

CHRISTIANS

Fulfilling Their MISSION

13 Lessons

**Prepared by:
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2009

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"CHRISTIANS—Fulfilling Their Mission"

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Lesson One

"Introductory—A Sense of Purpose!"

We believe that God has saved us for a purpose—and that purpose is to work! (Eph. 2:10). God, Himself, has set the example of work! Jesus said that the Father works (Jn. 5:17) and that He also worked (Jn. 5:17; 9:4). God not only created the heavens and earth, but preserves them and regulates them up until now. God was also deeply involved in the work of redeeming fallen man. Jesus is now glorified after making redemption possible, but he still works—intercedes, supervises, rules, regulates, and sustains His people.

It should then be obvious, that if God is still working, then He expects us to work also. We are to give ourselves to good works (Eph. 2:10). He also gives warnings:

Rev. 3:14-16 _____

Prov. 6:6-8 _____

Matt. 25:30 _____

James 4:17 _____

Two brothers once lived down this way,
And one was "DO" and the other was "SAY."

If streets were dirty, and taxes high,
or schools were crowded, "SAY" would cry:
"My, what a town!" but brother "DO"
would set to work and make things new.

And while "DO" worked, "SAY" still would cry:
"He does it wrong, I know that I
could do it right." So, all the day
was heard the clank of brother "SAY,"
But this one fact from none was hid,
"SAY" always talked, "DO" always did!

The secret of success of God's people in Nehemiah's day was.....***"They had a mind to work!"*** (Neh. 4:6). They had interferences from the people around them, but they worked to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem. They were threatened, but it did not stop them from doing what they knew had to be done if they survived as a Nation under God! Within a relatively short time the work was completed because they had a mind to work! If we are to complete the work that God has given us to do, we too must have a **mind to work!** Please consider this a call to fulfill our mission as a people of God!

Three Necessities!

1. We must be motivated to work by seeing the importance of our Cause. We first must see the importance of the church, itself.

a) A high price was paid to bring the church into existence!

Jn. 3:16 _____

Eph. 5:25-27 _____

Acts 20:28 _____

1 Cor. 6:20 _____

b) The church's relationship to Deity. We are God's called out people—we are His possession! We are to represent Deity in the world.

Eph. 3:21 _____

Matt. 5:16 _____

c) The church's potential in the world. The church is not just another "drain" on society. It has great and desirable things to offer:

John 8:32 _____

1 Tim. 3:15 _____

Phil. 4:6-8 _____

Rom. 5:1 _____

Christians can be "salt" and "light" to affect the world for good.

Matt. 5:13 _____

Matt. 5:14-16 _____

The church can be "stability in the midst of turmoil."

Phil. 2:14-16 _____

d) Because of the churches future glory! This world is not our final home—we look for a "New Heavens and Earth."

Eph. 5:25-27 _____

2 Pet. 3:11-13 _____

2. **We must be organized to work effectively as a group.** A great many things can be done by individual effort without cooperating with others in the church. This is good and we need to be busy filling our lives with good works (Tit. 3:14). But there are some areas where cooperation is needed; therefore organization becomes necessary. Leaders need to have the work needs of the church laid out and **programs planned** to carry them out. They need to provide **training, motivation,** and **help** for those who make up the church of our Lord. Organization helps to get the most out of a group effort.

Acts 6:1-5 _____

3. **We must be united to work well.** We work **together** with God! It is wonderful to have this oneness in our efforts to serve God! Discord is usually sown by a small minority (1 Tim. 1:18-20).

1 Cor. 3:9 _____

Ps. 133:1 _____

Eph. 4:3 _____

This oneness has to be worked at! Just one or two discordant persons can hinder the group from accomplishing things together. There are four important elements that will help to keep the church working together:

1. Planned purposes of the church should be made fully known to all members.
2. Everyone who desires should be given a place to work.
3. Personalities must be forgotten and misunderstandings resolved quickly with a right spirit.
4. The Lord's Work should be kept foremost in our minds and lives.

Common cause and noble endeavor can help to bind together and unite minds and lives! (1 Cor. 1:10-13; Phil. 4:2).

Mission or Missions?

What is the work or mission of the church? Can we say that the church has only one mission—that of preaching the Gospel to the world? If there is only one mission, then whatever we do in addition to it would be a violation of Christ's authority over us. Thus, we believe our mission is four-fold:

1. **It is a mission of the church to worship and conduct worship services.**

2. **It is a mission of the church to edify the saints.**
3. **It is a mission of the church to do benevolence work.**
4. **It is a mission of the church to preach the Gospel.**

We will be looking at each of these areas in our study. The life of Christ certainly showed these four things were uppermost in His life.

1. **Christ sought the lost.** (Matt. 1:21; Lk. 19:10)
2. **Christ sought to keep the saved faithful.** (Matt. 10:22; Lk. 22:32)
3. **Christ worshipped and grew in personal devotion and praise of God.** (Matt. 15:7-9; Lk. 2:42-52; 4:16)
4. **Christ help to relieve human suffering.** (Acts 10:38; Matt. 11:2-6; 18:5-6)

Concluding Thoughts

Our purpose in these studies is to:

1. See more clearly our mission and work;
2. Be challenged to do each of them to the best we can;
3. Be sure we understand what is involved in each mission;
4. To discover ways and means of carrying them out most effectively.

We ask for your sincere interest, participation, and help to make our study profitable.

Lesson Two

"EDIFICATION: The Mission of Teaching"

The word "edification" means "to build up, make strong, and to confirm a person." This involves teaching, training, encouragement, exhortation, rebuke, admonition, etc. God expects His people to be taught. We are actually commanded to teach the brethren.

- 2 Tim. 2:2 _____
- Heb. 5:12 _____
- Eph. 4:10-16 _____
- Matt. 28:18-20 _____
- 1 Tim. 4:11, 13, 16; 1:3; 1 Cor. 4:17 _____

God has also made provisions for teachers in the church.

- Eph. 4:11 _____
- Tit. 2:4 _____
- Acts 20:28, 32 _____
- Heb. 13:7 _____
- 1 Pet. 5:2 _____
- 1 Tim. 3:2 _____
- Tit. 1:9 _____

Even those who teach in the church also need to be taught. They need building up or rejuvenation so they can broaden their abilities to serve well as teachers.

A Lasting Work!

"If we work upon marble, it will perish;
 If we work upon brass, time will efface it;
 "If we rear temples, they will crumble into dust.

"But, if we work upon immortal minds,
 If we imbue them with high principles,
 With the JUST FEAR of God and LOVE of their fellow-man,
 "We engrave on those tablets something which no time can efface,
 But which will brighten all eternity."

The Value of Teaching!

Why teach? The simple answer is.....because God said so! The Scriptures also give good reasons for such:

- Matt. 28:29 _____
- Col. 2:7 _____

2 Tim. 2:2 _____

1 Cor. 14:3 _____

1 Tim. 4:13 _____

2 Tim. 3:16 _____

2 Tim. 3:17 _____

Col. 1:28 _____

God wants His people to live godly and sincere Christian lives, so that He can use us to affect others about us. There are about 40 "one another" passages that need to be obeyed that will require a great deal of teaching and admonition. (See page 7).

Where do we do this Teaching?

Jesus taught in the Synagogue (Matt. 9:35); Temple (Matt. 26:55); Sea Side (Mk. 4:1); Homes (Mark 2:1-2), etc.

The early church taught in the Temple (Acts 2:46); House to house (Acts 5:42); Synagogue (Acts 13:14-16); Public worship (1 Cor. 14:26), etc.

There seems to be no limitation on the where we are to teach—but teach we must do!

Concluding Thoughts

Teaching had to play an important role in the early church. Very little is given as to the particulars or details. However, enough is given to know it is to be done and why. Our responsibility is to teach all Jesus gave and train others to do the same.

One Another Passages

- 1) Encourage one another. Heb. 10:25; 1 Thess. 5:11
- 2) Teach one another. Col. 3:16
- 3) Build up one another. 1 Thess. 5:11; Rom. 14:19
- 4) Admonish one another. Col. 3:16
- 5) Exhort one another every day. Heb. 3:13
- 6) Stir up one another to love and good works. Heb. 10:24
- 7) Comfort one another. 1 Thess. 4:18
- 8) Confess your sins to one another. Jas. 5:15
- 9) Pray for one another. Jas. 5:16
- 10) Instruct one another. Rom. 15:14
- 11) Address one another in Psalms and Hymns and spiritual songs. Eph. 5:19
- 12) Be subject to one another. Eph. 5:21
- 13) Be kind to one another. Eph. 4:32
- 14) Forgive one another. Eph. 4:32
- 15) Forbear one another in love. Eph. 4:2
- 16) Be servants of one another. Gal. 5:13
- 17) Have the same care for one another. 1 Cor. 12:25

- 18) Live in harmony with one another. Rom. 12:16; 15:5-6
- 19) Outdo one another in showing honor. Rom. 12:10
- 20) Greet one another with a holy kiss. Rom. 16:16; 1 Pet. 5:14; 2 Cor. 13:12
- 21) Love one another. Rom. 12:10; 13:8; 1 Pet. 1:22; Jn. 13:34, 35; 15:12; 1 Jn. 3:11, 23; 4:4, 11, 12; 2 Jn. 3.
- 22) Wash one another's feet. Jn. 13:14
- 23) Be at peace with one another. Mk. 9:50
- 24) Wait for one another. 1 Cor. 11:33
- 25) Bear one another's burdens. Gal. 6:2
- 26) Do not refuse one another (Husband & Wife). 1 Cor. 7:5
- 27) (do not) have lawsuits.....with one another (before unbelievers). 1 Cor. 6:7
- 28) Practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another. 1 Pet. 4:9
- 29) Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another. 1 Pet. 5:5
- 30) As each one has received a gift, employ it for one another. 1 Pet. 4:10
- 31) Always seek to do good to one another. 1 Thess. 5:15
- 32) Let us have no provoking of one another. Gal. 5:26
- 33) Let us have no envy of one another. Gal. 5:26
- 34) Let us no more pass judgment on one another. Rom. 14:13
- 35) Welcome one another (in spite of different views). Rom. 15:1; 14:1-15:7
- 36) Do not grumble, brethren, against one another Jas. 5:9
- 37) Agree with one another. 2 Cor. 13:11
- 38) Do not bite and devour one another. Gal. 5:15
- 39) Do not lie to one another. Col. 3:9
- 40) Do not speak evil against one another. Jas. 4:11

Lesson Three

"EDIFICATION: The Challenge of Teaching"

If teaching were easy everyone would be able to do it effectively. But for some reason the inspired James warns about those who would be teachers—***"Be not many of you teachers!"*** (Jas. 3:1). Not everyone can teach as well as others; yet, we all teach in one way or another. We teach by: (1) Word of mouth; (2) Example or Influence; (3) Encouragement; (4) Cooperation; etc. We have already seen an emphasis upon teaching in Lesson Two. Let's review briefly:

- 1) The Older to teach the younger. Tit. 2:4
- 2) We are to teach all Jesus commanded. Matt. 28:19-20
- 3) We are to teach diligently the things of the Lord. Acts 18:25
- 4) We are to teach the same things. 1 Cor. 4:17
- 5) We are to warn people in our teaching. Col. 1:28
- 6) We are to teach to establish people in the faith. Col. 2:7
- 7) Women are not to teach over a man. 1 Tim. 2:12
- 8) We are to teach the Word of God. 1 Tim. 4:11
- 9) We are to teach the word to faithful people who can in turn teach others. 2 Tim. 2:2
- 10) We are to teach no other doctrine. 1 Tim. 1:3
- 11) The primary purpose of teaching is to edify or build up. 1 Cor. 14:3; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10
- 12) We are to exhort people to continue in the faith. Acts 14:22
- 13) We are to warn the unruly. 1 Thess. 5:14
- 14) We are to teach with longsuffering. 2 Tim. 4:2

Goals for Teachers!

1. To encourage God's people to a continuous development of a Christ-like character.
2. To develop a better understanding and love for the Bible as God's Word.
3. To bring about a greater appreciation for the Christian family.
4. To promote a greater desire to become an intelligent and useful member of the church in order to participate and contribute constructively to building up of the church.
5. To foster a Christian understanding of life and the universe, and the ability to see in them God's purposes and plans.
6. To encourage others to become teachers of the Word.
7. To continue to upgrade the standards for teachers:
 - a) A consecrated personality;
 - b) Deep and genuine devotion;
 - c) Concern for those taught;
 - d) Growing knowledge of the needs of those we teach;
 - e) Use the best methods possible to get message across;
 - f) To encourage teachers to read and study constantly.
8. To encourage a well-planned curriculum for all.
 - a) One that produces familiarity with the entire contents of the Bible.
 - b) One that exposes the students to church history, missionary activities, present-day problems.

- c) One that builds character that will stand firm against pressures.
- d) One that is adapted to the needs of a growing life in Christ.

Future Planning!

1. It is important that future planning be done to adequately meet the needs of a growing church.
2. Set goals, lay out directions, to plant seed, cultivate it, nurture it, and wait for fruition.
3. To be sure plans include the training of sufficient personnel to carry out the plans that are made.
4. To train leaders and produce a steady supply of prepared new teachers.
5. Anticipate new needs in order to face new problems.

Concluding Thoughts

To meet the needs of people and to prepare for the future requires a lot of planning. At the same time, there must also be a preparing for others to carry on the same work. A teaching program is not simple—it requires a lot of planning, working, insight, and dedication. Parents play an important role in the teaching of children. What the church does is to help build on what the parents have done.

Lesson Four

"EDIFICATION: The Ways and Means of Teaching"

It is not enough to know our responsibility to teach all that Jesus has commanded; but we need to get busy doing what needs to be done! We must plan, pray, work, grow, and enlarge our ability to carry out the mission God has given to us. We need to find effective ways of doing the job. Our challenge is not just to get the knowledge into everyone's head, but to motivate and encourage every member to put such knowledge into practice.

Jas. 1:22-25 _____

Matt. 7:21-23 _____

We need to evaluate what we are presently doing to see how effective we are in our efforts. Then, we need to ask: *"how can we improve on what we are doing?"* Then, we need to find people who are interested in helping to make these improvements.

In this lesson, we want to explore three fundamental things: (1) The best use of time; (2) How to secure more willing workers; (3) What activities can we use to do more edifying?

The Best use of Time!

Several years ago, a person tried to estimate the time that different religious groups made use of to instill their teachings to their people. I do not know how accurate these figures are, but it is possible that they are close.

- Roman Catholics.....300 hours a year.**
- Jewish.....305 hours a year.**
- Protestants.....25 hours a year.(??)**
- Camp Hill Church.....360 hours a year.**

The above number of hours for the church of 360 includes Bible Classes on Sunday and Wednesday and a sermon on Sunday AM and PM. Not all of the members attend that much. While the above makes us look better from a Time standpoint; yet, do we feel that this is sufficient and how effective are they in doing the teaching needed? Are we making the best use of the time that we have together? Some have suggested that a few weeks of continuous, intensive training may be far more fruitful than 52 weeks on Sunday and Wednesday.

Eph. 5:14-17 _____

Securing Willing Workers

In most congregations of the church, there is a small percentage that does most of the work, while the remainder goes unused and undeveloped. A church that is able to involve the majority of the church in its efforts can be an effective moving force in any community. But how do you get this kind of commitment from the majority of members? We would like to evaluate and discuss the following thoughts together.

1. Make appeals to the deeper urges within each individual.

- a) To show gratitude to God for His blessings (Phil. 4:6-8).
- b) The desire to share the love of Christ with others (Jn. 13:34-35).
- c) To want to show concern for both young and old (Rom. 13:8).
- d) Encourage the desire to express the best that is in us by fruitful service in a cause that is supremely important.
- e) To want the approval of those we admire and respect.
- f) A sense of partnership in a great enterprise (1 Cor. 3:9).
- g) A desire to maintain the two great God-given institutions: Home and Church.

2. Present incentives to serve.

- a) Present publicly the need and importance of these activities.
- b) Make appeal through use of Scripture.
- c) Show the dignity and importance of teaching and training programs.
- d) Show appreciation—publicly and privately.
- e) Discover, develop and utilize special talent.
- f) Make special appeal to youth to give themselves in service to God.
- g) Provide surroundings, tools, and equipment to make work satisfying.

3. Make an appeal for deeper dedication.

- a) Encourage high ideals.
- b) To be faithful to the Lord's church, its worship, programs and activities.
- c) Help to create attitudes of reverence and worship.
- d) Learn to maintain a spirit of co-operation.
- e) Adopt a personal plan of religious growth.

4. Call for an acknowledgment of certain things:

- a) Recognition that I am called to serve (Matt. 20:28).
- b) Working with God is a sacred privilege and obligation (1 Cor. 3:9).
- c) Need to fulfill my part in the church's responsibilities (1 Cor. 12:14-22).
- d) The need to be a "faithful" worker (Rev. 2:10).
- e) The need to guard my personal example in word and habit.

Suggested Activities

There are many activities that might be suggested, but having the personnel to put such into practice might be a problem in some situations. Discuss and add to the following things.

1. Through Bible classes and materials.
2. Through worship assemblies.
3. Through preaching.
4. Emphasizing individual studies in home.
5. Involvement in work of church....taking responsibilities.
6. Visitation.
7. Church bulletin.
8. Special devotionals in the home.
9. Parties, get-togethers, or eating together.
10. Training programs.
11. Church library.
12. Tracts
13. Religious papers in home.
14. Lectureship programs designed for members.
15. Holding on to members.
16. New Members classes.
17. Well-arranged building to be used.
18. Home study courses for members.
19. Tapes, CDs, etc.
20. Home library.
21. Bible Correspondence Courses
22. Extra, and special classes (School of the Bible, Saturday classes, Afternoon classes, week-end emphasis).

Concluding Thoughts

Thank you for your willingness to participate in these classes and make suggestions and evaluate ideas that could be very helpful to the future of this congregation. If we know what our mission is; then, we need to find effective ways to see that our mission is carried out.

Lesson Five

"WORSHIP: Fulfilling Our Mission"

One of the things that Christians are under obligation to do is to "worship." This word "worship" comes from an Anglo-Saxon background indicating "worth-ship." It is a way of expressing to God how much we value Him in our lives. It is an effort to show homage, reverence, honor, and respect to the God of creation (Isa. 6:1-8)—as well to give thanks for redeeming us.

In order to properly worship God, we need to understand who He is.

1. He is a being of overwhelming majesty, holiness, sinlessness, and perfection.
2. He is all-powerful—nothing is too great for Him to accomplish.
3. He is all-knowing—all is laid open before Him.
4. He is everywhere-present—there is nowhere we can go that God is not there.
5. He is just and righteous—He does not act unfairly or incorrectly.
6. He is faithful—He never breaks a promise or goes back on His word.
7. He has great compassion, mercy, and love for His creatures. He has shown this by the giving of the greatest of gifts to redeem us back to Himself.

Millions of people all over the world meet to worship the true God of heaven. But is it worship? Is it acceptable worship? Is it fulfilling our mission of worship to God?

Things to be Involved in Acceptable Worship

1. The Mind (Jn. 4:24). It is to understand that God is worthy of our adoration. (Rev. 4:11). It is also understanding what we are doing. (1 Cor. 14:15). It is remembering what He had done for us. (1 Cor. 11:24). It is giving our attention—realizing what we are doing. (1 "Cor. 11:17)

2. The Heart (Jn. 4:24). It is the offering of thanksgiving from our heart to God for all His mercy and blessings. (1 Cor. 1:4). We praise Him for His grace. (Eph. 1:6). We offer our devotion to Him because He deserves it (Rom. 12:1). We express our love to Him because of His love for us. (1 Jn. 4:19). It is expressing our emotions and affections for and for what He has done for His creatures.

3. The Body (Eph. 5:19; 1 Tim. 2:8). The various avenues of worship does require some body participation on our part.

4. Fellowship (1 Cor. 11:17; Acts 2:42). Fellowship is "joint-participation." It is individuals come together for the mission of worshipping the God of Heaven.

5. It is a means of serving God (Rom. 12:1). We serve God when we do His bidding. We are not the masters, God is the Master. By rendering this service unto God, we give Him due recognition of who He is!

Necessities of Worship

In order for worship to be meaningful, it must be the outpouring of one's heart to God. It must be more than just doing things! These activities are merely avenues ordained by God and through which we express our worship (worthy-ship) to Him. What are some necessities of worship?

1. **God must be the object of our worship.** (1 Cor. 10:14; Matt. 4:10). It is the outpouring of our hearts to the great God of Heaven.
2. **We must engage in the right form of worship.** (Jn. 4:24; 17:17). We show respect for what He requested or commands to be done. Right forms are mere avenues through which we express our worship to God.
3. **Worship is to be with the right spirit or attitude.** (Jn. 4:24; 1 Cor. 14:15; 1 Cor. 3:16-18). It is expressing from the heart how we feel and believe about God.

Whether we worship God privately or publicly with others, the above three factors need to be involved! But there are dangers here that must be avoided!

1. **An over-emphasis on worshipping in truth to the neglect of worship in spirit!** True worship involves both the truth and in spirit!
2. **An over-emphasis on worshipping in spirit to the neglect of worship in truth!** Again, true worship involves both the spirit and in truth!
3. Examples to illustrate:
 - a) Lev. 10:1-3
 - ◇ It is easy to see that God condemned them because they did not "do" the right thing.
 - ◇ They did something, but not the right something! But, their actions also show that they had the wrong spirit.
 - b) Heb. 11:4
 - ◇ Cain's spirit was wrong—he did not bring what God required of him.
 - ◇ By not bringing the right thing, he did not worship in truth either.

Concluding Thoughts

It is important to keep both sides of worship equally emphasized! We must avoid following after the dictates of men (Matt. 15:7-9). We must make an effort to express honestly, sincerely, and emotionally how we feel about God and His redemptive actions. Acceptable worship comes from an obedient heart that shows we respect God and want to do His bidding. **Questions to evaluate:**

1. Are we truly concerned about our worship to God?
2. Can one be time-conscious and still worship God correctly?
3. Does true worship to God infer one has given himself to God?
4. Do you have recommendations to offer to those who arrange our worship to God.

Lesson Six

"WORSHIP: Evaluating Our Activities"

When Christians come together in an assembly for worship, we engage in certain activities that are labeled and thought of as being **acts** of worship. The command to worship infers certain things, such as:

1. A place to worship together;
2. A time for all to meet together to engage in certain activities;
3. Leaders to lead the group in certain activities.

What are the activities that we engage in that would identify us as worshipping? What indications are given in Scripture?

Acts 2:42 _____

1 Cor. 14:15 _____

1 Cor. 16:1-2 _____

When we engage in these activities, we are showing our respect or reverence for the God who has saved us through His Son. But just to engage in these activities without our heart really being involved will make our worship vain or useless. The church at Corinth had met together and engaged in certain activities of worship—but the Apostle stated that they had come together not for the better but for the worse (1 Cor. 11:17). What was wrong? He illustrated his point by what they had done about the Lord's Supper (Communion).

1 Cor. 11:20-22 _____

The Apostle also pointed out how disorderly they were in their public assemblies. More than one was speaking at a time and some were speaking in a foreign language with no one to translate the message. (1 Cor. 14:9-12, 27-30).

1 Cor. 14:26 _____

God has designed worship activities that give us opportunities to express our love, respect, honor, and reverence for Him; but they also are designed for our benefit—that we might be built up (edified).

Questions for Discussion

1. **How should we view the "Lord's Day?" (Rev. 1:10)**
 - a) Is it the "Christian Sabbath?"
 - b) Is the Lord's Day to be considered a day of rest?

- c) What makes this day significant? (Mk. 16:9; Jn. 20:1, 19, 26; Acts 2:1; 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 11:17-20).
- d) Should the whole day be spent in worship activities?
- 2. How should we show reverence in our worship assemblies? (Ps. 111:9)**
- a) How do we show respect at other important occasions?
- b) Can quietness help our worship assemblies?
- c) Do we need preparation in order to show reverence in our assemblies?
- d) Should dignity and appropriate conduct characterize our worship assemblies?
- e) Why is reverence so important during our worship?
- 3. Does God command us to worship together every Sunday? (Heb. 10:25)**
- a) Should we go because we have to or want to or both?
- b) Is forsaking the assembly grounds for discipline?
- 4. What does it mean to partake "worthily" of the Lord's Supper? (1 Cor. 11:27-29)**
- 5. Do we receive forgiveness of sins in partaking of the Lord's Supper? (1 Cor. 11:24-25)**
- a) What about John 6:48-58?
- 6. Is the Lord's Supper a memorial of the DEATH, BURIAL, and RESURRECTION of Jesus? (1 Cor. 11:23-26)**
- 7. Who should partake of the Lord's Supper? (1 Cor. 11:18)**
- 8. Should we pray to Jesus rather than to the Father (Matt. 6:9; Acts 7:59)**
- 9. Should all prayers end with the phrase "In Jesus' name?" (Jn. 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:24, 26; Eph. 5:20)**
- 10. Why don't we say the "Lord's Prayer" in unison? (Matt. 6:9-13)**
- 11. Can we give a smaller amount than we should, but do it cheerfully, and be acceptable with God? (2 Cor. 9:6-7)**
- 12. Can we bind the following things on people?**
- a) Bowing of the head in Prayer? (2 Chron. 20:18)
- b) Bowing the knee before God in prayer? (1 Kgs. 18:42; Lk. 22:19)
- c) Lifting up hands in prayer? (1 Kgs. 8:22; 1 Tim. 2:8)
- d) Closing of eyes in Prayer?
- e) Looking upward in Prayer? (Lk. 18:13)
- f) Standing in Prayer? (Matt. 6:5; Lk. 18:13; Mk. 11:25)
- g) Fasting? (Acts 13:3)
- h) Buying a meeting house to assemble in?
- i) Using one cup or many in the Lord's Supper? (Lk. 22:17)
- j) Must be in tie and coat if leading in services?

13. Is the church building sacred?

Concluding Thoughts

When we leave the assembly of God's people, how can we truly know that we have "worshiped" the God of Heaven? Was our heart truly in the things that we did? Did we show reverence, respect, and honor to God—which He rightfully deserves? Or did we try to worship God with a "polluted heart" (Ezek. 20:16); a "Lifted up heart" (Ezek. 28:17); or with a "divided heart." (Hosea 10:2)? Are we aware when our heart is not in our worship? If we go away from the assembly and are not built up or edified, who is responsible?

Lesson Seven

"WORSHIP: It's Value and Necessity"

There is no question in regards to Scripture teaching that God wants both public and private worship! Both are discussed in Scripture (Matt. 6:5-6; 1 Cor. 11:17; 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; etc.). Each has its own place and time as well as its own values. But, it is definitely not an either/or question, but both are necessary for the Christian to be right with God. The time may come when we are physically no longer able to attend the public assemblies of the church; but, until then, we should take advantage of both situations. In this lesson, we want to look at the value (reasons) for public worship in particular.

The Value (reasons) for Worship

1. Worship to God is essential to salvation! God has commanded such of His creatures, not because he needs it, but that we need it:

- a) Ps. 99:9—***"Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at His holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy."***
- b) Matt. 4:10—***"You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve."*** (Quote of Deut. 6:13).
- c) John 4:23—***"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him."***

To not worship God is a basic evil of mankind! (Rom. 1:21, 25). Worship is not only a duty, but it is his pre-eminent duty! Jesus did not say "you may worship God if you feel like it," but he stated it as an imperative: ***"You shall worship the Lord your God."*** We either pay proper homage to God now (in this life), or we will pay homage to Him in the judgment to our everlasting shame (Phil. 2:9-11). No wonder that the Hebrew writer was gravely concerned when those to whom he was writing were forsaking the assembly of public worship to God (10:25).

2. True worship is at the root of our spiritual life, growth, and steadfastness as a Christian. (Heb. 10:23-25). Failing to worship God shows a bad heart condition (Acts 8:21); as well as, it indicates a lack of love for God (1 Jn. 5:3). Our spiritual man needs constant nourishment (Matt. 4:4; 1 Pet. 2:2). The dangers are real that we can depart from God because of an ***"evil heart of unbelief!"*** (Heb. 3:12). Because of the way we have been designed by God, we need companionship, friendship, and fellowship. The early church realized this and met daily to worship and to fellowship with one another (Acts 2:42, 46). There is spiritual strength to be found in these kinds of assemblies. We not only receive spiritual grounding that gives conviction and steadfastness, but courage to live a godly, holy life to bring glory to God! Walking in the light is not the easiest thing to do. We need all the strength and encouragement we can receive to endure to the end (Heb. 3:14).

3. It promotes the oneness of God's people! We are admonished to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3). Jesus, Himself, prayed that we would

maintain that oneness (John 17). The public worship of God is so designed by God to help promote such! We all are participants, not spectators, in common things and common beliefs. The religion of Christ is one of togetherness—a brotherhood of saints (1 Pet. 2:17). We function as a body of people (Rom. 12:4-5). Public worship of God brings kindred hearts together, in a common faith in God, with mutual love for one another, and holding firm to common goals in life. These are all expressed in our worship assembly!

4. Public worship encourages faithfulness and fidelity to Christ! (Heb. 10:25; 1 Pet. 3:15; Heb. 2:1-4). Our assemblies of worship are open and public confession of our faith in God. Faithful attendance to these assemblies is a testimony to the world that we stand with Christ. We receive strength while in these assemblies to be loyal to Christ every day and every where! It will protect us against wrong concepts or mis-understandings of God's Word so that we will not make shipwreck of the faith (1 Tim. 1:18-20). It helps us to maintain our relationship with God and one another. If we are indifferent and unconcerned about public worship, we are already on our way to departing from God!

5. Public worship is a special way of drawing near to God! (Jas. 4:8). God seeks for or desires for His people to worship Him (Jn. 3:23-24). But James challenges us to ***"draw near to God and He will draw near to you."*** What better way to draw near to God than in worshiping Him together? It is a special time to express our love to God for what He has done for us. He deserves our praise, honor, and reverence! (Rev. 5:9-10; 7:12).

A Tragic Hindrance To Acceptable Worship

James indicates this problem in the same verses where he admonishes God's people to draw near to God! (James 4:8-11). Notice what he says, by inspiration, that a man must do in order to draw near to God.

1. He must cleanse his hands of ungodly involvement.
2. He must cleanse and purify his heart.
3. He must be regretful (mourn & lament) over his mistakes.
4. He must humble himself before God.

The Old Testament Prophets pronounced God's disgust of His people coming before Him to worship and living ungodly and unrighteous lives! Isaiah 1:10-17 illustrates this concept very vividly! God said that He took no pleasure in all the many sacrifices and offerings they brought. He even indicated that they were an abomination to Him. The reasons are clearly stated: ***"Your hands are covered with blood," "Cease to do evil," "Learn to do good, seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, and plead for the widow."*** Their sins were hiding God's face from them and their prayers were not heard! (see also Isa. 59:1-2). Amos 5:21-24 states basically the same thing that their worship to God is worthless because of their ungodly lives! Today, under the New Covenant, we offer as our sacrifice to God—not an animal—but our bodies as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1-2). But notice that our bodies are offered as that which is holy and acceptable to God! Jesus pointed out this concept in Matt. 5:23-24 when He said: ***"If you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."*** How we live our lives and how we conduct ourselves among our fellow-man can make a big difference as to whether our worship will be accepted by God. Jesus

continually referred to such people as hypocrites (Matt. 23:23, etc.). To think that I can correctly worship God and continually act unrighteous towards my fellow-man is pure self-deception!

Concluding Thoughts

Man is designed by God to worship. Let's be sure that our worship is not hindered by ungodly and unrighteous living on our part. Let's learn to recognize the many values of worshiping God from our hearts. And whether our worship is private or public, let's be sure that it is not only offered with our mouth, tongue, and body, but most of all from our heart (our inner man)!

*Lesson Eight****"BENEVOLENCE: Mission to the Poor"***

What is involved in Benevolence? The word comes from Latin that means "goodwill." It refers to an inner feeling of concern for others that leads to acts of goodwill or concern. The word "charity" would be defined in a similar fashion. The idea involves: (1) Seeking to do good to others; (2) Primarily to help fill a need; and (3) The use of our resources, possessions, abilities to help others. Underlying all of this is the fulfillment of a command of God—*"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* (Matt. 22:39).

Scripture Emphasis**In the Old Testament:**

Exo. 23:6 _____
 Deut. 15:7 _____
 Ps. 41:1 _____
 Ps. 82:3-4 _____
 Ps. 109:32 _____
 Prov. 14:31 _____
 Prov. 19:17 _____
 Prov. 22:16 _____
 Prov. 29:7 _____

In the Gospels:

Matt. 5:42-46 _____
 Matt. 6:3-4 _____
 Matt. 10:8 _____
 Matt. 10:42 _____
 Matt. 14:16 _____
 Matt. 15:1-9 _____
 Matt. 18:23-35 _____
 Matt. 25:31-36 _____
 Lk. 6:30, 38 _____
 Lk. 10:30-37 _____
 Lk. 12:33 _____
 Lk. 14:12-14 _____

In Acts:

Acts 2:44-45 _____
 Acts 4:32 _____
 Acts 4:34-37 _____

Acts 5:1-11 _____
Acts 6:1-4 _____
Acts 11:27-30 _____

In the Letters to Christians:

Gal. 2:10 _____
Gal. 6:4-5 _____
Gal. 6:10 _____
1 Thess. 4:11-12 _____
2 Thess. 3:8-12 _____
1 Cor. 13:1-3 _____
Jas. 1:27 _____
Jas. 2:1-7 _____
Jas. 5:4 _____

Who are we to Help?

1. Our own family and relatives.

1 Tim. 5:8 _____
Matt. 15:1-9 _____

2. Our brethren in the Lord.

Gal. 2:10 _____
Jas. 1:27 _____
John 13:34-35 _____

Acts 11:27-30—This was a special collection taken up for the poor saints in Judea.

Money was sent from the churches of Galatia, Achaia, and Macedonia.

- a) How. (1 Cor. 16:1-3)
- b) Attitude in giving. (2 Cor. 8-9)
- c) Purpose. (2 Cor. 8:14)
- d) Integrity with funds. (2 Cor. 8:21)
- e) Delivered by. (Rom. 15:25-27).

3. Our Neighbor.

Gal. 6:10 _____
Matt. 22:39 _____
Matt. 5:13-16 _____

Concluding Thoughts

Our love is to abound towards all men, but especially towards our brethren in Christ (1 Thess. 3:12). We need to be known for our good works (Tit. 3:8). It is not the talkers, but the doers that bring glory to God through letting their light shine (Matt. 7:21). We are exhorted to be ready unto every good work (Tit. 3:1).

Lesson Nine

"BENEVOLENCE: Commands and Principles"

God mainly directs His people by commands or similar ways of letting us know what He wants or what pleases Him. When it comes to benevolence, there are plenty of commands and statements that let us know what God wants. (See the previous lesson). Occasionally God will give a warning on what not to do towards others. In addition, He will give us statements of "principles" that give general guidance on how to handle a lot of situations that are not specifically mentioned in Scripture. We will examine these things in this lesson and deal with some special items that often are brought up in such a study.

Warning concerning the Poor

Christians are given a reminder by inspiration to not forget the poor (Gal. 2:10). They are not to show partiality to the rich over the poor in their midst (Jas. 2:1-9). God's people are especially not to crush or take advantage of the poor (Jas. 5:4). We are warned not to defraud a brother (which would include defrauding the poor) (1 Thess. 4:6). We are also not to go to law with a brother over matters that the church can help to settle. But if not, then be willing to be cheated by your brother (this would also include the poor) (1 Cor 6:5-8)

Principles to help make Decisions!

All of us are faced with decisions to help others. Some are desiring of help while others are not. A Christian can want to help, but have some reservations about doing so. What can help him to make the decision one way or another? The following principles are given to us to help with this kind of decision making.

1. **Each man is to bear his own burden. (Gal. 6:4-5)**
2. **Each person is to work with his own hands to provide for his needs. (1 Thess. 4:11-12; Eph. 4:28).**
3. **If a person won't work, neither should he eat. (2 Thess. 3:8-12)**
4. **Give not that which is holy to the dogs. (Matt. 7:6)**
5. **You will always have the poor with you. (Matt. 26:6-13; Mk. 14:7-8)**
6. **Supplying their needs must be done out of love. (1 Cor. 13:1-3)**

There may be other principles that could be added to the above list. Make use of these and others to make your decisions about helping others.

Church Treasury

Decisions often have to be made about whom and how can people be helped out of the collected funds of the church. The expression "church treasury" is not in Scripture—but we believe the

idea is inferred. How can we determine what this money is to be used for? The easiest way is to look in Scripture and see what is commanded to be done or how they used it in the early church.

1 Cor. 16:1-2 _____

1 Tim. 5:3, 16-17 _____

Phil. 4:14-18 _____

Can these funds be used for purchasing a building to meet in and the upkeep of that building? There is neither command nor an example of such being done! Then, upon what basis do we use the money for such? Is it possible that the money collected can be used for things inferred in a command? We know the early church met together for worship. They met in the Temple area and in homes that we know about. They may have met in a synagogue building for a short time. But there is no indication that they used the collected money for a building! The church has to have a place to meet for worship—how do they obtain such? We believe that it is acceptable to use the collected money for a building to meet in from inference!

Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35 _____

Did members of the church live out of these funds? Did it provide them with **food, shelter, clothes, or other things**? Did they eat together?

1 Cor. 11:20-22, 33-34 _____

What is being condemned—eating together or confusing the Lord's Supper with a common meal? (2 Pet. 2:13; Jude 12).

Caring for Orphans

1. Does the Bible give explicit instructions on how to care for orphans?
2. Do we have any example of orphans being cared for in the New Testament?
3. Who can care for orphans?
4. What are some ways that orphans can be cared for?
 - a) Foster home.
 - b) Adoption.
 - c) Individual or the church to support such in a private home.
 - d) Individual or the church to support such in a public home.
5. Can a congregation or congregations voluntarily cooperate together to care for orphans?

6. Who has the right or authority to legislate in these matters? (1 Tim. 4:1-5).
 - a) God is the Law giver—man has no right to take His place and make Laws (Matt. 15:9).
 - b) God has commanded the care of orphans and widows.
 - c) But the Bible does not tell either individuals or congregations how they are to care for them.
 - d) When we have a command from God to do something, we do not need the methods described to us also.

7. Where are the directions in the Bible for:
 - a) A song leader or song books?
 - b) Owning a church building?
 - c) Using a building exclusively for worship services or teaching?
 - d) A preacher performing a marriage ceremony in the building?
 - e) Paying non-members for goods or services to the church?
 - f) Having restrooms in the building?
 - g) Having a water fountain in the building?
 - h) etc.

Concluding Thoughts

A good question to ask ourselves—*"What have I done?"* We can say that I don't get drunk, murder, lie, or steal, etc.! But the question is still....what have I done? Christians are to put off the old way of life but also put on the new way of living....doing God's commands! (Jas. 4:17; Jn. 5:29; Matt. 25:42). We definitely need to be concerned about others about us. We need to be looking and seeking ways that we may help.....because covetousness is gone and generosity is to be shone!

Lesson Ten

"BENEVOLENCE: Be Doers!"

There is a great deal of teaching on Benevolence in the Scriptures! Christians need to be **"ready unto every good work!"** (Tit. 3:1). We not only need to be talkers, but doers as well! The Bible also talks a lot about the need for Christians to be workers! Man was made to work (Gen. 2:15). Work was not a penalty for sin (Gen. 3:17-19). We have already seen that God and Christ work (Jn. 5:17); so, why shouldn't Christians work as well.

Eph. 2:10 _____

Jas. 1:25 _____

Jas. 4:17 _____

Work can bring happiness into our lives and into the lives of those whom we work to help. **"Jesus went about doing good."** And He said: **"It is more blessed to give than to receive."** (Acts 20:35). We need to have the reputation: **"well reported for good works"** (1 Tim. 5:10). We are told by Jesus that we are the **"salt of the earth"** and the **"light of the world."** How can we be this—or have this kind of influence on our world? **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."** (Matt. 5:13, 14, 16). One of the best ways to lose our own burdens is to forget self and show concern for others (Phil. 2:3-4). Our lives will be enriched and we can realize that our lives are counting for something good or worthwhile.

A "do-nothing" religion is worthless. Unfortunately, there are many more "talkers" than there are "doers!" God wants worker to do His work.

Matt. 23:3 _____

Matt. 7:21 _____

Titus 1:16 _____

Rev. 14:13 _____

Gal. 6:9-10 _____

Some day we will hear one of two things:

Matt. 25:21 _____

Matt. 25:26 _____

Why such emphasis on our lives being filled with good works?

If my salvation is by Grace through Faith and not of works—then why should I fill my life with good works? (Eph. 2:8-10). A grave mistake is made by people who do not look carefully at this passage. There is a contrast being drawn between being saved by Grace through faith or being saved by my good works. It should be obvious that we cannot do enough good works to be saved because good works do not forgive our sins—God does when we put our trust in Jesus for our redemption! God designed that His children's lives would be filled with good works (v. 10). If we do not fill our lives with good works, will we be lost? **YES!** Why would we be lost? Do good works save us? **NO! Jesus saves us!** But whom does Jesus save? He saves those whose faith is active and obedient to God. A faith without works is dead—worthless (Jas. 2:17-24). Thus, good works are necessary to our salvation, but they alone cannot save us—we need Christ cleansing blood! (Rom. 5:8-9).

Practical Application!

"And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful." (Titus 3:14). There are three practical approaches to filling our lives with good works:

1. **Individually**—one on one situation. Those we know personally. Needs that we can meet personally.
2. **Collectively**—To offer help financially from the church treasury. This is usually done when the need is too large for an individual to handle on a sustaining basis.
3. **Collectively as individuals**—Individual Christians band together to have a "Christian Camp" or a "Christian College" or an "Orphan Home" or a "Home for the Aged." Also at times, two or three Christians can put sufficient funds together to help someone in immediate need.

Christians can be a part of all three avenues if they so desire and are financially able or have the time to give the help needed.

"Father, where shall I work today?"
 And my love flowed warm and free.
 Then, He pointed me out a tiny spot
 And said, "Tend that for me."
 I answered quickly, "Oh no, not that,
 Why, no one would ever see,
 No matter how well my work was done,
 Not that little place for me."
 And the word He spoke, it was not stern:
 He answered tenderly,
 Ah, little one, search that heart of thine;
 Art thou working for them or me?
 Gethsemene was a little place,
 And so was Calvary.

Lives filled with good works!

1. Send a get-well card to a sick person.
2. Read the Bible to an older person that cannot see well.
3. Talk to at least one elderly person each Sunday.
4. Write a thank-you note to someone who has influenced your life for Christ.
5. Smile at those you meet at church or in town.
6. Do something good to a person who dislikes you.
7. Help keep the church building clean by policing your area.
8. Help with a food pantry or clothes closet at the church building.
9. Organize help for sick people.
10. Visit widows, shut-ins, and see after special needs.
11. Foster Home care.
12. Help for orphan home care.
13. etc.

Concluding Thoughts

There are so many things (little things even) that all of us can do to help those about us. The biggest stumblingblock is to put ourselves on the side line and be concern for others—and show it. ***"Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."*** (Jas. 1:27). God's people do care and they continually show it by their actions!

Lesson Eleven

"EVANGELISM: Fulfilling Our Mission"

Evangelism is a God ordained activity! The coming of the Son of God in the flesh was to place a strong emphasis on reaching the lost (Lk. 19:10). Before His ascension back to heaven, Jesus gave the marching orders to His Apostles: ***"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."*** (Mk. 16:16). The Apostles and Prophets were inspired and guided into the preaching and writing down this message from God (Eph. 3:1-6). The early church accomplished their mission of taking the Gospel to the whole of mankind (Col. 1:23). But this mission is a continual mission throughout the ages. The need for men to hear the saving message from God will continue to be needed until Jesus comes again. And what a joy and privilege that we have to be used of God to reach out to a lost world with a message of hope.

Is there anything else that is betterworth,
As along life's way we plod,
Than to find some wandering soul of earth,
And bring him home to God?

I would rather find a soul that is lost,
And bring him home again,
Than to own what all earth's acres cost,
Or all the wealth of men.

Wouldn't I be glad when the day is done,
In breathing my latest breath,
To know some word of mine had won
And saved a soul from death?

What was the Message they preached?

Acts 5:42 _____

Acts 11:20 _____

1 Cor. 1:23 _____

Acts 8:4 _____

Acts 15:35 _____

Rom. 10:8 _____

Gal. 1:23 _____

1 Cor. 15:1 _____

Acts 8:12 _____

Acts 4:2 _____

Acts 13:38 _____

Acts 10:36 _____

Acts 14:15 _____

Where were they to preach?

Lk. 24:47 _____

Mk. 16:15 (20) _____

Acts 8:40 _____

Eph. 3:8 _____

How was it to be done?

Col. 1:28 _____

2 Tim. 4:2 _____

Gal. 1:6-8 _____

1 Cor. 2:1-5 _____

Eph. 4:29 _____

1 Pet. 3:15 _____

2 Tim. 2:24 _____

Acts 13:46 _____

1 Thess. 2:4 _____

Eph. 4:15 _____

Evangelism of the early church

The Apostles were told to wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon them to give them power and then to begin their preaching in the city of Jerusalem (Acts 1:8), and then in all of the province of Judea, and the province of Samaria, and unto ends of the earth. When one reads through the book of Acts, he can see that they did what they were directed to do.

- 1) Jerusalem (Acts 2-7) (Acts 5:28)
- 2) Samaria (Acts 8:5-40)
- 3) Judea (10-11:18)
- 4) Phenice, Cyprus, Antioch (11:19-30)
- 5) Cyprus, Asia Minor (Galatia) (Acts 13-14)
- 6) Asia Minor (Galatia), Macedonia, Achaia (Acts 15-18:22)
- 7) Asia Minor (Ephesus), Macedonia, Achaia (18:23-21:14)
- 8) Rome (Roman Letter)
- 9) Spain (Rom. 15:24)
- 10) Crete (Titus Letter)
- 11) Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10)
- 12) Ethiopia (Acts 8)
- 13) All provinces of Asia Minor (1 Pet. 1:1) (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia).
- 14) Babylon (1 Pet. 5:13)

Concluding Thoughts

Christianity must not and cannot be localized! When the Apostles and the church seemed quite content to just stay in Jerusalem, God allowed persecution to come in order to scatter these first

Christians—so the Gospel could be spread (Acts 8:1-4). The Holy Spirit made a direct appeal to the church at Antioch to send out men (Acts 13:1-3). God used the best trained, prepared, spiritually mature, courageous, and visionaries to become the spreaders of His Word. The whole thrust of the New Testament letters was to see that the Gospel was carried into the whole world. The church today must be possessed with this understanding and desire also. Many have no idea of the importance nor the bigness of the task of missions. It is important that we get all Christians to think in terms of a world-wide program of missions! We need to help support and send out the best and most brilliant men and women to build the spiritual empire of the King of kings.

Lesson Twelve

"EVANGELISM: Who is to do it?"

It is quite obvious that you would like to have the best prepared, trained, and gifted persons to reach out with the Gospel to the world. The Apostle talks about this in Romans 10:13-17. People need to hear the Gospel before they can believe it and become obedient to it. The Gospel is a "revealed" message from God that men can only know about when they hear it. There is no other way—they must hear it in order to either accept it or reject it. Evangelism is the means of getting the message of Salvation through Christ to the whole world. But even the Apostles, who had been trained by Jesus for three years and who had the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, could not get all the preaching done that needed to be done. The writer of Acts let's us know that those who were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:4). But at that time the Apostles remained in Jerusalem. The preaching and teaching that needed to be done was not limited to the Apostles. And, as well today, the preaching and teaching must not be left to only trained preachers who are supported to do this work. The inspired Jude puts the burden on all of God's people to earnestly contend for the faith (v. 3). The diligent efforts of every member of the church is needed to get the message out to the whole world.

Discussion Questions**1. What does the phrase, "becoming all things to all men" mean to you? (1 Cor. 9:19-22).**

How do we reconcile the above statement with Paul's injunction in Rom. 12:1-2? The 1 Corinthian passage is talking about conforming in ways that are not sinful in order to reach people. The Roman passage is talking about God's people no longer conforming to sinful ways. The Apostle is saying that we need to be "regular" people around others without partaking of their sinful activities. We make use of all possible means of reaching people as long as no sin is involved.

2. Does bearing fruit in John 15:1-8 have direct reference to converting people?

Do the following passages indicate that "fruit" is converting people?

Jn. 4:36 _____

Rom. 1:13 _____

1 Cor. 7:16; 9:22 _____

1 Tim. 4:16 _____

Jude 23 _____

1 Pet. 3:1-2 _____

Is spiritual reproduction indicated in the following passages?

1 Tim. 1:2 _____

2 Tim. 1:2 _____

1 Cor. 4:17 _____

Phile. 10

1 Cor. 4:15

"Fruit" is often used to refer to "offspring." If we help to lead a person to be saved in Christ, he would be the fruit of my labor or your labor. However, "fruit" is also used to refer to attitudes, thoughts, words, or deeds worthy of a Christian. The following things are identified as "fruit" or "fruits" of the saints:

- 1—A reformed life. (Matt. 3:8-10; Lk. 3:8-9; Matt. 13:23).
- 2—Goodness. (Lk. 6:43-45; Gal. 5:22).
- 3—Love (Gal. 5:22)
- 4—Joy (Gal. 5:22)
- 5—Peace (Gal. 5:22)
- 6—Patience (Gal. 5:22)
- 7—Kindness (Gal. 5:22)
- 8—Faithfulness (Gal. 5:22)
- 9—Gentleness (Gal. 5:23)
- 10—Self-control (Gal. 5:23)
- 11—Christian Living in general (Jn. 15:1-8; Rom. 7:4; Col. 1:10; Jude 12; Matt. 21:43)

Will I be lost if I do not help to reach others? (Jn. 15:2)

3. Can we use the phrase, "Witnessing for Christ" correctly today? (Acts 1:8)

A witness is generally one who has seen something first-hand. All the Apostles had seen the risen Christ and could bear witness to His resurrection. This is critical to Christianity's existence! However, there is another use of this word as illustrated in the following Scriptures.

Isa. 43:10, 12; 44:8

Acts 10:43

Rom. 3:21

Rom. 2:15

Rev. 6:9; 12:11, 17; 20:4

Our word "martyr" comes from this Greek word, MARTURA. A martyr is one who bears witness to Jesus by dying for Him (Rev. 17:6). Preaching the Gospel is a means of witnessing or testifying that Jesus is truly the Son of God (Matt. 24:14; 2 Tim. 1:8). We cannot witness to Jesus' resurrection as an eye-witness, but only as one who has seen the evidences and testifies of his convictions. We can witness or testify to our belief about Christ today by our words, our lives, and even by our death.

4. How concerned should we be that all men have an opportunity to hear the Gospel at least once? (Mk. 16:15)

Success in any endeavor depends upon labor, effort, and often pain and exertion. The church was brought into existence by travail (persecution). It was spread into all the world amidst persecution (Acts 7:59; 8:1-4, etc.). They seem to have grasped what their mission was—to see that every nation has an opportunity to hear the Gospel at least once.

Concluding Thoughts

How much do we value the souls of men....and even our own soul?

What are we doing to help get the Gospel message to the whole world?

What do you consider to be the greatest problem we have in doing evangelism?

Are we bearing fruit or do we need to be cut off and thrown into the fire?

Lesson Thirteen

"EVANGELISM: Means to Reach the Lost"

Even though the church may seem to be growing and maturing, it is not the time to sit back and take it easy! We have not finished our task of Evangelizing the World! The purpose of this lesson is to first look at our past efforts to reach the lost and then to be challenged to do even better in the future (2 Cor. 13:5). Let's look at a listing of efforts that this church has put forth to reach the lost in this area:

1. We have supported a preacher (sometimes two) to reach the lost.
2. We make use of our Bible Classes and Worship services to reach the lost.
3. We have had "Gospel Meetings" and "Campaigns" to reach the lost.
4. We have had "Seminars" on special topics to reach out to our community. (John Clayton's Why Believe in God; Marriage enrichment, etc.)
5. We have advertised in one of more ways to reach out to people. (News paper & radio)
6. We have had VBS to reach people.
7. We have conducted Bible studies with people using prepared video, slides, or study books in order to reach people.
8. We have extended personal invitations as well.
9. etc.

With all of this, our growth has been very slow. Most of our increase has come from people moving in or transferring membership from other congregations in the area. We all are happy over whatever growth that the church has experienced. But, are we content with this—can we do better? While we may not be using some of the former things used in outreach, we definitely need to do something that will reach out to people with the Gospel.

Home Bible Studies

Our newest efforts have been to set up Home Bible Studies in members' homes and to invite people to come out to these. This approach has a definite advantage in getting people to come to someone's home rather than a church building. It can also help to build a relationship with the people who attend the studies. It is important that new members know some people in the church to help encourage them. The effectiveness of this approach to evangelism requires:

1. Members to attend these studies;
2. Someone willing to host the studies;
3. Someone willing to effectively teach the studies;
4. Members who will constantly invite friends to attend and when they come, help them to feel comfortable.

This is an effort that will take some time to build on itself, but it can be very productive in outreach. Those working in this outreach method will need to have sufficient "stick-to-it-ness" to see the fruit of these efforts. One advantage of these studies for the church is that members are more involved and learning more each week.

A New Challenge!

It is important that we get every member involved in the efforts of outreach to the lost. While it is obvious that not all can teach others effectively themselves; yet, they can bring people to those who can teach effectively (Jas. 3:1). One of the greatest needs is to find people who are willing to study and hear what God is trying to say to them. This may be where every member can be involved. Here is our new challenge to us as a group:

1. ***"One help to win one in 5 years!"*** If each member would set their goal that within 5 years they will try very hard to find at least one person who is willing to study the Bible and come to belief and obedience to the Gospel
2. It is not hard to see what could happen—we would double in 5 years!
3. This would not require that much effort on any one person's part.
4. It is an ideal approach to outreach.
5. It is the cheapest approach to outreach.

Questions for Discussion

1. **Who would I contact to try to find that one person who will study with me or others?**
2. **What are some things that can be done to create such an interest?**
3. **What kind of training program(s) can we initiate that will better prepare all of us to reach out to other people?**
4. **How can we effectively show that we are concerned about people being saved?**
5. **What kind of mass efforts can be done that will give us more interested people in studying the Bible with us?**

Concluding Thoughts

Our evangelistic mission is to get the message before all the people—to give them an opportunity to hear, believe, and obey the Gospel. We all want the church to grow and souls to be saved; so, let's put our "hands to the plow" and get to planting the seed of the kingdom.

