

LESSON 5 Understand the Task

It was at the end of three months of hard work in the fields in Burkina Faso. There had been enough rain that year, and the harvest was good. The chief called for a big celebration day. Men, women, and children covered the big marketplace.

Many dancing groups were performing. The whole village seemed to have moved into the market. Then, about midday, a loud, deafening cry was heard from among those in the crowd. A person cried out as if he were in danger. All attention was directed to him.

“What happened?” The question went from one person to another. Some thought a person had become insane, but the man explained the reason for his cry. He said, “When I looked at this crowd, I thought how the day is coming when all of us will be under this earth we now walk on. The feeling of loss was so great upon me that I could not help but cry out. I meant to cry deep within myself, but I could not control it. It just came out!”

This story reminds me of the last day of a festival in Jerusalem. People from all nations were about to leave Jerusalem without meeting God. Christ, sensing a great loss, could not help but call out to them: “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink” (John 7:37).

Jesus’ invitation came from a desire to help. The need is great around us. People are dying without Christ. Unless we realize that, we will not do our utmost to pass on our experience. May this lesson open your eyes to the great need for personal evangelism—sharing the good news!

The Plan

Essentials of Personal Evangelism

Vision Is Needed

Dedication Is Needed

Prayer Is Needed

Humility Is Needed

Understanding Is Needed

The Goal

Identify the essentials of personal evangelism.

ESSENTIALS OF PERSONAL EVANGELISM

Goal. Identify the essentials of personal evangelism.

Workers Are Needed

Millions of people live without knowing or believing God's gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. If we go to the hospitals, we will see that great numbers of people are dying without Christ. Many more have never heard of Christ and His good news.

When Jesus spoke to His disciples about the greatness of the task, He compared it to a very large field ripe for harvest. But He added that the workers are few. (See Matthew 9:37.) Many Christians are not aware of this great need. Some have even said that it is not their business to win souls. Some are stopped by fear or because they do not know how to approach people. Yet more than at any other time in the church's history, the Lord of the harvest is short of workers. He is calling and pleading every day, "Who will go for me? Who will tell the unbelievers of my sacrifice for them? Who will be my feet to walk, and my mouth to speak?"

Angels would have been willing to do the job, but God has not chosen to use them. His will is to use people. If only every

Christian would be involved in personal evangelism, many people would not die in their sin.

The command of Jesus was not given to just one nation. It was given to the **whole** world. It was to **all** nations. It was to include the ends of the earth. The task Jesus gave us certainly is not small. It is greater than we can even imagine. There is a need for workers everywhere.

It is true that we hear of many people coming to Christ today. Millions are praising Him all over the world. We thank Him for this wonderful work. But the world’s population is growing very fast, so the harvest field keeps on increasing. When we look at what remains to be done, we cannot help but cry out in sorrow, because many millions are still living in sin.

Our efforts at times seem unfruitful, but when each believer seeks to follow God’s leading, God will give opportunities to speak for Him. Our sense of responsibility and obedience to His Spirit will bring results. When each of us becomes a personal evangelist, fully aware of our God-given burden for lost people around us, we will see a wonderful spiritual harvest.

Let us pray to the Owner of the harvest, that He will send out workers to gather in His harvest. And when you do pray, also be willing to answer, “Lord, here am I, send me.” Then, you will know the joy of being a co-worker with Christ.

Personal evangelism is for every Christian. As someone said, “Personal evangelism is the whole work of the whole church for the whole world.” We have been born again. We no longer belong to ourselves. Let us then wholly serve our new Lord and Master.

Application

- 1 Who is the Owner of the harvest?.....
- 2 Who are the workers in the harvest?.....
- 3 What is being harvested?

4 Circle the letter in front of each true reason why there is a shortage of workers in personal evangelism.

- a)** Christians do not know what to do.
- b)** There are not enough Christians to do the work.
- c)** Many Christians do not realize how many people are dying without Christ.
- d)** Christians are sometimes afraid to witness.
- e)** God has only chosen a few workers in each area.

5 What is God's answer to the need for workers in His harvest field?

- a)** He wants us to pray that workers will go.
- b)** He will send angels to do the work.
- c)** He wants the Holy Spirit to do the work.

6 List three reasons why each of us must be involved in personal evangelism.

- a)**
- b)**
- c)**



Vision Is Needed

We are living in troublesome days with great needs worldwide. Regardless of the country or place, the needs are the same—economical, spiritual, emotional, social, and political. Some people are giving up their faith in God. Others are obeying deceiving spirits and following ungodly teaching. Moral values are changing as social institutions break down. Media reports of crimes, wars, famines, and starvation are ever-increasing as urgent cries of helpless souls are heard.

But unless God gives us vision (a specific burden and reality), we will not be able to see the need and hear the cries. As a personal witness, we need to have clear vision or understanding

of the condition of the unsaved. This vision will give us the desire to help these needy people.

When the apostle Paul saw the vision of the begging Macedonian man (Acts 16:9) he did not waste time. He and his co-workers went over to Macedonia, and, as a result, that part of Europe heard of the saving grace of God through Jesus Christ. Since then, hundreds of thousands of people have been won to Christ.

It was when He saw the general condition of the people in Jerusalem that Jesus wept with compassion. He knew that if they had understood His love, they would have accepted Him, and He would have sheltered them (Luke 13:34).

Vision gives us strength and courage in our daily battle against sin. Vision helps us keep our eyes on the nearby harvest and see people the way God sees them. Vision will help us rescue people from death. So unless we have this powerful vision, the people around us will die in their sin. Let us ask the Lord of the harvest for this vision, so that we may do His will.

Application

7 To have vision means to see

- a)** all the things that are wrong with the world today.
- b)** lost and dying people as God sees them.

8 We need to have vision because

.....

.....

9 Be honest with yourself as you put an X in the box that describes you.

MY VISION	Always	Most of the Time	Not Very Often
I feel the needs of others.			
I care what happens to people.			
I have courage to witness.			
I want to tell others about Jesus.			
I want to help others find Christ.			

Dedication Is Needed

Jesus was so dedicated in His mission that He said to the disciples, “My food . . . is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work” (John 4:34). Jesus, the greatest personal evangelist who ever lived, went on eating this *food* until the day He cried, “It is finished!” He had completed the work for which He was sent.

The apostle Paul was also dedicated to personal evangelism. His life and writings demonstrated this. The Holy Spirit revealed that Paul would go through many hardships in Jerusalem, so his co-workers tried to keep him from going to Jerusalem. But Paul insisted on doing the will of his Lord:

“Why are you weeping and breaking my heart?
I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die
in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”
(Acts 21:13–14)

Paul saw the work as more important than even his own life. For him it did not make any difference whether he lived or died. He did what he was sent to do.

Application

Choose the correct word in parentheses and write it in the blank space.

10 The apostle Paul saw his
 (work/food) as more important than his
 (health/life).

11 The secret to true dedication in doing God's work is that I
a) put God's will ahead of my own desires.
b) do what I think is best for me.

Prayer Is Needed

When Jesus showed His disciples the great size of the harvest, what do you think He did next? We might think that He should send them immediately into the harvest field. But no, He said, “Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Luke 10:2).

When we pray to the Owner of the harvest, we show great concern, love, and compassion for the spiritually lost. This will lead us to pray and share the message of Christ.

When Israel disobeyed and God was about to bring judgment upon the nation, Moses interceded in prayer and compassion. God heard his prayer, and the request was granted (Exodus 32:30–32).

God poured out His Spirit on 120 believers on the Day of Pentecost because Jesus had promised it. The result of that outpouring was great concern for the lost (Acts 2:1–4). The disciples had seen Jesus go up to His Father in heaven. They heard Him when He commanded them to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the Spirit (Acts 1:1–5). Then, 120 of them gathered to wait in prayer to receive the promise. Those were the first ones whom the Lord sent out into His harvest.

Application

- 12** Christians who are really concerned about lost souls will
- a)** pray.
 - b)** worry.
- 13** Those believers who prayed on the Day of Pentecost were
- a)** the ones God chose to send out into His harvest.
 - b)** not really dedicated to God's work.
- 14** When we pray that God will send out workers we must realize that
- a)** He may not answer our prayer.
 - b)** He may send us.
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Humility Is Needed

One of the greatest dangers in personal evangelism is for the workers to look at their success as something they have done themselves. You and I have been sent by God. We are using our Lord's name in all our work of witnessing. If the Owner of the harvest blesses our work and causes it to produce results, we should be careful not to take pride in ourselves. Rather, we should rejoice in our Lord who was willing to humble himself, and we must give all the glory to His Father.

When David offered to fight Goliath, David's goal was to glorify God. Read what he said to Goliath:

“You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it

is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves;
for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all
of you into our hands." (1 Samuel 17:45–47)

David did not say that the whole world would know that he, David, was brave or courageous. His desire was that people would know that God was not limited—that He does save in all circumstances.

As workers in the harvest field, we must be humble and never take glory for what is done. We must give all the glory to the Owner of the harvest. We must be willing to let Him use us so that others will see His glory. This is the true spirit of the worker in personal evangelism.

Application

15 The word *humility* means the opposite of

- a)** unselfishness.
- b)** pride.

16 A Christian worker should be humble and give all the glory to God because

- a)** without God the worker could do nothing.
 - b)** the worker's part is greater than God's.
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Understanding Is Needed

KNOW THE ASSIGNMENT

Trying to do a job that is not ours will lead to difficulties. We are workers together *with* God (1 Corinthians 3:9); we are not just working *for* God. In personal evangelism, just as in any other ministry in the church, we have a part to play, and so does God. Good results come when the two parts fall into their proper places.

We are sent to sow the seed, to plant, and even to water. This means that we share the good news of what Christ has done for us, and we take every opportunity to do so. The rest belongs to God, to His Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

It is good to see people saved. It is good to see them turning to God through our testimony. But remember that we cannot convict people of sin through our speaking. It is the Spirit of God who convicts them when we speak. We cannot save people from sin. But Christ can *through* us.

So, whether you see many results or not, our job is to spread the good news and to warn people of the danger of dying without Christ. For He who sent us has told us that His Word will never fail to reach its goal (Isaiah 55:11). Let us not try to trade responsibilities with God.

KNOW THE BIBLE

A worker in personal evangelism cannot expect to be effective without at least a general knowledge of the Bible, the Word of God. We should know its major and minor divisions. We should know where to find key verses that will help us in talking with people about Christ. We should be able to interpret and apply these verses. Every Christian soul winner should have a basic knowledge of the Bible for the sake of Christian growth and experience.

As personal evangelists, we should also keep in mind that it is the Word that gives faith. It is the Word that brings conviction, changes lives, teaches holiness, and keeps us from falling into sin. When we know the Word, it will help us to speak the right words at the right time.

Application

17 Circle the letters in front of the TRUE statements.

- a)** Our work for God is to convince people that they are sinners.
- b)** As workers with God, we have our part, and He has His part.
- c)** We need perfect understanding of the Bible in order to be personal evangelists.
- d)** If we do not see results in our personal work, that means we are not doing our part.
- e)** The main work of the Christian is to spread the good news about Jesus Christ.
- f)** We know that the Word of God will always reach its goal in bringing people to Christ.

18 In your own words, write one sentence to explain what each of these statements means.

a) Know the assignment

.....
.....

b) Know the Bible

.....
.....



Check Your Answers

10 work, life.

1 God

2 Believers in Christ

11 a) that I put God's will ahead of my own desires.

3 The souls of men, women, and children

12 a) pray.

4 a), c), and d) are true

13 a) the ones God chose to send out into His harvest.

5 a) He wants us to pray that workers will go.

14 b) He may send us.

6 (In any order)

a) People are dying without Christ.

b) Population is increasing.

c) God has chosen to use us as His workers.

15 b) pride.

7 b) lost and dying men and women as God sees them.

16 a) without God the worker could do nothing.

8 that is the only way we will see the great need of those who are without Christ.

17 b), e), and f) are true

9 Think about people you know who are lost and dying. Ask God now to give you more vision to go to them with the good news.

18 Your answer should be something like:

a) We are to share the good news about Jesus Christ and let God do the rest.

b) We need a general understanding of the Bible and its key verses to be effective witnesses.