



of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word... do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry” (2 Timothy 4:1-5). Evangelists are financially supported to teach the gospel. Let me suggest to you, however, that this is the evangelist’s work primarily because he is a Christian!

Second, the evangelist must equip the saints. Note carefully these in-

spired words, “**And He gave some... as evangelists... for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ**” (Ephesians 4:11-12). One of the “gifts” Christ has given to the church is evangelists. The reason Christ gave these gifts is so that the saints would be equipped for service. This is

similar to the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 2:2—“**The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.**” One of the evangelist’s most important duties is to prepare others to teach lost souls.

If God’s plan is executed properly—i.e., if evangelists equip saints to teach the lost, and if saints take their responsibility to teach the lost seriously—there is no reason we shouldn’t see growth like the church in the first century experienced. So, let’s work together. Let’s encourage one another to teach lost souls the gospel of Jesus Christ. Teaching the lost is your responsibility, and it’s my responsibility because we are disciples of Christ!



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Faithful Sayings Issue 17.11 March 22, 2015

Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.
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ISSUE

17.11

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

March 22,
2015

Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Steve Dixon
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Andrew Dow



Who’s Responsible for Teaching the Lost? By Andrew Dow

What is numerical church growth supposed to look like? The early part of the book of Acts records an occasion on which “**about three thousand souls**” were saved (Acts 2:41, NASB). Shortly thereafter we read that “**the Lord was adding to their number daily those who were being saved**” (Acts 2:47). Eventually “**the number of men came to be about five thousand**” (Acts 4:4), but the young church never stopped growing. Is this what numerical growth is supposed to look like?

To be fair, I don’t believe it would be realistic of us to expect to save three thousand souls every Sunday. After all, this wasn’t always the case even in the book of Acts when inspired apostles taught the gospel and worked miracles. However, if we are going to claim to be the New Testament church, should we not continually be growing like the New Testament church?

I am persuaded that one reason local churches today are not growing is because we have a misunderstanding of our roles in the church. I believe that in many cases we have convinced ourselves that teaching the lost is not *my job*, and so we expect others to do it. After all, don’t we support an evangelist to evangelize? I want

to spend a little bit of time seeing to whom Scripture gives the responsibility to teach the lost.

The Work Of The Church Is Teaching the Lost

As we begin to consider whose responsibility it is to teach the lost, we have to start with the understanding that evangelism is the work of the church! I think this is clearly seen in Paul's description of the church to Timothy—"I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the

living God, the pillar and support of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). Paul describes the church as that which upholds and promotes the truth. The church is, in one sense, the pedestal on which truth rests and from which all men can see the truth. It is only reasonable to conclude that the church plays a major role in spreading this truth to a lost world.

We see in Scripture a number of ways that local churches accomplished this work. Paul explained to the Corinthians how churches in Macedonia offered him financial support so that he could work with the church in Corinth (2 Corinthians 11:7-11). However, teaching the lost vicariously through paid evangelists is not the only way a church is to evangelize. As Paul opened his first epistle to the Thessalonians, he wrote, "**You became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you...**" (1 Thessalonians 1:7-8). You see, the entire church was involved in sounding forth God's word. The church fulfilled this work, and they were praised for doing so.

All Christians Are Commanded To Teach the Lost

Narrowing our scope even further, I want to point out a couple of texts that show it is the responsibility of individual Christians to teach the lost. First, notice some of our Savior's final words, "**Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you**" (Matthew 28:19-20). Some would contend that these verses were spoken to the apostles (cf. vs. 16), and therefore do not have direct application to us today. I would suggest that

this is a pattern that Jesus expected all of His disciples to follow. After all, these apostles were to teach future disciples to "**Observe all that I commanded you.**" Does "**all that I commanded you**" somehow exclude this command to "**go therefore and make disciples**"? It might be of interest to point out that the Greek could literally be translated, "**Having gone, then, disciple all the nations...**" (YLT). The point of Jesus' words is not that we must travel to some exotic land to preach the gospel, but rather that wherever we are going (e.g., grocery store, park, coffee shop, etc.) we should be looking to make disciples. This command could not be more applicable today, and it is directed to every disciple of Christ!!

Next, consider these words which Peter penned, "**But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR GOD'S OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of the darkness into His marvelous light**" (1 Peter 2:9). Could our purpose in Christ be expressed any clearer? Christians are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a people for God's own possession, but why? Read it again, "**so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you.**" Brethren, it is our God given responsibility to tell others about what He did for us!

Throughout Scripture, God's people are expected to be lights to the world (Matthew 5:14f) and teachers of the word (Hebrews 5:12). Who is responsible for spreading the word of God and teaching lost souls? Each and every Christian has this responsibility.

It cannot be delegated or passed off. We should work diligently to become people who are interested in saving souls. If we can accomplish that, we will become more like Jesus (Luke 19:10).

What's The Work of an Evangelist?

Having established the fact that evangelism is something we should all be engulfed in, a question that naturally comes to my mind is this: *what's the work of an evangelist?* I think that's an important question, and one that we won't have time to answer fully here. But as far as it relates to the discussion of teaching the lost, what is the evangelist's role? I'd like to suggest two primary works the evangelist has.

First, and perhaps most obviously, the evangelist must evangelize! Some of Paul's last words to a young preacher were these, "**I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and**

