

## Encouragement for Members to Evangelize

### What is Evangelism?

The word "Evangelism" is of Greek origin. Evangelism is the activity of preaching the good news. The good news is the best news that has ever been or can ever be proclaimed, for it is the message of how the Lord Jesus through His suffering and death paid for the sins of the whole world. What better news is there than the good news that Jesus Christ is the true Savior from all sins for every age and every generation since Adam and Eve and to the end of time when our Lord will come again to take every believer to heaven! Grant this to each of us also God, we pray. Amen

### Examples and Encouragement from Scripture to Evangelize

One could perhaps rightfully ask, "When did evangelism truly start?" Would you believe "evangelism" started with Adam and Eve who shared the good news of the promised Savior from sin with their sons, Cain and Abel? Abel accepted the "evangelism" message of a Savior from sin. By faith Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord. Cain did not because his sacrifice was not by faith (Hebrews 11: 4, Genesis 4). Cain grew very jealous and slew his brother Abel. God gave Adam and Eve another son, Seth, who carried on the "evangelism" work his parents began in him (even at a young age, as a child). Through word of mouth from the prophets and other believers, God preserved the preaching of the gospel message through the Old Testament. Those ancient believers were evangelists spreading the words and promises of God—the good news of the coming Savior. Among them were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In time, God used many men of the Old Testament to write His evangelizing Word, men such as Ezekiel, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Samuel, David. The Lord God also revealed the good news through the inspired Word of the New Testament. Therefore when it is written in the Scriptures, **"Go therefore into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature"**

( Mark 16:15), we are left with a big job to do, especially as there are countless people who have not heard the name of Jesus Christ, God's Only Son, and the only Savior from sin, death and the power of the devil. They may have heard of Jesus but not as the only One through whom we have eternal life.

### What Can We Do?

One might ask, "How can we help?" Primarily by our personal conversations with others. Such a conversation might go this way: "(Name of person you are talking to), would you mind if I asked you a personal question?" (Positive answer) "Do you know Jesus as your personal Savior from sin?" If the answer is positive, ask, "Are you able to

deepen that knowledge with church attendance?" Since we do not want to proselytize, we will go on our way. If the individual has no church home, offer an invitation to come to Berea. One might offer to pick the individual(s) up so they can attend with you. Tell them: "I know you will find the church service informative and spiritually helpful. Every Sunday, you will hear a message of the love of Jesus, and how the Heavenly Father cares about you, body and soul."

Should you ever find yourself on a house to house survey, this could be used there if nothing is given you to ask or say. If you know personal friends who are not churched, there is an opportunity to use these suggestions. You can modify them any way you like using Biblical guidelines.

A publication titled *Talk About the Savior* suggests an approach. It starts: "If you were to die today, what would you tell God when He asked you 'Why should I let you into heaven?'" If person answers: "Because Jesus died to take away my sins, and by the work of the Spirit of God I believe in Jesus Christ as my Savior" your work with them could continue: "That is the message which we hear every Sunday at Berea, and if you have no church home we would love to have you hear it with us regularly at Berea."

May we not hesitate to do that and, as Luther says, "with all boldness and confidence" proclaim to everyone we know the glorious redemptive work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. With anyone who has a church affiliation we can use that response or conversation or whatever Christian conversation might come to mind, especially if you know the person well.

To an unbeliever, one could use the aforementioned approach or ask if the individual has thought about where he will spend eternity. If the person still is interested, you can tell of your confidence of life in heaven because of what Jesus has done for you. In this way we are following the Savior's commission recorded in the gospel of Mark (16:15): **"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."** You can do so with the assurance that the Lord will be with you (Matthew 28:20)

We have the injunction. We have the motivation--the love of Christ. What is it that holds us up? It is the devil and our lazy, sinful, indifferent excuse-filled flesh. Yet God still loves us and died for us on that cross on Calvary, which everyone needs to know about and believe in to receive eternal life. We have our work cut out for us, do we not? May we get about sharing the Good News in our personal witness as well as by contributing to the spreading of the gospel through our offerings by which we send missionaries into the world, to places where we cannot personally go. God help us all, Amen.