

The Work of an Evangelist

Let us take a look at Eph. 4:11-13 “It was He (Christ) Who gave some (gifts) to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be **evangelists**, and some to be pastors (elders) and teachers, **to prepare God's people for works of service**, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” We want to concentrate on the **WORK** of an evangelist. He does not hold an **office in the church**, but rather his is a **work**. The Lord, in his wisdom, **did not create offices**. All of us, as members of the body of Christ, whether we are an elder, deacon, teacher, or an evangelist, **ours is a work to “prepare God’s people for works of service.”** In the church of Christ, from the Holy Scriptures, we go by **command, example or a necessary inference**. This third one, we must be careful, **making sure the inference is necessary**. The work of an evangelist can be determined by three things:

1st. Go into a field where it appears to be promising to start a new congregation. It may take two years, three years or more. **But he must understand that his work there is temporary. He is there to work himself out of a job!**

2nd The evangelist should return, that is go back within a reasonable time, to the churches he has established, or others have established, in **order to strengthen and encourage them**. None of us ‘own’ churches, **they all belong to Christ, the Head**.

3rd. As he visits these churches he is to “**set in order the things that are lacking**.” It may be they need more instructions in following the Bible pattern, or false doctrine is being taught. He is to assist the brethren in carrying out discipline if needed, or, if necessary, remove the leaven.

Expanding on no. 1. There are many scriptural evangelist recorded in the Bible that one would do well to study and learn from their example, such as Philip doing personal work as he converts the Eunuch, or going into the city of Samaria and, by the power of the gospel, converts many in that city. Or we can think of Stephen as he preached his own death sentence in front of the dreaded Sanhedrin. **But permit me, to use the work of the apostle Paul as our main example** for going into unknown territory for the purpose of establishing new churches, following the scriptural pattern.

Turning our attention to the 13th chapter of the book of Acts, we read, “In the church at Antioch (Syria) there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen... and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul **for the work to which I have called them**. So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.” **Acts 13:1-3**

After performing some very interesting work on the Island of Cyprus, they sailed to Perga, which is located on the southern coast of Asia Minor. From there they went north to the big city

of Pisidian Antioch. (**Remember**, there are two Antiochs, the other one is in Syria, from where they had departed, located three hundred miles north of Jerusalem). Standing up in the synagogue, Paul motioned with his hand and said: "Men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me!

“The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers; **He made the people prosper** during their stay in Egypt, with mighty power **He led them out of that country**, He endured their conduct for about forty years in the desert, He overthrew seven nations in Canaan **and gave their land to his people as their inheritance. Acts 13:16-19** “As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath. When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God. What can evangelist learn from Paul’s preaching? **He and Barnabas were strangers in this city. First, they had to gain the respect and build a relationship with their listeners.**

“On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. When the Jews saw the crowds, **they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying. Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly:**“**We had to speak the word of God to you first.** Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we turn to the Gentiles, this is what the Lord has commanded us. When the Gentiles heard this, **they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.** The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. But the Jews incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, **and expelled them from their region.** So they shook the dust from their feet...and went to Iconium. **And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 13:42-52. Often it is necessary to ‘speak boldly’.**

As evangelist, we must be prepared to encounter opposition, without being discouraged. Look on the positive side. “Many were appointed to eternal life.” At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they **spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed.** But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders. But when they found out about a threat to stone them, they fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe **and to the surrounding country**, where they continued to preach the good news. **Praise God! Acts 14:6.**

In Lystra, there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed and called out, **"Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.** When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, **"The gods have come down to us in human form!"**...But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul

heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: "Men, why are you doing this? **We too are only men, human like you. Acts. 14:8-14.** We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, Who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them." I have known evangelist who were very successful, but they couldn't handle the praise from men. In time they fell. Fell hard. Their feet were made of iron mixed with clay.

Later, in Lystra, under opposition, Paul was stoned and left for dead but the disciples gathered around him, (I'm sure they prayed fervently) so Paul got up, went back into the city (**Evangelist must develop courage**) and then he and Barnabas left for Derbe. "**They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples.**" Although we are not specifically told that they established churches in every city, by necessary inference, they did. As we have read in every city where they preached there were 'many' Jews and Gentiles who believed. Paul and Barnabas, with full knowledge of possible persecution, from Derbe, turned back, reversing their trip, going through Lystra, Iconium, Pisidian Antioch, Perga. Then they sailed back to Antioch, (Syria). "On arriving there, they **gathered the church together and reported all** that God had done through them and how He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed there a long time with the disciples. Evangelist ought to be accountable to those who support them by giving frequent reports of their work.

No. 2. Paul and Barnabas have now finished their first missionary journey. All of the above historical account is found in the 13th and 14th chapters of the book of Acts. Have we forgotten what **No.2** requirement was of an Evangelist? **Secondly**, they should go back within a reasonable time to see how the brethren are doing in these newly established churches. We get this example also from the apostle Paul. "Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, **Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.**"

"Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, **commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.**" They went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. They both received the blessing of the church. This matter of disagreement between Paul and Barnabas was **not over a doctrinal issue**, but their personal judgments differed. Neither were wrong. In fact, God chose Mark to write one of the gospels. Later the apostle Paul writes to young Timothy, "Get Mark and bring him with you, **because he is helpful to me in my ministry.** I just noticed something of interest which I have underlined. They, meaning Paul and Silas, went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. Even though we do not have a record of these churches by name, they had to be established by Paul and Barnabas on their first journey, as well as many un-named churches. As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the

decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. (Refer to Ch. 15). So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers. **Acts 15:36-41**

Paul's second journey begins in chapter 16. He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose **mother was a Jewess and a believer**, but whose father was a Greek, Paul, using good judgment had him circumcised so there would be no problem when entering the Jewish synagogues. Titus was a different situation. The Jews made circumcision a **major doctrinal issue** in which the apostle Paul said, NO! "We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you." **As in this case, many times an Evangelist must plant his feet on solid ground and stand firm. No compromises. Gal 2:3-5** All things done in the spirit of Christ.

Support? Yes! Most men are not self-sufficient so they can dedicate their life to the work of the Lord without full or partial support. Reading from **1Tim. 5:17**, "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well, are worthy of double honor, **especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.** For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "**The worker deserves his wages.**" This rule applies to Evangelist as well. You might ask, "How was the apostle Paul supported"? He gives us some answers to this question in Acts 18. His second journey took him to Corinth, in Greece, where he met Aquila and Priscilla and **because he was a tent-maker, as they were, he stayed and worked with them.** Paul preached in the Synagogues every Sabbath, supporting himself.

When Silas and Timothy joined him in Corinth he devoted himself exclusively to preaching..."Many of the Corinthians heard him and believed." What a success story. **Paul, Aquila and Priscilla were able to leave for Ephesus after 18 months of hard work and perseverance. They worked themselves out of a job!** Back to the subject of support. The apostle Paul called **the elders of the church in Ephesus** to meet him on the island of Miletus. **Notice:** He didn't call "**The Minister**" of the church to meet him! Paul addressed the elders, he said, "I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that **these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions.** In everything I did, **I showed you that by this kind of hard work** we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: '**It is more blessed to give than to receive.**'" **Acts 20:32-35**

The apostle Paul was loved by the brethren at Philippi. He wrote, "Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, **not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need.** I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. **They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.** And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus." **Phil 4:12-19** As our Lord assured the twelve disciples, and then the seventy, two by two, when He sent

them out to evangelize Israel, He promised to take care of their needs. To them and to us, He promised, **"I will never leave you nor forsake you"**. We work by faith, not by sight.

In conclusion regarding evangelistic support, Paul wrote, "Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? **In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. 1 Cor. 9:13-14** From this we learn that an evangelist is to **'earn his living'** from preaching the gospel. He may have a family. A rule of thumb might be that he should receive an amount for his "living standard" to be on a par with that of the average member. Common sense should be applied. Brother Harry has just released a report that we are **sending partial support** to some 40 brethren who are doing evangelistic work in the Philippines and in Africa and in Mexico.

I wish to write a little more about the use of the word **'minister'**. As all students of the Bible know it means, simply, **'one who serves.'** Jesus rose up and spoke in the synagogue in Nazareth, a **'minister'** handed him the book of Isaiah. After reading He closed the book, and He gave it again to **'the minister,'** and sat down. **Luke 4:20 KJV.** His job was to open and close the doors of the synagogue and serve the needs of the priest. (From Unger's Dictionary).

The word 'gay' used to be a beautiful word as well as the word 'liberal.' But not so today. Also the word **'minister'**, in our times, refers to an **'office'** or position, in the church. Most churches of Christ have a large sign in front. Usually, at the bottom it will read, "Joe Jackson, Minister". Does this church have only one member.? I'm being ridiculous. In Scripture, all members, men and women, are ministers. (servants). In Scripture since there is such a misunderstanding or misuse of the words, 'Pastor or 'Bishop' we choose to use the word 'elder' instead. This sober instruction Paul gave to young Timothy, "Watch your life and doctrine closely. **Persevere in them,** because if you do, you will save both yourself and those that hear you." **Watch your life! Watch your doctrine! Closely! Tim. 4:16**

An evangelist must live above reproach, and be an example, especially to the young men, "Similarly **encourage the young men** to be self-controlled. In everything set **them an example by doing what is good.** In your **teaching show integrity,** seriousness, soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about you". **Titus 2:6-8**

The 3rd role of an evangelist is to carry out the instructions Paul gave to Titus, "The reason I left you in Crete was **that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town,** as I directed you. An elder must be **blameless,** the husband of **but one wife,** a man whose **children believe** and are not open to **the charge of being wild and disobedient.** Since an **overseer (elder) is entrusted with God's work,** he must be blameless-not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-

controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, **so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.**” Every Christian should strive to attain all of these qualities.

The best that can be determined is that the apostle Paul was released from prison, 64 AD and was beheaded by Nero in 67 AD? It appears the churches in Crete were established by those Cretans who were present on the day of Pentecost. **But what a responsibility and challenge he left for Titus!** The next few verses report that the Cretans were lazy gluttons, liars, rebellious, deceivers, evil brutes, dishonest and following false teachings. **“Rebuke them sharply”**, Paul advised young Titus, **so that they may be sound in the faith.** But even out of that kind of human culture, people were converted, churches were established, so the next step was to ordain elders in every city. “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” **Rom 1:16** (Even to the Cretans. Praise God!) **Evangelistic work is the hardest work you will ever love.**

The conservative churches of Christ, in the States, during the forties, fifty and sixties, almost died off under the ‘The ‘Circuit Rider’ System. Several preachers had a list of churches which they ‘booked’ for gospel meetings each year, lasting 2 to 3 weeks long. He preached ‘canned’ sermons designed to convert the denominational world. These sermons were great, if the world had been there. The congregations didn’t get the spiritual food they so badly needed. A few children might be baptized. They were lazy, not visiting the sick or the brethren, or conducting personal Bible studies during the day. He was given a sizable check and ‘booked’ another meeting for next year, then left town.

WARNING! In my 70 + years in the church, I have witnessed how bad things happen to Christians, **especially to Evangelist, young and old.** In time, when they became popular and in demand, some fell under the snare of the devil; their influence destroyed. **“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith..” 1 Peter 5:8-9.** The evangelist are working hard to save souls, the devil is working hard to destroy them. Max Lucado is the liberal preacher, in San Antonio, Texas, the church sign reads “The Oak Hills Church”. No longer, “The Oak Hills Church of Christ”. He is now an inter-denominational preacher. Popularity went to his head. Some of you had asked me about him. A young promising brother, which I knew, while doing evangelistic work, was discovered to be a member of a ‘sex club.’ A very well known preacher died in a motel fire. He was found in a bed with two women. Sorry! But Paul wrote, “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons... will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Rom 8:38-9:1**

A Mexico concern: God knows my concern about who is going to take my place in being active and reporting the work in Mexico. At 88, it is only logical that someone needs to take my place. God has wondrously answered my prayers. Brother Edward and Virginia Anderson have, for two years now, dedicated themselves to this great work. God is great! Praise God!

Additional admonitions from Paul to Timothy.

1 Tim 6:10 “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many grief’s.”

2 Tim 1:8-9 “So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me His prisoner. But join with me **in suffering for the gospel**, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace.”

2 Tim 2:1-4 “You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. **Endure hardship** with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”

2 Tim 2:10-15 “Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with Him, we will also live with Him; if we endure, we will also reign with Him. **If we disown Him, He will also disown us**; if we are faithless, He will remain faithful, for He cannot disown himself...Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and **who correctly handles the word of truth.**”

2 Tim 4:1-3 “In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, Who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge: **Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.**”

2 Tim 4:6-8 “For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. **I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now** there is in store for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day—and not only me, but also to all who love his appearing.”

2 Tim 4:5 “But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, **do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.**”\

The Role of Women in the Lord’s Church

Eve was given to Adam as his ‘**worthy helper**’. Adam became her head. Someone has stated, **Yes, but she became his crown.** Women, throughout the ages, have not been given the praise and recognition they deserve. “A wife of noble character who can find? **She is worth far more than rubies.** Her husband has full confidence in her and **lacks nothing of value.**” **Prov. 31:10-11** Then we may ask, “What is of **more value** than wisdom? A godly woman! What is better than a godly woman? **Nothing.** She is truly one of God’s masterpieces. A workman in the Lord’s vineyard will have little, or no success and respect, if he does not have a godly wife.

In Old Testament time, and today in many foreign lands, women are considered as slaves, chattel, property or beast of burden. But in Scripture we find many ‘**worthies**’ such as, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Hannah, Deborah, Bathsheba, Elizabeth gave us John, and Mary gave us Jesus. Mary is, and has been the most popular name in the world. Many derivatives come from her name: Marie, Maria, Marianne, etc; even the masculine name Mario comes from Mary. “Blessed art thou among women and blessed in the fruit of thy womb.” (Jesus). Jesus came to establish His church and deliver mankind (men and women) from bondage. Christianity has done more to set women free than anything else, including manmade laws.

Paul wrote, “As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches. **They are not allowed to speak**, but must be in submission, as the Law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; **for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.**” **1 Cor 14:33-35** Does this not seem to be in contradiction to what has been said? In no way! Let the affairs of the assemblies be the work of men, let the affairs of the home, of being a wife, of being a mother and the duties of being a sister in Christ be left to the woman. She doesn’t need the burden of some of the church affairs. That burden has been lifted at Calvary.

I know some ‘**worthy sisters**’, who help brother Harry in various ways, Julie and Janette. Also Rebecca, who helps Andy with the publication of the ‘Beams.’ Sister Debbie has published the ‘Harvester’ since husband Ray was killed in an auto accident, and there are ‘**other worthies**’. Here, at Cloud 9, we have a number of sisters who are always ready when called upon. Sister Premie, in the Philippines is always with Chris in his full-time evangelistic work, reporting almost daily about the situation on several islands and their needs. This is also true of Brennie, on the island of Palawan, who gives a lot of her time and efforts in encouraging the brothers and reporting the needs of many churches she visits. She also has three different businesses to take care of. I am going to say, that our sisters are the back bone of the church. Without them the churches would vanish. That’s plain English, but it is my humble judgment.

Paul said, “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea. I ask you to receive her in the Lord **in a way worthy of the saints** and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me.” Priscilla and Aquila were converted on Paul’s first visit to Corinth. “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. **They risked their lives for me.** Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. **Greet also the church** that meets at their house.” **Rom 16:1-5** “I have been reminded of your sincere faith, **which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice** and I am persuaded now lives in you also. For this reason I remind you to **fan into flame the gift of God**... For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.” **2 Tim 1:5-7** As Jesus preached the good news...with the twelve, a number of women followed Him who had been cured of evil spirits, diseases and demons. Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and others, **gave them support out of their own means.** **Our Lord Jesus gave them their lives, they in turn gave Him theirs.** **Luke 8:1-4.**