

Doing the Work of an Evangelist

By Doug Hamilton

2 Timothy 4:1-5, "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, ⁴ and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. ⁵ But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

The year was 67 AD. Paul wrote Timothy from a Roman prison while awaiting death row for serving Christ. He wrote in 2 Timothy 1:8, "*Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God...*" He did not commit a crime against God, but rather was imprisoned by the government for serving God and spreading the word of His kingdom. Because of his fervor toward the gospel of Jesus, he would be put to death by beheading.

2 Timothy 4:6-8, "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸ in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."

Paul had a special relationship with Timothy, being involved in the conversion of three generations of his family. 2 Timothy 1:5, "*For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well.*" With Paul's impending execution, he inspired Timothy to carry on his own mission as an evangelist for Christ. He reached out to encourage his protégé to carry on with the "*work of an evangelist*". He charged him to "*fulfill your ministry*". This involved several tasks, including preaching the Word, reproof, rebuking and exhorting. Being an evangelist involves a broad array of responsibilities in the past and even today.

Sunday, February 26th will be my last Sunday as the evangelist of this congregation and will be continuing a comparable position at New Road church of Christ in Waco, TX. I have had many members ask me, "What are we going to do without you being the minister here? Are we going to get another preacher?" When I accepted the position fifteen years ago, it was never my intention to create a vacuum for my absence. My presence in this congregation, like yours, is at best temporary. Though we all have unique qualities and talents, we all will be replaced by someone at some time in our life, by either relocation, promotion or death.

Last Sunday morning it was announced by the elders that they have decided for time being to enlist a group of men from the congregation to fill the responsibilities of the pulpit on Sundays. We have been blessed in this congregation with many gifted men who can preach when called upon. With that in mind and fear of the challenge which awaits you, I would like to challenge you in the closing of my days to "*Do the work of an evangelist*". I am going to take you through

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a four-part series titled *The Classified Sermons*. I am going to invite you into to my world as the preacher for Camp Hill and help you to do the work of this evangelist. Whether or not you choose to hire another man, I want to be best replaced and further help you to carry on the work of the kingdom. I will do this by covering four phases of my job, Evangelism, Education, Encouragement and Equipping. Let us begin.

1) Evangelism

The number one priority of the work of an evangelist is Evangelism. What is evangelism? It is the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, through death on the cross, burial in a tomb and resurrection from the dead. Paul reminded Timothy of this in *2 Timothy 2:8*, “Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel...” It is the message that Jesus “abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (*2 Timothy 1:10*).

- If an accountant does not give an accounting of the funds, then is he an accountant?
- If a judge does not make judgments, then is he a judge?
- If a fisherman does not fish, then is he a fisherman?

If an evangelist does not evangelize, then is he still an evangelist? Of course not! This is the top priority of the evangelist.

a. Personal Evangelism

i. One-on-one Studies with the lost.

We have a beautiful example of this in *Acts 8:30-31*, *Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said, “Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.*

This is one of the most beautiful accounts of a one on one study we have from the Bible. Philip personally studied with the treasurer of the nation of Ethiopia and ended up leading this official to Christ.

What happens to the church family when this area is overlooked? I would like to think that I kept this part of my job over the years I was at Camp Hill. There is an opening for this work of the evangelist.

Position Open: Personal Teacher of the Gospel

The Camp Hill church of Christ is in search of people willing to personally study the gospel with others for the purpose of their conversion. The position involves a passion for the lost, knowledge of the gospel and a zeal to communicate it to others

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By Doug Hamilton

ii. Follow-up with new converts.

There must be follow-up with new converts once they respond to the gospel. The Hebrew write communicated in 5:12, *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.* It is important for a new convert to receive a grounding in the elementary teachings of the scripture. Without it they are susceptible to leaving Christ. There are some positions officially open for this.

Position Open:

The Camp Hill church of Christ is looking for men and women in the church to ground new converts in the elementary teachings of Christ. You must have a passion to commit the time, patience and love to these Babes in Christ. You must be mature. Please contact the elders if you have an interest in the position.

b. Mission Work

Acts 1:8 "...and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Being an evangelist is to be willing to hold to a worldview of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel was designed to be placed into any culture at any time and be effective. A true evangelist must be willing to put this perspective to test.

i. Foreign Evangelism: He must be willing to participate in a foreign mission field with people who are radically different than themselves. Jesus instructed this in his closing words before ascending into heaven.

- a. Matthew 28:19-20, Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..."
- b. Mark 16:15, And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

An evangelist must be willing to invest some time in the promotion of the gospel in the further reaches of the earth. He is someone who helps the congregation to further the vision of a world-wide gospel.

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I hope I have addressed this area well. I have a confession to make: I really don't like food poisoning and malaria. Being away from home for extended periods of time is not my thing. Even with that in mind I sought to bring you a worldwide image of the gospel by extending my gospel preaching onto the foreign mission field.

Position Open:

The Camp Hill church of Christ is looking for men and women who are willing to go to the foreign mission fields with the gospel of Jesus Christ on short and long-term missions. Duties include setting up missions, fundraising and making reports for the congregation. If interested, contact the deacon of missions or one of the elders.

- ii. **Regional:** He must be willing to participate in with the other congregations in his region. We as the Lord's church are not an island unto ourselves. Just like in the first-century and in respect to autonomy, an evangelist is not afraid to help his brethren down the road if they are willing.
 1. Acts 16:5, "Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees....So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily.
 2. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 11:28, Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern for all the churches.

There is a need in the work of an evangelists to be a team player in the area congregations for which he resides. I hope that I have lived up to that expectation. Even more, I hope you live up to that in my place. Here are some of the positions that will be officially open upon my departure concerning regional missions.

Position Open:

The Camp Hill church of Christ is looking for a teacher to continue the work of the church for the people of Newport Episcopal Commons Home in Newport, PA. Duties involve teaching a weekly Bible class for up to ten people every Tuesday at 10 AM. If you have an interest in this position, contact Doug Hamilton.

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Position Open: Men's Monthly Leadership Meeting

Administrator

The Camp Hill church of Christ is looking for a man or men to be the administrator(s) over the monthly Men's Church Leadership Meeting at the church building. Position involves setting up the refreshments, sending the email and spearheading the topics. Please contact one of the elders if interested in this position.

Position Open:

The Camp Hill church of Christ is looking for a man or men willing to nurture relationships with regional congregations. Duties involve occasional phone calls and area travel. Please contact Doug Hamilton or the elders if interested.

iii. Local

This is the true test of an evangelist's service. Is he willing to share the gospel with those in his immediate community? Is he willing to keep evangelism at the forefront of his own congregation? Is he willing to reach out to his own member's friends and relatives? I pray that I have always kept that as a priority. There are now some openings for this.

Over the years I have been the point of contact for more than a hundred people who wanted help to lead their loved ones to Christ. With my departure, someone or some people in the church are going to have to be the catalyst for this labor. There is an open position.

Position Open: Local Evangelism

The Camp Hill church of Christ is seek for people who are willing to assist in sharing the gospel message with others of the community. Those interested can contact Doug Hamilton for further details.

In closing:

This series of lessons is called the Classifieds because of the ads looking to bring in people to do the work of an evangelist. All of these ads from this week will be on a board in the lobby. If you have an interest in a particular task, write you name on the paper and contact the appropriate person. If by departure is complete and the positions are not filled, then plan on this being the end of such work.