

#### An Evangelistic Church for the 21st Century ISBN 978-1-58318-349-6 June 2024



Published by Way of Life Literature PO Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061 866-295-4143 (toll free) - fbns@wayoflife.org www.wayoflife.org

Canada: Bethel Baptist Church 4212 Campbell St. N., London Ont. N6P 1A6 519-652-2619

> Printed in Canada by Bethel Baptist Print Ministry

# **Contents**

Introduction	4
Evangelism at the End of the Age	6
Evangelism and Apostasy	10
Evangelism's Reason	15
Evangelism's Authority	17
Evangelism's Power	18
Evangelism and Quick Prayerism	19
Evangelism's Message - The Gospel	
Evangelism and Repentance	34
Evangelism and God's Law	42
Evangelism and Evidence of Salvation	47
Evangelism's Right Attitude	55
Sowing and Reaping - The Technique	
Fishing and Sowing	
Evangelism of Children	
Evangelism and Prayer	79
Evangelism and Practical Tips	88
Evangelism and Gospel Tracts	104
Evangelism and Receiving Church Members	108
Can Someone Be Saved After One Sermon?	113
Lessons from the Gospels and Acts	118
Seeker's Bible Study	133
Dealing with Roman Catholics	134
Dealing with Skeptics	138
Evangelism Memory Verses	154
Resources for Evangelism.	162

#### Introduction

Evangelism must be a continual campaign or it is lost. And it is being lost to Bible-believing churches everywhere.

Most of the large, aggressive churches of bygone days are dead or dying or have morphed into an entirely different character. For example, Highland Park Baptist Church of Chattanooga, Tennessee, no longer exists. It was the home of Tennessee Temple Bible College. In its heyday in the 1970s and 1980s, Highland Park had a great emphasis on world missions. They campaigned on that. They had huge, exciting missionary conferences in which hundreds of God's people surrendered their lives to that work and went across North America and to the ends of the earth to preach the gospel and plant churches. Highland Park had a great emphasis on evangelism. They campaigned on that. It was called "the church of the green light." There was a large model of a traffic light near the church auditorium that was always showing green. They went door to door; they preached on the streets; they started gospel preaching chapels across that part of the South; they had youth camps; they had children's clubs; they operated a rescue mission, etc.

The evangelism at Highland Park was corrupted by a wrong methodology, but campaigning on evangelism and world missions is Scriptural and must not be given up. (See the chapter "Evangelism and Quick Prayerism.")

Many churches that are still doctrinally sound are dying because they have little evangelism. They hold to sound doctrine and are "King James" and use the hymnal and perhaps are still modest in apparel, but they are dying. A major reason in a great many cases is that they are doing so little aggressive sowing of the gospel. A great many are beat down and discouraged; they are just trying to

hang on to what is left. The bulk of the congregation is elderly. The pastor has little vision and zeal for evangelism and the people have almost none.

This new course An Evangelistic Church for the 21st Century replaces the course Sowing and Reaping.

This course is part of the Way of Life Bible College, which we started in 2023. The course has video classes, textbook, review questions, and tests. The textbook can be read as a book, but it is much more effectual to take the material as a Bible course and to take the review questions and tests seriously.

The video classes cover the highlights of the course, not every chapter. Even the chapters we cover on the videos aren't dealt with thoroughly. It is up to the student to go through all of the material so he can answer the review questions and take the tests.

There is a memory verse program in the chapter "Evangelism Memory Verses."

#### The Student's Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to learn the course. You can't depend on the teacher and the classes. The teacher's role is to guide, to explain, to help, and to teach highlights of the course. But the teacher can't actually teach you in the sense of putting the Word of God into your mind and heart and life.

The student will get as much from the course as he or she puts into it. For the greatest benefit, the student must do the following: (1) He must listen actively to the classroom teaching either on the videos or by a teacher. He must do his best to capture the teaching. He must follow along in the textbook and write down things that aren't in the textbook. He must lean into the teaching, give it his full attention, and refuse to be distracted. (2) The student must do the assignments. (3) The

*Introduction* 5

student must study the textbook on his own, including those sections not covered in the classes. (4) The student must use the review questions to prepare for the tests. This is a very important part of learning the material. The first step in this is for the student to answer as many of the review questions as he can without the textbook. Next, he consults the textbook to check his answers and to find the answers to the questions he could not answer. Finally, he should access the review question answers and check them against his answers. (5) The student must take the tests, then go back and find the answer to every question that is missed. The tests are based on the review questions. The tests are taken with the textbook closed.

#### The Assignments

Memorize the verses that are listed at the beginning of each chapter.

Distribute at least 50 tracts every week of the course and try to witness to the recipients.

Participate in the gospel outreaches of the church.

Try your best to find an unsaved person who will allow you to take them through the Seeker's Bible Study. Do this under the supervision of your church leaders.

Answer the Review Questions. Take the Tests.

#### The Necessity of a Supervisor

If the student is taking the course by himself and not as part of a class, it is imperative that he or she find someone to supervise the studies. The supervisor can be a relative, pastor, teacher, or friend. The individual must be capable, dependable, and committed to the task of supervising the student's progress through the course. This entails (1) making sure that the student completes the studies in a timely fashion, (2) checking the assignments, and (3) overseeing the testing.

#### Way of Life Bible College

https://www.wayoflife.org/bible-college/

#### **Courses**

https://www.wayoflife.org/courses/

# **Evangelism at the End of the Age**

We live at the end of the church age when the vast majority of churches are apostate. Jesus said, "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt. 24:12).

A great many Bible-believing churches have grown lukewarm about evangelism. I hear preachers saying things like this: "People don't want to hear. There is just no interest. We've tried everything. Decades ago we could knock on 100 doors and get a new family added to the church. Today you can knock on a thousand or five thousand and get nothing."

While it is true that the apostasy is deep and the times are changing, it is also true that God is just as zealous today for the Great Commission and evangelism as He was in the first century. If His people will rise up and do what He has commanded, He is with them. He is ready to go. We have the same power for salvation and Christian living as they had in the first century.

#### Matthew 28:18-20

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAY, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD."

Here we see the end of the age. That's where we are. The signs are everywhere.

- Consider *the homosexual movement* which has exploded on the scene in these days and has swept across the world. ("Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot...," Lu. 17:28). Even Jerusalem is called "Sodom" in Bible prophecy (Re. 11:8). Jerusalem has an annual "gay pride" parade, and Tel Aviv's an-

nual "gay pride" week is a mecca for homosexuals worldwide.

- Consider the push for *globalism*. "and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations" (Re. 13:7); The "mystery Babylon" (Re. 17:5) is global. "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Re. 17:15). The move toward globalism is found everywhere today: in international commerce, in the United Nations, in the European Union, in China's Belt and Road Initiative, in the rush to destroy national sovereignty, in covid lockdowns, in global satellite communication, etc.
- Consider the return of Israel to the land in a spiritually dead condition. This is described in the Valley of Dry Bones prophecy of Ezekiel 37. It describes Israel's return in two stages, first in a spiritually dead condition. "So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them" (Eze. 37:8). Then Israel will be converted, which is yet future. "Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army" (Eze. 37:9-10).
- Consider *the preparations for the Third Temple*. The Temple Institute is making these preparations. The temple articles such as the laver and the gold candlestick have been built. The priests' garments have been fash-

ioned, and priests are being trained. This temple is mentioned in Bible prophecy and will be occupied by the Antichrist (Mt. 24:15; 2 Th. 2:4; Re. 11:1-2).

Christ's Commission is operative to the very end of the age. This is our business until the Rapture, yet most individual believers and churches and homes have become sidetracked. Consider a brief overview of this work:

- Preaching the gospel to every soul in every nation ("Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Mr. 16:15).
  - Baptizing those who believe
- Teaching them to observe all things that Christ has commanded; every member must learn to be a serious Bible student; must be trained to be a priest, an ambassador, a soldier, a teacher (Heb. 5:12-14). Fathers must be trained to be the spiritual heads of the home, and mothers to be the keepers of the home.
  - It is a big, never-ending work,
  - It is the most important work on earth.
- It requires all of God's people to be engaged. Each believer must say, "Here I am, Lord. I'm ready. Show me my part."

Christ has promised to be with those who do this work. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

- "LO." this is the Greek *idou*, which is "a demonstrative particle, serving to call attention to something." It is often translated "behold" (Mt. 1:23). Christ is emphasizing this reality and promise.
- "I." The same resurrected Son of God who gave this Commission to the disciples in the first century is with His disciples at the end. He is everything God's Word says He is, and everything He is available to those who do His will.
- "I AM." This is the name of God ("And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM," Ex.

- 3:14). That Jesus is God emphasizes the certainty of these things.
- "I am WITH you." Christ is present. He is not preoccupied with other business. This is His chief business, and He is with those who are doing it. This is not a general promise to all the saints. The context applies to the Great Commission people.
- "**YOU**" is plural and refers to all of Christ's disciples who obey Him in this business. It refers particularly to a a New Testament church.
- "EVEN" emphasizes that the end of the world holds no special problems for Christ, no matter what is happening, whether apostasy or persecution. He has lost no life-changing, devil-defeating power.
- "WORLD" is aion, referring to an age in which God is working out His eternal plans. The Bible speaks of aions past (Col. 1:26), the present aion (2 Ti. 4:10; Tit. 2:12), and aions to come (Eph. 1:21; 2:7). "Forever and ever" is from the Greek eis tous aionas ton aionon, which means into the ages of ages. The present aion is the church age in which God is calling out a people for His name from among the Gentiles (Ac. 15:14; Ro. 1:5). The church will glorify God in Christ "throughout all ages (aionas ton aionon), world without end" (Eph. 3:21). Church age saints, together with the redeemed of all ages, will reign with Christ in the New Jerusalem ais tous aionas ton aionon (Re. 22:3-5).

If the redeemed will rise up and work, Christ is ready to go!

- He hasn't grown weary and feeble. He isn't distracted. He hasn't moved on to other projects.
- We can have the same churches today as they had in the first century. We have everything the first church had in Acts 2 and the church at Antioch had in Acts 13. The only difference is we don't have the apostles and the signs of an apostle (2 Co. 12:12).

# **Evangelism and Apostasy**

A pastor recently said to me, "We see in Acts 2 that people were led to Christ and baptized in one day. How can we justify spending a lot of time with people today making sure they are saved and preparing them for baptism, such as Charles Spurgeon's practice of requiring baptismal candidates to meet with the deacons or elders before being accepted for baptism?"

The answer is that we must understand the times. It is not the 1st century; it is the 21st century. It is not Pentecost time; it is the time of great, global apostasy.

"Apostasy," briefly, is to turn away from the New Testament faith to a corrupt form of Christianity.

We must be wise and careful in dealing with people in this time. We must be well educated about error and in how to deal with people. This is one of our major themes in this course.

Pentecost was a special, unrepeated outpouring of the Spirit. Further, Peter preached to Jews who were well grounded in Scripture. These were zealous, biblically educated Jews who made the arduous, expensive trip to Jerusalem for one of the major feasts. They knew a great deal of fundamental truths: the one true Creator God, the creation of the world in six days, Adam and Eve, the fall, the devil, sin, God's righteous law and its demands, redemption through substitutionary sacrifice, the coming Messiah, etc. Paul went to the synagogues first because he found a prepared people there, both Jews and Gentiles.

No one today is experiencing anything like Pentecost. First Baptist Church of Hammond claimed that more people were saved on May 3, 1998, than were saved at Pentecost. Pastor Jack Hyles estimated that around 15,000 people were saved that day and 5,112 were baptized. It was an unscriptural mess. Pastor Courtney Lewis witnessed how First Baptist dealt with children that day to create the big numbers. They rented various facilities and brought in bus loads of children from the ghettos, gave them a five minute Romans Road, 1-2-3 plan of salvation, had them raise their hands for salvation, then baptized them while a Hyles-Anderson student ticked off the numbers on a note pad. (See "Hylescost - Two Eyewitness Testimonies," www.way-oflife.org.)

#### The doctrine of apostasy

The doctrine of apostasy is summarized in 2 Timothy 3-4. Note some of the lessons: (1) The apostasy is for the "last days" (2 Ti. 3:1). (2) The apostasy will create "perilous times" (2 Ti 3:1). (3) The apostasy will corrupt the character of professing Christians (2 Ti. 3:1-5). Note that this is not a description of the world; it is a description of those who are "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." That refers to professing Christians. (4) The apostasy will bring persecution of the true saints (2 Ti. 3:12). Throughout church history, beginning in the time of Augustine, the greatest persecutions have come from apostate Christianity. (5) The course of the church age is summarized in verse 13, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." This is a description of ever increasing apostasy and error, which is exactly what we see in history. (6) The divine standard for the churches will remain the same throughout the age (2 Ti. 3:14). Every church that will please God must build upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets in the first century and recorded in the New Testament Scripture. We don't build upon the "church fathers" or the Puritans or any other tradition we build upon the Bible as the sole authority for faith and practice. (7) Four fundamental protections from apostasy are mentioned in this passage: First, separation from apostasy (2 Ti. 3:5). Second, Supernatural salvation (2 Ti. 3:15). Third, The divinely-inspired Scripture (2 Ti. 3:16-17). Fourth, biblical preaching (2 Ti. 4:2). (8) The doctrine of apostasy is summarized in 2 Ti. 4:3-4. First, it is to turn away one's ears from the truth in order to live according to one's lusts. Second, it is heap up teachers who will support the apostasy. Third, it is to be turned to fables. These include heresies pertaining to Christ, Angel worship, Mariolatry, the Saints, the Mass, Monasticism, holy relics, Joseph Smith's Book of Mormon, JEDP, etc.

- The doctrine of apostasy is found in the parables of the mystery of the kingdom in Matthew 13 which Jesus gave from a boat anchored in a cove on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given" (Mt. 13:11). These parables describe the church age, which is a mystery that was not revealed in the Old Testament. Consider the parable of the leaven in Mt. 13:33, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Here, the church age is characterized by the spread of apostasy, and at the end of the age the whole will be leavened, meaning nearly all churches will be apostate. The "three measures of meal" represents Christianity or Christendom as a whole. It will be totally apostate at the end of the age, though there will still be true churches outside of "Christianity." This is what is described in 2 Timothy 3-4 and it is exactly what we find in church history and in our times.

- The doctrine of apostasy is found in the very design of the New Testament. As the New Testament progresses, there is an increasing emphasis on false teaching. This emphasis begins in the Gospels with Christ's

teaching: false prophets in sheep's clothing (Mt. 7:15-20); the coming of false Christs at the end of the age (Mt. 24:4-5, 11). Paul's Epistles expand on this (1 Corinthians 15; 2 Corinthians 11; Galatians entire epistle; Philippians 3; Colossians 2; 1 Timothy 4; 2 Timothy entire last two chapters). Peter expanded on this (2 Peter 2-3). John expanded on this (1 John 2; 2 John). Jude expanded on this (Jude's entire epistle).

- These Scriptures have been fulfilled. They were fulfilled throughout the church age, and they are fulfilled in a major way today. Even in the Bible Belt of America, most people couldn't pass a test on the meaning of the words of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4--Christ (what is the meaning; who is He?); Scripture (what is the Bible; how did we get it; what is its theme? why does it have 66 books; what is the OT and NT?); sin (what is sin according to the Bible?); Christ died for our sins (what does this mean?); He died according to the Scripture (what does this mean?); He rose again the third day (in what manner did He rise; how do we know He rose?). People are vaguely familiar with these terms, but the great majority don't have a clear biblical understanding of them.

- No matter what you are doing in evangelism, end-time apostasy is the context, whether it is house to house visitation, bus ministry, nursing homes, jails, Bible clubs, VBS, tent meetings, etc. We must not lose sight of the times. We must not think that most professing Christians are sound in the faith. We must not be lulled into thinking that it is OK to join hands with apostate Christianity for the sake of evangelism.

#### The deceitfulness of false teachers

- The Bible has many warnings about the deceitfulness of false teachers. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves (Mt. 7:15). "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions

# **Evangelism's Authority**

MEMORY VERSES: Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 10:16; 2 Corinthians 5:20 (For the complete memory verse course, see the chapter "Evangelism Memory Verses.")

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:18-19).

"He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Luke 10:16).

57

The believer who preaches the gospel is Christ's ambassador; he has Christ's authority; and the listeners will be judged as if Christ Himself spoke to them.

We have authority to go anywhere in the world and preach the gospel to any person.

Many people believe that "religion" is a private matter and that strangers have no business meddling with it, but Jesus has commanded His people to preach the gospel to every person, so He has made this our business.

If man's law forbids preaching the gospel, we should not obey, because God's law is higher.

# **Evangelism's Power**

MEMORY VERSES: John 1:9; 16:7-11; Romans 1:16; Ephesians 6:18-20 (For the complete memory verse course, see the chapter "Evangelism Memory Verses.")

The power for soul winning is not in the efforts of the soul winner. It is not in his or her personality or attractiveness or impressive appearance or reasoning power or debating skills.

The power resides in Christ and the Holy Spirit and the gospel and the Word of God, and this is what we must trust 100%.

The power is in Christ's enlightenment and drawing (Joh. 1:9; 12:32). It is a wonderful thing to know that the resurrected Christ is actively involved in the lives of men, even the most stubborn. Not every man will be saved, because man can say no to God, but every man is given light and is drawn.

The power is in the conviction of the Holy Spirit (Zec. 4:6; Joh. 16:7-11). The soul winner must have confidence that the Holy Spirit is with him and has gone before him and will go behind him, bringing conviction to the heart of the sinner.

The power is in the gospel (Ro. 1:16). The gospel is the good seed of the spiritual harvest. God calls men through the gospel (2 Th. 2:14). When the gospel is proclaimed, God is calling men. The gospel is described in a nutshell in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

The power is in the Word of God (Heb. 4:12). The man who led me to Christ quoted and read a lot of Scripture, which reminds us of the importance of memorizing Scripture

and being able to find one's way around in the Bible. The fact that this man knew his Bible and could answer my questions and challenges impressed me, and the Scriptures pierced my heart. The Scriptures are the pricks that bring conviction. Christ said to Paul, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Acts 9:5). A "prick" refers to a sharp-pointed instrument, such as a goad that was used to drive oxen. To "kick against the prick" refers to a stubborn ox that foolishly fights his owner's goading and thereby injures no one but himself. Likewise, sinners resist the conviction of God that comes through the light of creation, conscience, and Scripture to their own destruction.

To appropriate God's power, we use prayer. In 1 Timothy 2:1-6, praying "for all men" is mentioned in the context of God wanting all men to be saved. We see the same thing in Ephesians 6:18-20. Prayer is intimately associated with salvation. When we go out to share the gospel, we must pray. We need to keep a list of unsaved people that we pray for regularly. We must not presume upon God's power. He has taught us to pray.

One of most important things that a church can do to increase the fruit of its evangelism is to pray more. (See the chapter "Evangelism and Prayer.")

### **Evangelism and Quick Prayerism**

We must warn about the unscriptural method of evangelism that has permeated Baptist churches since the 1970s. A pastor recently told me (April 2024) that he thinks Jack Hyles' influence is largely gone. I am convinced that he is naive. Quick Prayerism is taught in most soul winning courses. The Sword of the Lord has taught Quick Prayerism since the 1960s and still publishes books by Hyles and others that promote that methodology. (As of April 2024, Hyles' Let's Go Soul Winning was on sale at the Sword web site.) I regularly hear from people who are in churches that promote Quick Prayerism. Even pastors who don't think they practice Quick Prayerism, unknowingly practice some form of it because of their training.

Everyone should be aware of this so they can guard against it.

#### What Is Quick Prayerism?

Quick Prayerism is an evangelistic methodology that is quick to get people to pray a sinner's prayer after a shallow gospel presentation and usually without any hint of repentance. It is quick to pronounce those people saved and to give them "assurance" and to try to baptize them even if they barely show any interest in the presentation and even if they give no biblical evidence of the new birth. Frequently, Quick Prayerism incorporates psychological salesmanship manipulation. In Quick Prayerism, an empty "sinner's prayer" has too often replaced Holy Spirit conviction and miraculous regeneration. Quick Prayerism is characterized by soul winning reports that are grossly exaggerated, since the number of real conversions are minute compared to the overall statistics. The soul winning reports are filled up with empty professions.

#### Quick Prayerism is quick.

An example of this was communicated to me some time back by a pastor friend who had the following experience at a prominent independent Baptist church that operates a large Bible college. The soul winner in question is a veteran independent Baptist missionary to Japan, a man with significant influence in the independent Baptist movement.

"We went out with their staff on Saturday morning for soul winning. We were immediately partnered up with some of the veterans. The first door we went to, we spoke to a friendly Catholic guy and to my surprise, the guy got 'saved' before my very eyes as --- took him from a few scripture passages to the sinner's prayer so smoothly that I was caught off guard. ... A lady answered the bell at one house and stood impatiently behind the screen door while the soul winner went quickly through the plan of salvation. She wanted to attend to her child, who was fussing in the background, but he begged her to listen to the presentation. During the entire time, she was looking back into the house, severely distracted. At the end of his presentation, he boldly demanded that she open the door partially and take his hand. She seemed shocked by his request, but she cautiously did as he said. He then asked her if she wanted to go to Heaven when she died. When she answered in the affirmative, he asked her to pray after him the sinner's prayer, which she did. He announced her gloriously saved, and she immediately closed the door and went about her business."

#### Quick Prayerism is a set plan.

It is a plan that is used with every individual.

We don't see anything like this in Scripture.

# Quick Prayerism focuses on a ticket to heaven.

"Are you 100% sure that you will go to heaven when you die? If I can tell you how to be 100% sure that you will go heaven when you die, you would be interested in doing that, right?"

The saved person does go to heaven when he dies, but this approach is never seen in Scripture. Jesus did not use this with the Samaritan woman. Peter did not use this on Pentecost. Paul did not use this in Athens.

The emphasis in Scripture is on a new relationship with God today and forever. It is on new life that starts now. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (Joh. 17:3). "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Co. 5:17).

- In the case of the woman at the well, the emphasis is on drinking living water (Jo. 4:10).
- In Matthew 11, the emphasis is on finding rest for one's soul (Mt. 11:28-30).
- In John 3:16, the emphasis is on not perishing but having everlasting life (Joh. 3:16).
- In the case of Zacchaeus, the emphasis is on salvation from one's lost condition (Lu. 19:9-10).
- In the case of the Jews at Pentecost, the emphasis is on saving yourself from this untoward generation (Ac.2:40).
- In the case of Cornelius, the emphasis is on receiving remission of sins (Ac. 10:43).
- In the case of the Philippian jailer, the emphasis is on being saved (Ac. 16:30-31).
- In the case of the Athenians, the emphasis is on salvation from the coming judgment (Ac. 17:30-31).
- In Romans 1, the emphasis is on obtaining the righteousness of God (Ro. 1:16-17).

# Quick Prayerism uses a salesmanship program.

Jack Hyles taught dozens of psychological tricks. Consider how he used prayer to manipulate individuals:

"There are several ways to do this, but you must try to get them to pray. If he is really ready, say, 'Could I pray for you, and while I pray, would you pray and ask God to save you today?' Maybe he is not quite that ready. Maybe you don't know. You could say, 'Could I pray that you will get saved?' Maybe you don't think he will let you pray for him to get saved. Then you say, Could I have a word of prayer with you before I go?'

"Anyway, to get your head bowed is good. If you are talking to him, he might interrupt, but if you are talking to the Lord, he won't. You can preach him a little sermon in the prayer. If you can't win a fellow to Christ, and if he won't let you present the plan to him, the best way to tell him how to be saved is to tell the Lord and let the sinner hear you.

"I go into a home and say, 'Sir, would you like to know how to be saved?'

"No, don't have time for it. The wife's sick and I'm busy."

"Could I have a prayer for your wife before we go, that she will get well?"

"With his wife lying there sick, a man would be a fool not to let the preacher pray for her. He says, 'Well, O.K."

"I pray, 'Dear Lord, bless this wife and make her well, and help this man to know that Romans 3:10 says, 'As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.' And if people die in their sins, according to Romans 6:23 'the wages of sin is death.' O dear Lord, show him that Romans 5:8 is true when it says that 'God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners...'

"Pray him the plan. He won't interrupt you. You can get by with a lot of things talking to the Lord that you wouldn't talking to him. ...

# **Evangelism's Message - The Gospel**

MEMORY VERSES: Romans 1:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (For the complete memory verse course, see the chapter "Evangelism Memory Verses.")

Salvation doesn't require a Bible education, but it does require understanding the gospel. Paul described salvation as "to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Ti. 2:3-4). The truth here is the gospel.

Paul also described salvation as follows: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (Ro. 6:17). That form of doctrine is the gospel.

We need to teach the gospel to God's people. Paul addressed his presentation of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 to believers (1 Co. 15:1). This teaches us that new believers need to learn the gospel properly so they can be grounded in its truths personally and so they can share it with others. This also teaches us that older believers need to learn the gospel better and better. We will never stop learning about the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

We need to teach the gospel to our children. In times past, Baptists catechized children. At age seven, Isaac Watts used the letters of his name as an acrostic for the major doctrines of redemption, showing the great theological education given to children in those days.

- I I am a vile, polluted lump of earth
- S So I've continued ever since my birth
- A Although Jehovah, grace doth daily give me
- A As sure this monster, Satan, will deceive me
- C Come therefore, Lord, from Satan's claws relieve me.
- W Wash me in Thy blood, O Christ

- A And grace divine impart
- T Then search and try the corners of my heart
- T That I in all things may be fit to do
- S Service to Thee, and Thy praise too.

Isaac wasn't converted until age 15, but great preparation preceded his conversion.

We need to teach the gospel to sinners. We published Seeker's Bible Study for this purpose, www.wayoflife.org.

The gospel is the seed which God uses to produce the fruit of repentance and faith. The seed must be "good" or it will produce tares rather than good fruit (Mt. 13:24-27).

False gospels were already being sown in the days of the apostles (2 Co. 11:3-4; Ga. 1:6-7). The world is filled to the brim with them today. There are gospels of good works, gospels of the golden rule, gospels of baptism and church membership, gospels of no repentance, gospels of charismatic experiences, gospels of sacraments, gospels of Mary, gospels of false prophets (Joseph Smith), gospels of Hindu gurus (*Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*), gospels of a form of godliness but denying the power thereof (2 Ti. 3:5), gospels of asceticism, gospels of mystical prayer practices, even gospels of living by your own lusts (2 Ti. 4:3-4).

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 contains the gospel in a nutshell. Nowhere else in Scripture is the gospel summarized in this brief manner. Every foundational truth about the gospel is covered in this important passage.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

#### Consider:

- The Content of the Gospel
- The Faith of the Gospel
- The Security of the Gospel

#### The Content of the Gospel

What do we need to know to understand the gospel?

#### We must understand Christ (1 Co. 15:3).

Who is Christ? Christ means "the Anointed One." Christ is a Greek word that means the same thing as the Hebrew Messiah (Psalm 2:2; 132:17). It refers to God's chosen. It refers to the man that God has chosen to be the Saviour of the world and to establish God's eternal kingdom. Christ, and God's eternal plan in Christ, is the main theme of the Bible. See Ephesians 1:7-10.

Christ refers to Old Testament prophecies about the coming of God's chosen man. Adam was the first man, and Christ is the second man, the last Adam (1 Co. 15:45, 47). Adam was the head of the first creation, and Christ is the Head of the new creation. The first creation was condemned because of Adam's sin. The last Adam came to redeem the fallen sons of the first Adam.

Believing the gospel requires believing that Jesus is the Christ that was promised in the Old Testament prophecies.

Believing the gospel also means that I must reject false christs. Jesus warned that false christs will come into the world. "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Matthew 24:4-5). The way to identify a false christ, is to examine his teaching and compare it with the Bible. The true Christ is the eternal Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, virgin born, sinless. He died and shed His blood to pay man's sin debt. He rose from the dead bodily.

He ascended back to heaven where He awaits His return. One false christ is the christ described in The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ. I read this before I was a Christian. It says that Christ went to Egypt and India when He was young and there He learned the wisdom of the gurus. This is a false christ. The true Christ is the eternal Son of God. He is the source of all wisdom and didn't need to learn wisdom from any teacher in this world. Another false christ is the Jesus of Islam. The Koran, Islam's holy book, speaks of Jesus (Isa), but it is not the Jesus of the Bible. The Jesus of the Koran is not the eternal Son of God, did not die on the cross for man's sins, and did not rise from the dead.

#### We must understand sin (1 Co. 15:3).

To be saved, the individual must see himself as a wicked sinner before God and deserving of eternal condemnation. No one can be saved apart from this. It is the product of Scripture and the Holy Spirit.

That Christ died for our sins means that we are sinners. All men are lost sinners (Ro. 3:23). It is a necessary part of the gospel to show men that they are condemned sinners. The good news of the gospel must begin with the bad news that man is a condemned sinner before a holy God. Unless an individual acknowledges this from the heart, he cannot be saved. Unless an individual understands that he is lost, he will not seek the Saviour.

We are sinners by nature. When Adam disobeyed God in the garden of Eden, he became a sinner, and all of his children inherited this sinful nature. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Ro. 5:12). No one has to teach us how to sin. "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness,

# **Evangelism and Gospel Tracts**

Gospel tracts and pamphlets are very important tools in evangelism. The printing press is a wonderful gift from God and has been used greatly for the glory of Jesus Christ. The printed page can multiply our efforts in the service of God, and tracts can sometimes go places where we cannot go.

# Understand why we must preach the gospel to every person.

- To be obedient to and to prove our love for Christ (Joh. 14:15; Mt. 28:19-20; Mr. 16:15; Lu. 24:45-48; Ac. 1:8; 2 Co. 5:17-21; Php. 2:16; 2 Ti. 4:5). God has called every believer to do this work. Each Christian can reach different people.
- To prove our love for men (Mt. 9:36). Do we care about our fellow man who is on his or her way to eternal judgment?
- To give men a choice for heaven or hell (Ro. 10:14).
- To take away excuses (2 Co. 2:14-16). When we give the gospel we are doing two things: One, we are offering that person an opportunity to be saved and two, we are making him accountable before God about the gospel.
- To get a reward (Joh. 4:35-36). Our place in Christ's kingdom will be determined by what we do in this present life (Re. 2:26-27).
- To get a harvest ("Blessed *are* ye that sow beside all waters," Isa. 32:20). If the farmer only plants a small part of his field, he will not get a very large harvest. Each church must plant as widely as possible by every means possible.
- To put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:15). The disobedient Christian is spiritually weak and can be defeated by the devil. Note that there must be "preparation of the gospel." God's people must learn as much as possible about sharing the gospel. The better prepared

we are, the more likely it is that we will have fruit. This is true for every endeavor in life.

#### Obtain some good tracts.

The first consideration in the use of gospel tracts is to be certain that the content is scriptural. There are two problems with many tracts.

First, many tracts do not contain a clear and biblical presentation of the gospel. Terms such as "ask Jesus into your heart" or "give your life to Christ" aren't scriptural. Salvation is not to give one's life to Christ; it is to trust the finished atonement of Christ which He accomplished on the cross. We are sinners who must be cleansed and justified before our lives can be acceptable to God. This is not "splitting hairs." Paul warned that in order to be saved, the sinner must believe the right thing (Ro. 6:17; 1 Ti. 2:4). People have been saved through concepts such as asking Jesus into your heart and giving your life to Jesus, but they were saved in spite of those concepts and not because of them. Everything we do in the cause of Christ must be brought to the whetstone of God's Word. (See "Giving My Life to Jesus and Asking Jesus into My Heart," Way of Life web site, www.wayoflife.org.)

Second, many tracts do not deal with repentance. Salvation comes by "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ac. 20:21). Whether or not the word "repentance" is used in a gospel tract, the *idea* should be. What is repentance? It is a change of mind that results in a change of life; it is to turn around and face in a different direction; it is to surrender to God's authority. It is plainly illustrated in 1 Thessalonians 1:9, "ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."

Following are some suggested gospel tracts:

# Lessons from the Gospels and Acts

We suggest that teachers assign the students to do their own studies of the following passages, writing down the lessons about evangelism. These can be discussed in class.

#### **Nicodemus**

#### See John 3:1-16.

#### 1. Lessons about Nicodemus

Nicodemus came to Jesus with questions. God was drawing, and Nicodemus was seeking. He considered Jesus a great religious teacher (v. 2). He approached Jesus as a rabbi but not as the Messiah.

Nicodemus came by night, being afraid of his peers (v. 1). The fear of man bringeth a snare (Pr. 29:25), and many will be in hell because they feared man more than God. These are "the fearful" of Revelation 21:8.

#### 2. Lessons from Jesus's method of teaching

Jesus dealt with people emphatically and directly ("verily, verily," vv. 3, 5, 11). This was no religious dialogue; it was not a sharing of religious and philosophical views. Jesus proclaimed the truth, and that is what He has instructed us to do. We are to "preach the gospel," not dialogue the gospel (Mr. 16:15).

Jesus announced His authority as the Son of God from heaven (vv. 10-13). He came down from heaven and is in heaven! This is the mystery of the incarnation. The eternal Son of God became a man, but He never ceased to be God. He was omnipresent (Joh. 3:13). This verse is corrupted in the modern versions by the omission of the words "which is in heaven."

#### 3. Lessons about the new birth (vv. 3-7)

The new birth exposes the insufficiency of religion. Jesus preached the new birth to show this self-righteous, religious-minded man that religion and the works of the law are entirely insufficient to save him. The

thinking of the religious Jew is that righteousness is obtained through works (Mt. 19:16; Joh. 6:28). While it is possible for a man to be religious and to obey laws, he cannot make himself "born again." This is entirely beyond man's ability and requires a miracle of God. The requirement that man be born again, therefore, shows the utter insufficiency of religion and leads the religious-minded to say with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?"

The new birth points to the cross, where Jesus died in the sinner's place and was raised from the dead to new life. The law of God condemns each of us to death, because that is the wages of sin, which we have all committed, and the way of salvation is to join Jesus on the cross vicariously by faith and to be raised to new life with Him (Isa. 53:6; Ro. 6:3-4; 2 Co. 5:21).

The new birth is a spiritual birth in contrast to the natural birth (vv. 5-6). It is heavenly, as opposed to earthly (v. 12). Water and Spirit describe the two births. Water refers to the first or natural birth, and Spirit refers to the second or spiritual. This is clear in the context. See verse 6. Baptismal regenerationists insert baptism here, but when Jesus explained how to be born again in this same passage He didn't mention baptism. See John 3:14-18.

The new birth is universally needed (v. 7). "Ye" is plural. Jesus tells Nicodemus that all Jesus and all people must be born again. All have sinned and all must be born again.

The new birth is universally available (v. 16). Compare 1 Timothy 2:3-6.

The new birth is the product of God's love (v. 16).

The new birth is for those who are already condemned (v. 18). All have sinned and come

short of the glory of God and are under God's just condemnation.

The new birth is the work of the Spirit of God (v. 8).

The new birth is obtained through believing in Christ and His death on the cross for our sins (vv. 13-16). The word "believe" is repeated 10 times in this chapter. The faith must be directed to Christ's death and resurrection (Joh. 3:14). It is not enough to believe that Christ was a good man or even that He is God. I must believe that He died for my sin and rose from the dead. This is the gospel. See 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

The new birth can be seen (v. 8). In the same way that we can see the wind's effect, we can see the change that it makes in a believer's life. There is evidence, as we see in every case of salvation recorded in the New Testament.

The new birth is secure (v. 15-18). The believer "will not perish" (v. 16), has "everlasting life" (v. 16), is "saved" (v. 17), "is not condemned" (v. 18).

How does the new birth compare to the first or natural birth? First, both are real events that happen at a certain time. Salvation is not a process. Second, both are of God. Even though the first birth is a "natural process," the Bible teaches that God is the author of conception and life. Compare Psalm 139:13-16. Third, both require seed. The seed for the new birth is the Word of God (Lu. 8:10). Fourth, both are dramatic events that can be seen by others. Salvation changes a person's life (2 Co. 5:17).

4. Lessons from the serpent in the wilderness. (Joh. 3:14)

See Numbers 21:4-9. The serpent signified the fact that Jesus would take our sin upon himself on the cross. God the Father forsook Jesus because He was bearing the sin of the world (Mr. 15:34).

The people sinned and were judged by God. Likewise, the Bible says that all have

sinned and come short of the glory of God (Ro. 3:23) and the wages of sin is death (Ro. 6:23).

God provided the means of salvation. It was a gift of His love to undeserving sinners.

There was only one way of salvation. Compare Acts 4:12.

The way of salvation was lifted up for all to see. Likewise, the gospel of Jesus Christ is to be preached to every person (Mr. 16:15).

Those that looked upon the serpent were healed. Likewise, those who look to Christ's cross and believe are saved.

The healing was complete. God provided everything the people needed. Likewise, the sinner finds complete salvation in Christ.

5. The result of this evangelistic encounter

Nicodemus believed and became Jesus' disciple. We see him twice more in the Gospels. He argued with the other Pharisees about their disobedience to the law of God in condemning Jesus without hearing him (Joh. 7:50). Though we don't know if he had fully believed at that point, we do know that he had believed by the time of Jesus' death. By then he was willing to publicly identify himself as Jesus' disciple by helping prepare the Saviour's body for burial (Joh. 19:39).

#### The Woman at the Well

#### See John 4:1-43.

1. Lessons from how Jesus dealt with the woman

Jesus started the conversation (v. 7). God seeks sinners; they don't seek Him (Ro. 3:11).

He was willing to talk to anyone of any status (v. 9). The gospel is to be preached to every creature (Mr. 16:15). Jesus loved all people and has taught us not to have prejudice against any.

He used the circumstance and turned the conversation to spiritual things (v. 10).

### **Dealing with Roman Catholics**

Because of the ecumenical movement, a growing number of Roman Catholics are familiar with biblical terminology about salvation, such as *born again*, and some have been trained to reply affirmatively to the question, "Are you saved?" or "Have you been born again?"

The problem is that they do not mean by this what the Bible means. Rome's doctrine of salvation is not the true gospel of complete and sure salvation through personal faith in Christ. It is a gospel of works that is sometimes presented under the guise of grace.

#### A Summary of the Roman Catholic Church's Doctrine of Salvation

Following is official Catholic teaching as defined by its own councils. The publication cited is *Vatican Council II—the Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. This volume is published by the Roman Catholic Church and contains the following Imprimatur [Latin meaning "let it be printed," the sign of official approval by the Catholic hierarchy]: Walter P. Kellenberg, D.D., Bishop of Rockville Centre, August 12, 1975.

# 1. Rome teaches that Christ, having purchased redemption by His blood and death, delivered it to the Catholic Church to be distributed through her sacraments.

Rome's gospel centers in the Catholic Church, the pope, and the sacraments. While Catholicism teaches that Christ died on the cross to purchase man's salvation, it is not satisfied simply to invite men to receive this salvation by faith directly from the resurrected Christ.

Consider the following quotes from the Second Vatican Council:

"For 'God's only-begotten Son ... has won a treasure for the militant Church ... he has

entrusted it to blessed Peter, the key-bearer of heaven, and to his successors who are Christ's vicars on earth, so that they may distribute it to the faithful for their salvation. They may apply it with mercy for reasonable causes to all who have repented for and have confessed their sins. At times they may remit completely, and at other times only partially, the temporal punishment due to sin in a general as well as in special ways (insofar as they judge it to be fitting in the sight of the Lord). The merits of the Blessed Mother of God and of all the elect ... are known to add further to this treasury" (ellipsis are in the original) (Vatican II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Apostolic Constitution on the Revision of Indulgences, Chap. 4, 7, p. 80).

"For it is through Christ's Catholic Church alone, which is the universal help towards salvation, that the fulness of the means of salvation can be obtained. It was to the apostolic college alone of which Peter is the head, that we believe that our Lord entrusted all the blessings of the New Covenant, in order to establish on earth the one Body of Christ into which all those should be fully incorporated who belong in any way to the people of God" (*Vatican II*, Decree on Ecumenism, chap. 1, 3, p. 415).

# 2. Rome's plan of salvation has several steps

The First Step is Baptism. According to official Roman Catholic doctrine, salvation begins with baptism. It can be infant baptism for those born into Catholic homes or adult baptism for those who approach the Roman Church later in life. Either way, it is through baptism that a person receives spiritual life.

"By the sacrament of Baptism, whenever it is properly conferred in the way the Lord determined and received with the proper dispositions of soul, man becomes truly incorporated into the crucified and glorified Christ and is reborn to a sharing of the divine life" (*Vatican II*, Decree on Ecumenism, chap. 3, II, 22, p. 427).

After baptism a person is considered to be born again and part of the Church. This new life is said to be nurtured and kept alive through Confirmation, Mass, Penance and the other Catholic sacraments.

"Just as Christ was sent by the Father so also he sent the apostles ... that they might preach the Gospel to every creature and proclaim that the Son of God by his death and resurrection had freed us from the power of Satan and from death, and brought us into the Kingdom of his Father. But he also willed that the work of salvation which they preached SHOULD BE SET IN TRAIN THROUGH THE SACRIFICE AND SACRAMENTS, around which the entire liturgical [ritualistic] life revolves" (*Vatican II*, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chap. 1, I, 5,6, pp. 23-24).

"THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS ARE THE NECESSARY MEANS ESTABLISHED BY CHRIST THROUGH WHICH HIS RE-DEEMING, LIFE-GIVING, SANCTIFYING GRACE IS IMPARTED TO INDIVIDUALS' SOULS. You must centre your life upon the sacraments established by Christ if you want to save your soul. means of salvation. ... The sacraments are the source of your real life, the divine life that will unite you with God in this world and in eternity. Let nothing make you think that you can get along without the sacraments. Without them your soul must die. ... IF YOU DON'T RECEIVE THE SACRAMENTS AT ALL, YOU DON'T RE-CEIVE GRACE. If you don't receive them properly, that is, if you receive them seldom and with little devotion, you receive less grace" (L.G. Lovasik, The Eucharist in Catholic Life, pp. 14, 15).

Thus we see that the Roman Catholic plan of salvation is faith in Christ PLUS baptism PLUS continuing in the sacraments.

# 3. Rome teaches that salvation is by the grace of God through Christ and is received by faith, but it denies that salvation is by grace ALONE and faith ALONE.

The following statement is made by a Roman Catholic priest well known for his emphasis upon the necessity for personal faith in the exercise of the sacraments, yet he is careful to say that the sacraments are also necessary.

"In recent years the church has reiterated again and again that we are saved by faith AND the sacraments of faith. BOTH ARE NECESSARY" (J.D. Crichton, *Christian Celebration: The Sacraments*, p. 65).

The Catholic Church redefines grace.

When a Roman Catholic priest speaks of salvation through the grace of Jesus Christ, he does not mean the unmerited, free grace of Christ whereby a believing sinner is eternally and completely and once-for-all saved from sin. By "grace," the Roman Catholic Church means God's help to live a righteous life and to continue in the sacraments.

Consider the following quote from the Second Vatican Council:

"All children of the Church should nevertheless remember that their exalted condition results, not from their own merits, but from the grace of Christ. If they fail to respond in thought, word and deed to that grace, not only shall they not be saved, but they shall be the more severely judged" (*Vatican II*, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, chap. 2, 14, p. 337).

This is a strange kind of grace. It is a grace that does not result in eternal certainty but only the POSSIBILITY of living up to God's requirements. It is a subtle and unscriptural MIXTURE OF GRACE PLUS WORKS that is condemned in Galatians 1:6-8.