

# **“And a Great Many People were Added to the Lord”**

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

- A. The New Testament template for local church growth - Acts 11:19-26
  - 1. Sermons on church growth and personal evangelism are the second most commonly requested lessons for gospel meetings
  - 2. And invariably, the brother making the closing comments will say, “Thank you brother Blake for that sermon. We need to start doing more of that.” Wrong Pronoun! “I” need to do more personal work!
- B. 1Cor. 9:16 - Preach - Euangelizomai - Evangelize
- C. Threefold purpose of Christian existence:
  - 1. Evangelism - Great Commission is a command for every Christian
  - 2. Edification - teaching and training young believers
  - 3. Spiritual Growth - Growing toward perfection
- D. True Christianity has been sidetracked:
  - 1. Social Gospel - physical needs made a priority over spiritual
  - 2. Gospel mixed with worldly sciences and content (psychology, politics, astronomy, archeology, entertainment)
  - 3. Word of God is not preached as authoritative because many do not believe it is God's Word, or believe it must be adjusted to fit the times.
  - 4. Busy work; fishers of men have become keepers of the aquarium
- E. Results in:
  - 1. No spiritual content - Heb. 5:12-14
  - 2. No spiritual concerns - Acts 28:27
  - 3. No spiritual commitment - Eph. 4:14

## **I. THE NEED**

- A. A fresh awareness of Hell - Matt. 13:41-42; Mark 9:44
  - 1. People are seldom moved from a comfort zone without a strong sense of urgency
  - 2. What kind of Christian understands what is at stake for others, and takes no action on their behalf? Lazy, uncaring, cynical, fearful
  - 3. Are you aware that God will not accept “I was afraid” as an excuse for failing to reach out to the lost? - Matt. 25:25-26
- B. A fresh awareness of our responsibility - Mark 16:15; Ez. 3:17-18
  - 1. A command that carries the same weight as baptism
- C. To overcome our embarrassment of being Christians - Rom. 1:16

## **II. THE METHOD**

- A. Be a student of scripture - Rom. 10:17
  - 1. It's what your prospects need; we used to be called “people of the book”
- B. Be focused in prayer - Acts 12:5
  - 1. Not just Lord bless the preachers, help the sinners find the truth, etc.; get out there and be the answer to your own prayer

- C. Plan a strategy - start small - Goals in steps; Even God took six days to create the world, not one
- D. Start with what you know; you never will have all the answers; the unbeliever knows less about Christ than you do.
- E. Reading the New Testament over the phone with a friend. Ask a relative or a friend to join you in daily Bible reading.
  - 1. Begin with Matthew and read two chapters aloud together, alternating.
  - 2. Keep your appointments faithfully. In 60 days, you and your prospect will have read four accounts of the birth of the Savior, of His work and teaching, of His death, burial, and resurrection, and of His instruction to carry the Gospel to the entire world. You will have read Peter's gospel sermon, multiple accounts of conversion, and of the beginning of the Lord's church. You will have had a multitude of opportunities along the way to encourage your prospect to become a Christian.
  - 3. Here is what you will have accomplished: You will have taught the Gospel to a lost soul who may obey the Lord. You will have changed your relationship with that person forever. You will gain confidence to become a soul winner. You have helped to fulfill the Lord's work.
  - 4. And what resources did you use? A Bible, a lost soul, love for that person, a little courage to ask them, and a prayer for help
- F. There are dozens of personal work plans. The reason they don't work has little to do with the plan; it is about the commitment of the people working the plan
  - 1. Find one that works for you and work it.

### III. THE NEVERS

- A. Never concern yourself with the possibility of the Adversary's hindrance. Satan has no authority over the believer. He cannot prevent anyone's salvation. He was defeated at the cross.
  - 1. Peter preached and 3000 saved
  - 2. Remove from your vocabulary, "What if" in a negative context.
- B. Never allow your profession to dictate your usefulness for Christ. Gideon was a wheat thresher and Amos was a Herdsman.
- C. Never allow financial support to replace your personal involvement in ministry. If giving is all you can do, then do it, but try to find a way to put your hands on the task
- D. Never think that the results depend on you; Leave the results with God - Don't be anxious over what you cannot control. You just bring the Word - 1Cor 3:5-8

#### Conclusion:

- A. Edgar Albert Guest - "A soul I must save, if I would save my own; For, heaven's gates are closed, to him who comes alone."

Invitation: Elder Walter Scott preaching in Hiram County, OH.