converted must be born again.
    - “Not of blood” (physical descent), “will of the flesh” (not generated from fallen flesh), “nor will of man” (no works or effort) – he makes it emphatically clear this is in no manner a work of man.

**Conclusion:** The idea of “accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior” as the key to conversion has its root explanation in this passage. However, a thorough look at the context and passage as compared with the modern shallow focus of “accepting Jesus” do not match. The wording of the passage uses “receive” in relation to belief that Christ is the Messiah as an entry point into relationship and elaborates all that entails, showing the necessity of the relationship being built exclusively by the work of God in the new birth.

- The second terminology most often used to become a Christian is “*to invite Jesus into your heart.*” This concept is primarily taken from Christ’s words to the Laodicean church in Rev 3:20. Admittedly, some of the language is figurative (3:14-17) to describe the condition of the church, and the words in Rev 3:18-20 the remedy for individuals in the church.
  - The church is evaluated by Christ in harsh terminology: “wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked” (Rev 3:17b). This along with the other descriptions (verses 15-17a), define this church as filled with and practicing the actions of the unsaved. There is not one commendable statement concerning this church. It is an apostate church – a church without Christ not having any relationship with Him.
  - Verses 18-to-19 provide the remedy, which when exegeted shows the path for true salvation.
  - Following the last thing stated in verse 19 to “repent,” in verse 20 Christ is shown not in the church, but outside the church (contrary to Mat 18:20). Christ makes an individual offer, a plea for true fellowship (since the church has no relationship with Christ). What this shows is that the problem is not with our Lord, but with the Laodicean church, and that Christ is gracious to extend true fellowship with any person who is willing to do what He states in verses 18-to-19.

**Conclusion:** The concept of “*inviting Christ into the heart*” is not found here or anywhere else in Scripture. It is true Christ does reside in the hearts of His own (2 Pet 1:19), but inviting Christ to enter your heart as a prescribed means of securing salvation is not in the Word nor in any example of evangelism in the Word.