

# **FOCUS ON THE FIELD**

## ***Emphasis on Soul-Winning***

Messages in the “Focus on the Field” Series:

- 1. 20 REASONS FOR SOUL-WINNING**
- 2. WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS?**
- 3. THE COST OF SOUL-WINNING**
- 4. WITNESSING SEEMS FORGOTTEN**
- 5. THE GOSPEL IN A SHOE BOX**

### **20 Reasons For Soul-Winning**

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1. Seeking soul, 1 Kings 18:1; Matthew 12:42.
2. Compassion for soul-winning, Psalm 126:5–6.
3. The wise who win souls, Proverbs 11:30.
4. Harvest past, summer ended, no salvation, Jeremiah 8:20.
5. Penalty for failing to witness, Ezekiel 3:18–19.
6. Those who witness shine like stars, Daniel 12:3.
7. Fishers of men, Matthew 4:19; Luke 5:10.
8. Plentiful harvest, few workers, Matthew 9:37–38.
9. Praying for harvesters rather than harvest, Luke 10:1–2.
10. Parables of lost sheep, lost coin, lost son, Luke 15:1–32.
11. Lifting up Jesus to draw men, John 12:32.
12. Last words of Jesus, Acts 1:6–8.
13. Paul’s desire to bring salvation to Israel, Rom. 9:1–4; 10:1.
14. Spiritual persuasion, 2 Corinthians 5:11
15. Tears of compassion, Philippians 3:18.
16. Soul-winner’s glory, joy, 1 Thessalonians 2:19–20.
17. Coming day when soul-winning not needed, Hebrews 8:10–11.
18. Turning sinner from error of his way, James 5:20.
19. Snatch some from the fire, Jude 23.
20. Combined ministry of Holy Spirit, church, Revelation 22:17.

# What Are You Doing to Spread the Good News?

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How many times have you had someone come up to you and tell you, “I have some good news and some bad news to tell you?” The world is full of bad news and it is refreshing when someone has some good news to share.

The best news anyone can hear is what Jesus Christ has done for him. In 1 Corinthians the Apostle Paul writes, “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

The Gospel has been entrusted to us.

When we accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour, at that moment the Lord entrusted us to spread His message to everyone. Paul writes to Timothy and says, “According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.”

The Gospel must be elevated in our hearts.

I believe most Christians would acknowledge that the Gospel is the best news anyone could ever share with another person. However, this is just mental consent if it is never transferred to our hearts. In 1 Corinthians 9:16 Paul said, “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” It was not just head knowledge for Paul; the Gospel message was in his heart! He wanted to share this wonderful message with others.

The Gospel must be shared enthusiastically.

Every Christian should enthusiastically share the Gospel. We would be excited if we found a lottery ticket on the ground and won a million dollars. We would tell everyone about the blessing that came our way! The Gospel is much more important than anything this world can offer us.

In Acts 8, when the persecution went to newer heights and the Christians were scattered, they still witnessed. “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.” These believers were fanatical and excited about the opportunity they had to share the Gospel. May you and I have the same spirit that these early believers possessed.

The Gospel is for everyone.

Jesus reminds us that He came into this world and died on the Cross of Calvary for everyone! “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” You cannot witness to the wrong person.

The Gospel is the “Good News” of Jesus Christ. Together, let us be the bearers of “Good News” to someone today!

## **The Cost of Soul-Winning**

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And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. (Luke 9: 23, 24)

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. (2 Tim 2:1-3)

1. Self-Sacrifice: It takes time and effort on our part
2. Personal Separation: We must be clean vessels for God to use
3. Possible Persecution: We should expect to be ridiculed or even turned away (JW's & Mormons put up with it all the time)
4. Individual Study: We should follow 2 Tim. 2:15 and be prepared to share our faith
5. Prayer & the Holy Spirit: We must never depend on our own strength or abilities; we need Him to help prepare our hearts and the hearts of those to whom we give the Gospel.

# Witnessing Seems Forgotten

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## Text-Acts 1:8

Our Lord's command "...Ye shall be witnesses unto ..." (Acts 1:8) has been binding upon every believer. The word translated "witnesses" has derived from the Greek word that is basic to the thought of "martyrdom." Surely as we are crucified to the world and the world is crucified to us, we will be the "witnesses" that are needed in reaching the present society with the life-changing Gospel message. America has been blessed of God because of the Gospel of His Son, and those who have preceded us along the way have declared that gospel through the years.

Such a man was Uncle John Vassar, who has been called "The Apostle of Personal Evangelism." Everywhere Uncle John went, he led sinners to Christ. During the Civil War, to better assist in reaching soldiers with the Gospel, this dear man of God enlisted in the American Tract Society. On one occasion in Pennsylvania, while working among the Union troops, he became disoriented and was captured by General Jeb Stuart's cavalry. When interrogated as a suspected spy, he totally disarmed the troops by his fearless witness of the Savior. Ultimately he was escorted into the presence of the General, and when asked what he was doing, he responded: "I am working as a colporteur of the American Tract Society, to try and save the souls of the dear boys that fall around me daily. General, do you love Jesus?" General Stuart sought to put off the question by saying, "I know that good old Society, and have no fear of its emissaries." "But," said Uncle John, "dear General, do you love Jesus?" The puzzled officer was relieved by the suggestion of those who had arrested Uncle John, for they said, "General, take the man's promise that he will not tell of our whereabouts for twenty-four hours, and let us see him out of our lines, or we will have a prayer meeting from here to Richmond."

How tragic that the exploits of such a man should be so refreshingly challenging to our minds in this day. Ought not this pattern to be the norm of our concern for the lost about us?

On June 4, 1768, the sheriff of Spotsylvania Virginia, arrested John Waller, Lewis Craig, James Childs, James Reed and William Mash, Baptist ministers, for preaching without license. At their trial they were vehemently accused by the prosecuting attorney who said: "May it please your worships, these men are great disturbers of the peace, they cannot meet a man upon the road, but they must ram a text of scripture down his throat." Surely the prosecuting attorney was exaggerating when he lodged such a complaint, but there is no doubt that our Baptist forebears in every generation have been witnesses, and their efforts have led to soul-winning.

Some men witness faithfully and fruitfully throughout their entire lives and until the very moment of death. Such a man was the Scottish Baptist preacher, Reverend John Harper. On his way to America for a preaching mission in 1912, Reverend Harper was aboard the ill-fated Titanic. When the man of God realized the ship was going down, he cared for the safety of his little daughter, and then he began throwing out the life jackets of eternal life as he urged men to trust Christ as their Savior. During the last moments of his life, a man clinging to a board drifted near Mr. Harper who was also struggling in the water. The preacher called, "Are you saved?" The man answered "No," and John Harper called back, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Before the man could respond he drifted back into the darkness.

Later, the current brought the two men back in sight of one another. Again Harper called out, "Are you saved?", and once again the man cried back, "No." The Scripture verse was again cited: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

With that, the drowning pastor lost his grip on the board he had held, and almost immediately he slipped into his watery grave. The man he sought to win put his faith in Christ. Later he was rescued by the S. S. Carpathia's lifeboats. Four years after the Titanic went down, that survivor stood in a meeting in Hampton, Ontario and testified that he was John Harper's "last convert."

Oh that we might be found just as faithful unto death!

# The Gospel In A Shoe Box

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How the shoe resembles our lives:

- Every shoe has a maker
- Every shoe is made for a purpose
- Every shoe has a tongue, eyes, and a sole (soul)
- For repairs it has to go to the right person
- The hide was provided by a sacrifice

## ***This outline is from Ruth 4:7-10:***

Here we have Boaz taking off his shoe as a testimony to confirm he was redeeming his bride. That shoe was a testimony to all Israel that Boaz was redeeming Ruth to be his Bride. Glory, glory! So, as I read this custom of the Jews, and the testimony of this shoe, I began to think how shoes represent some folks that I have known. Let us look and see if we can recognize them.

### **1. THE SNEAKERS**

Boy, these are the ones that kill me. They think they can sneak by with their sin like David did with Bathsheba.

Then we have the other crowd mentioned in John 10:1: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.” Here we have people trying to sneak into Heaven.

### **2. THE RUNNING SHOES**

- Some we know are RUNNING from GOD like Jonah.
- Some we know are RUNNING to GOD maybe be in a rescue mission or a jail service.
- Some we know are RUNNING with God in their daily lives.
- Some we know this night are RUNNING for GOD. Thank GOD for these folks.

### **3. THE BABY SHOES**

In every church there are babies. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:1: “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.” Paul said spiritual babies speak in tongues and want to be is petted. A baby always cries for attention, never wants to change even when dirty, and always wants the milk.

### **4. THE FLIP FLOPS**

Today’s religious crowd changes with the breeze and they do flip-flops just like Bill Clinton. They make promises they never keep. You can depend on them crying at the altar with tears and then going right back to their old ways. Just like Peter told CHRIST, “You can depend on me” but before their night at the altar is over, they have “flip-flopped.”

### **5. THE COMBAT BOOTS**

We sometimes need to have combat boots with steel toes. This is the crowd of folks ready for battle and that doesn’t get their feelings hurt when the preacher steps on their toes.