**More Like the Master**

In His Personal Evangelism

Lesson 10

*“For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost”*

*(Luke 19:10)*

**Personal Evangelism**

There are many souls in the world that need to be brought to Jesus Christ. From the time of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3) to the present day, sin has separated mankind from God (Isaiah 59:1-2) and mankind is in need of a Savior. As Christians, we must always be working to bring others to Christ so that they can be saved. We call this “personal work” or “personal evangelism”. Jesus is our example of personal evangelism. Before he taught publicly, he spent the early part of his ministry working privately and personally to bring others to salvation. Even after he entered his public ministry, he continued to work personally and privately with individuals in order to save them. He taught others all the way to his dying day, including his time on the cross (Luke 23:39-43).

Even though the concept of sin has been downgraded and weakened in our modern society, sin is still very real and it is still a serious offense against God’s law (1 John 3:4; 5:17). Sinners who are lost need to be saved. Jesus knew his mission was to come to the world to save the lost. He was given the name “Jesus”, because he would save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). John the Baptist knew that he was the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Jesus said, *“For the son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Matthew 18:11; Luke 19:10). What can we learn from Jesus concerning his practice of personal evangelism and how can we be more like him in this great work?

**Jesus and His Personal Evangelism**

Jesus called the lost. Before Jesus entered into his public ministry, we find him calling his first disciples privately. His first disciples came from those who had followed John the Baptist (John 1:35-51). When two of John’s disciples followed, Jesus asked them, “What do you seek?” This question helped them to focus their priorities and their needs. Jesus called Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael on this occasion. He called them personally and privately. Two of them (Andrew and Philip), in turn, personally and privately called two others to follow Jesus (Peter and Nathanael). On this occasion, Jesus’ personal work encouraged others to do their own personal work. Later, Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James and John from their work of fishing. They immediately left all and followed him. Jesus said to them: *“Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men”* (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11). When Jesus was near Capernaum and the Sea of Galilee, he called Matthew the publican (a collector of Roman taxes) to follow him. Jesus made this invitation when he passed by Matthew’s tax booth and Matthew immediately followed Jesus (Matthew 9:9; Mark 2:13-14; Luke 5:27-28).

Jesus associated with the lost. Jesus associated with a sinful Samaritan woman in order to teach her (John 4:4-24). Later, Jesus associated with another sinful woman and he allowed her to anoint his feet (Luke 7:36-46). Her faith on this occasion got her forgiveness (Luke 7:47-50). When Jesus taught sinners in Luke 15, the scribes and Pharisees murmured. Jesus took this occasion to teach the crowd the importance of saving the lost. He used the parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son to illustrate his point (Luke 15:4,6,8,9,24,32). Jesus also taught that there is joy over a sinner who repents (15:6-7,9-10,25,32). The Pharisees should have been joyful on this occasion that sinners were coming to hear Jesus, but they murmured instead. Jesus was on a lost and found mission (Luke 15:32). When Jesus went to the home of Zacchaeus the tax-collector, he taught him (Luke 19:1-10). Jesus ate with publicans and sinners in the home of Levi (Matthew) and there he taught the importance of calling sinners to repentance. He said, *“I came not to call the righteous, but sinners”* (Matthew 9:10-13; Mark 2:15-17; Luke 5:29-32). Jesus did not associate with sinners in order to be like them, but to teach them and guide them to salvation. Jesus was indeed *“a friend of publicans (tax collectors) and sinners”* (Matthew 11:19) and mankind can be thankful that he was just that.

Jesus taught the lost. When Nicodemus came to Jesus privately at night, Jesus taught him the importance of being born again in order to enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:1-15). When Jesus met the woman at the well, he taught the importance of the water of life and proper worship (John 4:4-26). This woman, in turn, did her own “personal work” and brought others to Jesus who believed for themselves (John 4:27-42).

One method that Jesus used in teaching the lost was to turn an ordinary conversation or activity into a discussion of important spiritual principles. He did this with the woman at the well in John 4. He turned a request for a drink of water into a lesson about living water (John 4:7-15). Jesus went on to talk with the woman about her marriage and her religion (John 4:16-26). As a result, the woman and others became believers in Jesus (John 4:27-42). Another example of how Jesus turned ordinary events into opportunities can be seen in the feeding of the 5,000 in John 6. When the crowd came to Jesus the next day looking for him, he took the opportunity to teach them about the “bread of life” (John 6:22-71). Jesus looked for and made evangelistic teaching opportunities out of ordinary daily activities and conversations.

Jesus invited the lost. Jesus upbraided the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida for the unbelief and their lack of repentance (Matthew 11:20-24). But, he also invited them to be saved. He said, *“Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”* (Matthew 11:28-30). During a Passover, Jesus was surrounded by unbelievers and those who wanted to kill him (John 7:11-36). But, he invited them to come and take of the water of life and be saved. He said, *“If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink”* (John 7:37).

Jesus sent others to the lost. Jesus sent his 12 disciples to go out and preach to the *“lost sheep of the house of Israel”* (Matthew 10:6; 15:24). Later, he sent 70 out two by two to teach the lost (Luke 10:1-20). At the end of his ministry, he sent his disciples out again saying: *“Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation…”* (Mark 16:15). They were to start their preaching in Jerusalem and then go to *“all the nations”* (Matthew 28:19; Luke 24:47). Jesus knew that the lost all over the world needed saving, so he sent his followers to preach the saving message to them.

Jesus valued the lost. The reason Jesus did so much to call the lost, teach the lost, and associate with them was that he valued each and every lost person. Each lost person is valuable in the sight of God. Jesus taught the value of lost souls in the parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son (Luke 15:1-32). Yes, just one lost soul is valuable!

Jesus wept and prayed for the lost. Jesus valued the souls of all mankind and did not want them to be lost. He wept for them (Luke 19:41-44) and pled with them to come and be saved (Matthew 23:37-39).

Jesus did not force himself upon the unbelieving lost. Jesus wanted everyone to be saved, but he also knew that there were unbelievers who did not want his saving message. Jesus never forced himself upon unbelievers. If unbelievers did not want Jesus, he left them alone. For example, he left Nazareth when the angry Jews there did not want him (Luke 4:28-30). He left them again later when they were offended in him and would not believe in him (Matthew 13:53-58; Mark 6:1-6). When the citizens of Geresa (Gadara) begged Jesus to leave their area, he left (Mark 5:17-18). Jesus even told his disciples not to force themselves upon unbelievers but to look for those who wanted the gospel. They were to “shake off the dust their feet” and move on (Matthew 10:11-15; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5; 10:11-12).

**The Christian and Personal Evangelism**

Christians need to call the lost. Like John, we need to point the lost to Jesus the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29,35-37). Like Jesus, we can ask our lost friends and neighbors, “What do you seek?” (John 1:38). Jesus is still making the request, “Follow me” (John 1:43), and we can help the lost to follow Jesus. Today, there are still good and honest hearts like Nathanael who will come to understand and accept the fact that Jesus is the Son of God (John 1: 49). We need to go out and find them. Today, Christians are faithful followers who can go out and find other faithful followers. Christians do not call the lost to themselves, but to Jesus. Jesus is the only way to God and we call the lost to that way (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

Christians need to associate with the lost. Like Jesus and Paul, Christians need to go where the lost can be found. Paul looked for opportunities and places to teach the lost and he seized these opportunities when they came (Acts 13:14; 14:1; 16:13; 17:1-2,10,17; 18:4,19; 19:1,8-9). Christians do not associate with the lost in order to condone their sin, but to teach them and influence them for good. Christians need to let their light shine and their salt savor with those who are lost in sin (Matthew 5:13-16).

Christians need to teach the lost. Association alone is not enough. Christians need to teach their lost friends and neighbors the saving gospel. The gospel is God’s power to save (Romans 1:16). The gospel is what God uses to call the lost (2 Thessalonians 2:14). Christians need to use the gospel and speech *“seasoned with salt”* when they teach others (Colossians 4:6). Christians need to be ready to give an answer of the hope that is within them (1 Peter 3:15). With the right gospel message, Christians can save themselves and others who hear them (1 Timothy 4:16). All Christians need to have the attitude of Paul who wrote, *“I am ready to preach the gospel…”* (Romans 1:15) and *“Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel”* (1 Corinthians 9:16). Like 1st Century Christians, we need to be going everywhere preaching the word (Acts 4). Like Paul, we do not need to hold back anything that is profitable to the lost (Acts 20:27) and we need to teach them the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). Like Jesus, we can turn ordinary daily activities and conversations into evangelistic opportunities.

Christians need to invite the lost. Christians can be like Philip who enthusiastically went and said, *“We have found him…”* and *“Come and see…”* (John 1:45-46).

Christians need to be sent to the lost. The “Great Commission” that Jesus gave his apostles (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47) is still great today! Christians must continue to take the gospel near and far. Christians must learn God’s word together so that they can go out and teach others (2 Timothy 2:2; Hebrews 5:12). The lost cannot call upon the Lord unless they believe, they cannot believe unless they hear, and they cannot hear unless someone goes and teaches them (Romans 10:14-15). Will you be the one to go?

Christians need to value the lost. The souls of the lost are the most valuable possessions in the world (Matthew 16:26). Christians must do what they can to *“save a soul from death”* (James 5:19-20) and be busy *“snatching them out of the fire”* (Jude 22-23).

Christians need to weep and pray for the lost. Like Jesus and Paul, Christians need to weep for the lost souls in the world. Concerning his lost Jewish brethren, Paul wrote, *“I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart”* (Romans 9:2). Christians also need to pray for lost souls. Paul prayed for his lost Jewish brethren: *“My heart’s desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved”* (Romans 10:1).

Christians need not force themselves upon the unbelieving lost. There will be many times when the unbelieving lost do not want to hear and obey the gospel. Christians must not be discouraged when this happens. Like Paul, Christians must leave hardened unbelievers alone and look for others who will hear and obey. Paul did what Jesus said to do (Matthew 10:14), he “shook the dust off his feet” and went elsewhere (Acts 13:46-51; 18:6). Unfortunately, there are times today when Christians must do the same. There will be many times when Christians sow the seed of God’s word and it will land on the wayside soil, the rocky soil, and the thorny soil (Luke 8:4-14). But, Christians must keep sowing until the seed falls on that one *“honest and good heart”* (Luke 8:15). Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount concerning the unbelieving: *“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest haply they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you”* (Matthew 7:6). The gospel is not to be forced upon those who do not want it. Paul wrote that there are times when Christians simply need to avoid certain conversations with unbelievers who do not profit (2 Timothy 2:16-18; Titus 3:9-10). There indeed is, *“a time to keep silence”* (Ecclesiastes 3:7) and move on.

**More Like the Master in His Personal Evangelism**

The Devil wants the lost to stay lost. He does not want them to hear the saving gospel message. He does not want the light of the gospel to shine upon them. Paul wrote, *“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”* (2 Corinthians 4:3-4, KJV). It is our duty and privilege to take the saving gospel to the lost. Christians cannot be serious about serving Christ without being seriously concerned for the lost. We sing, “Rescue the Perishing,” but how much rescuing are we actually doing?

When we go and teach the lost and they are converted, they in turn will go and teach the lost. Remember the story of Andrew and Philip (John 1:35-51)? After Jesus called Andrew, he found Peter. After Jesus called Philip, he found Nathanael. This is how personal evangelism works and prospers even today. All Christians to the extent of their power and ability should be doing personal evangelism. The problem today is not a lack of souls to harvest. Jesus said the harvest of souls is plenteous (Matthew 9:37-38; John 4:35-38). The problem is a lack of reapers (Christians doing personal evangelism) to go into the harvest. Let us all pray that the Lord will send reapers and let us do our part to go and do personal evangelism. Was Jesus a successful soul-winner? Absolutely! Let us all be “More Like the Master” in his personal evangelism and we can be successful too!

**Questions**

1. What did Jesus do to call the lost and associate with the lost?

2. What did Jesus do to teach the lost and invite the lost?

3. What commission did Jesus give his disciples concerning the lost?

4. What did Jesus teach about the value of one lost soul?

5. What example in the gospels do we have of Jesus weeping and praying for the lost?

6. What did Jesus do in the presence of those who refused to believe in him?

7. How can Christians be like Jesus in these following areas of personal evangelism?

Calling the lost –

Associating with the lost –

Teaching the lost –

Inviting the lost –

8. How can Christians be like Jesus in these following areas of personal evangelism?

Going to the lost –

Valuing the lost –

Weeping and praying for the lost –

Dealing with hardened unbelievers –

9. What is the greatest change you need to make in order to be “More like the Master” in your personal evangelism?