

We do a lot of things in our church circles to reach the lost, but do we do what they did in the early days of the Church? I am grateful for all the ways our churches reach out to the community: bus ministry, special events, meals, parades, revival meetings, conventions, camp meetings, and visitations at the hospitals and homes. These are all wonderful ways to reach the lost, and we need to continue doing these good things. What more can we do though? Perhaps it would be good if we simply did what Jesus and others did to evangelize in the early days of the Church.

When I think of what they did in the New Testament, I see many ways in which we could return to their methods. Let's *Do What They Did* once again! If evangelism as recorded in the Bible worked, wouldn't it still be the God-ordained way to reach the lost? At any time did God by example or Scripture command us to do what they did only for a short period of time? No! So why are we not doing what they did on a regular basis today? Throughout history, when biblical evangelism was revived, the Kingdom saw growth and solid converts. Look what happened with the Wesleys and Booths when they went outside the church doors for the focus of their ministry. Wow! Amazing things happened! Lord, please send us a revival of evangelism once again!

One way they reached people in the early Church was with one-on-one conversations as they had encounters in everyday life. They took advantage of situations and encounters by turning them into opportunities to minister to hearts. This is what Jesus did with the woman by the well and multitudes of others He encountered as he went about His journey in life. We can learn a lot from the life of Jesus about how to reach those around us. Do we spend time talking to people we meet about the things of God, or is it all small talk that has little eternal value? Jesus and the disciples used those daily encounters as golden moments to apply the penetrating oil of the Gospel to loosen the bonds of sin. They gave those lost souls the light of life. You can do the same, but you must get past your uncomfortable feelings and fears.

Often people will forsake scriptural duty to witness to a lost soul because it is not comfortable, or they are afraid. To help you with this problem, think of the main obstacle that causes you not to talk to others about salvation. What is it? Is it fear of rejection, of not knowing what to say, of their reaction, of their potential offense, or of your proneness to fail at smooth speech? Whatever that obstacle is, place it on one side of a balance beam scale in your mind. Then place lost

souls on the other side of the balance. Is your discomfort, fear, or any other obstacle really of greater worth (weight) than lost souls or God's command to witness? God is great enough to enable you to overcome the obstacle! We must trust Him to help us. We will only overcome our fear by facing it. Ezekiel 3 has a lot to say about our neglecting to help the wicked find their way to the truth. While their sin will have consequences for them, our failure to warn them will also have consequences for us.

Another way for us to *Do What They Did* is to evangelize from house to house. The early Church did not visit others in their homes simply to invite them to a church service; they were declaring the Gospel. The Apostle Paul in Acts 20:20 said: "...I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house." He said "he kept back nothing"; that surely included what they needed to do to be right with God. When we go house to house, do we just invite them to church, a special service, or an event, or do we share the Gospel? Let's not keep anything back. Let's be faithful to share the Gospel right in their houses. Their soul's eternity depends on you minding God to be a witness.

The last thing I'll point out from those early days of the Church is the clearly documented way they reached the world around them – open air preaching! They spoke outdoors in multitudes of places. They preached publicly as Paul also referenced in Acts 20:20. They preached in the market-places, near false temples, in and near the synagogues, at outdoor altars to false gods, from boats, from mountainsides – you name it, and they probably preached there too. Where do we most commonly preach? Mostly in our churches and camps where only people interested come to hear. God did not call us to preach only to the interested or to those we can convince to come to our buildings. Friends, I fully believe it is impossible to say we are fulfilling the Great Commission so long as we are not preaching the Gospel to everyone. So, since everyone is not coming to our buildings, the only way to fulfill the Great Commission is to go where they are. Let's get back to doing what they did and see if we will have similar results. Let's take the Gospel to the streets, to every fair-ground, to every flea market, to every sidewalk, outside the false temples, on the courthouse steps, at our state capitals, on college campuses, and every place people are found! We need a revival of true New Testament evangelism!

God did not call us to build the Kingdom of God with only pastoral methods. We are called to perform all the offices of ministry, and the primary work of the evangelist is outside our buildings. Where are the evangelists? While only some may be called to full time evangelism, we are all called to be witnesses. While the evangelist preaches in the open air, who will talk and pray with those who hear the preaching? It takes all of us to do New Testament evangelism. Are you fulfilling the primary work of reaching the lost? May God help us all to humble our hearts, confess our failures, and pray through with repentance for our lack of evangelism. Remember, to repent, you must stop doing what is wrong (or neglected) and start doing what is right. Let's *Do What They Did!* Need help with evangelism visit:

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