

What is Evangelism?

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[0:00] 2 Corinthians chapter 5, we'll begin our reading at verse 11 and continue to the end of the chapter. Since then, we know what it is to fear the Lord.

We try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen, rather than in what is in the heart.

If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God. If we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised again.

So from now on, we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

[1:21] The old has gone. The new has come. All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

We are, therefore, Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

May the Lord make his gospel sweet to us, and may we already now commit to this Lord to follow wherever he leads us tonight in his word, to do whatever he says.

[2:30] Please turn again in your Bibles, or keep them open to 2 Corinthians chapter 5. I want to take a moment tonight to tell you just a little bit about a man named D.L. Moody, a well-known pastor in the Chicago area many years ago.

I'm quoting from a message by one of his close friends and associates who's named R.A. Torrey. And I simply want to read you part of a message he gave about the life of D.L. Moody.

He says, Mr. Moody made the resolution shortly after he was saved that he would never let 24 hours pass over his head without speaking to at least one person about his soul.

His was a very busy life, and sometimes he would forget his resolution until the last hour, and sometimes he would get out of bed, dress, go out and talk to someone about his soul in order that he might not let one day pass without having definitely told at least one of his fellow mortals about his need and the Savior who could meet it.

And so he tells about one such night. Mr. Moody got home and had gone to bed before it occurred to him that he had not spoken to a soul that day about accepting Christ. Well, he said to himself, it's no good getting up now.

[3:56] There will be nobody on the street at this hour of the night. But he got up, dressed, and went to the front door. It was pouring rain. Oh, he said, there will be no one out in this pouring rain.

Just then he heard the patter of a man's feet as he came down the street holding an umbrella over his head. Then Mr. Moody darted out and rushed up to the man and said, may I share the shelter of your umbrella?

Certainly, the man replied. Then Mr. Moody said, have you any shelter in the time of storm? And preached Jesus to him. Oh, men and women.

This is Torrey still. Oh, men and women, if we are as full of zeal for the salvation of souls as that, how long would it be before the whole country would be shaken by the power of a mighty God-sent

revival?

One time he was going to Milwaukee. Remember, he lives in Chicago. Going to Milwaukee. And in the seat that he had chosen sat a traveling man. Mr. Moody sat down beside him and immediately began to talk with him.

[4:58] Where are you going? Mr. Moody asked. When told the name of the town, he said, we will soon be there. We'll have to get down to business at once. Are you saved? The man said that he was not.

And Mr. Moody took out his Bible and there on the train showed him the way of salvation. Then he said, now you must take Christ. The man did. And he was converted right there on the train.

And we may have some differences with Mr. Moody's theology. And we may have some differences with something of his method. But I hope that you can't argue tonight with his heart.

Maybe you can tell that the subject tonight will be evangelism. If you've deduced that, then you are correct. In fact, starting tonight and for at least six other evening messages, perhaps less, perhaps more, but I think at least six more, we're going to give ourselves to the subject of evangelism.

I don't expect that we'll all be resolved to share the gospel with at least one person every 24 hours, like Moody, though it's certainly a worthy goal.

[6:05] I'd be excited if we would commit to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ as the Savior of sinners to one person a week. But just to read you a story and then call you to a commitment like that isn't really fair.

And so over the next several weeks, I hope to lay before us a biblical view of God-centered evangelism.

What it is, and that's where we want to begin tonight. Why we must engage in it. Who is to do the work of evangelism. How we should go about it. And I want to be very practical when we get to that point of how we should go about it.

How to have an evangelistic conversation. How to use tracks, even. A simple and yet clear way to present the content, the full content of the gospel message.

Where we're to do evangelism. When we're to do it. What is the outcome of it. Now these subjects are going to, of necessity, overlap. As we talk tonight about what is evangelism, I'm going to be assuming who does it.

[7:06] And that should be all of God's people. And so they'll overlap. And we may spend more time on some than others. And some might expand into more than one message. But through the course of the series, I want you and I want myself to see the great duty and privilege and calling that each one of us has to tell people the good news about Jesus Christ.

Such that when we're done with this series, we'll be eager and willing to go and tell the good news whenever God is pleased to give us an opportunity, if it's every day or every week.

It may seem like a tall order, but it is our aim. And you should know that I don't bring these messages as one who has arrived, but as one who needs this truth as much as any of us here.

And you should also know that I'm depending heavily on the work of other men that have blessed my soul in studying this. Mark Devers' book, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, a fairly recent book, was very helpful.

I'll tell you some of these. If you're interested in reading more, I'd encourage you to get one of these books and read them. Ernest Reisinger, *Today's Evangelism*, its message and methods, very helpful.

[8:27] J.I. Packer's book, and some of these I'm still working my way through, but J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, also very helpful. I'm indebted to Pastor Bob and his class on evangelism that he recently taught.

This book, if I could only recommend one comprehensive book on personal evangelism, it would be Will Metzger's *Tell the Truth*. Very helpful, very practical.

It covers almost every subject you can think of with respect to personal evangelism. I disagree with him occasionally, but I can almost wholeheartedly recommend Will Metzger.

Read him with discernment, but read him. At times when I quote them, I will note who gives the quote. At other times, their thoughts have been interwoven with mine, and it won't be distinguished. But I'd encourage you to read more if your appetite is wet by some of the things that we learn together. And so to begin tonight, what is evangelism?

[9:32] What do we mean when we talk about evangelizing? Very simply, it's telling the good news. You hear it right in the Word. The word evangel is the Gospel. It's the good news. And to evangelize is to share that good news with someone else.

More specifically, we could say it's telling others the good news of how through the work of Jesus Christ, they can be delivered from the power and penalty of their fatal sin problem before a holy Creator God and calling them to respond to that message.

To consider this tonight, we want to think about what evangelism is and what it is not to distinguish some errors that are very common in our day.

So we begin with what it is. What is evangelism? It's telling the good news of the Gospel. And what is that Gospel? What is the good news? What is the message that we're to be telling other people? That's where we want to begin because if we don't have the heart of the Gospel, then we have no message.

We have nothing to say. And so we must understand that. And the Gospel, I trust and I know that it's something that you all understand because you've heard it. And many of you here have received that message and trusted in this Christ.

[10:44] And that message is very personal for you because God has done this work in your heart. But just because you already know the Gospel doesn't mean we don't need to hear it again. Christians, we need the Gospel every day.

We need to come in repentance and faith every day. Come again to the cross every day to be reminded of what Christ has done for us. It's there that we find the strength for living. So it's good for us to hear the Gospel.

And if you are not a Christian tonight, you need to hear the Gospel again. You need to hear it until you respond in repentance and faith. And so I want to summarize that message that has been life transforming for so many people and could be for you tonight if you would open your eyes, your ears to hear and receive by God's grace.

I'll give you four points that you can summarize the Gospel around. And we might flesh these out more later as we talk about the how-to of evangelism. But four simple points to remember the message of the Gospel.

We'll talk first about God and His way. Second, man and His way. Third, Jesus Christ. And fourth, the response to that message, which is repentance and faith.

[11:55] And we have to start with God and His way. Because everything begins with Him. If we don't understand who God is, we won't understand the problem that we have.

God is the Creator of all things and all men. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And as the Creator of men, they are His by right. And so it is His right to give them the rules and laws by which they must live.

And so He has given us rules and laws by which we must live. And they're set down for us in the Scriptures. This is God's law. Just as if you were to invent something.

You're an inventor. You're very creative. And you come up with this marvelous product that's going to change the world. That is yours. And you can make the patent for that invention.

Or you can file for a patent and receive the patent. And then the rights to that invention are yours. And you can control how it's manufactured and how it's marketed, how it is sold.

[12:54] It is yours. You make the rules for that invention. So it is with God. He made something much bigger than some little invention that we could come up with. He made the world. And the people in it. And He also made the rules for those people.

It is His. And so it is by right His to make those rules. And this God is a holy God. And He cannot tolerate the breaking of those rules.

The violation of them requires punishment because He is a just and righteous God. And if we were to summarize the way that God sets before us, God's way, what does He expect of us?

We could summarize it in two commands. Love the Lord your God with all of your heart and soul and mind and strength. And the second, love your neighbor as yourself. Love to God and love to man. This is God's way.

These are the rules that He has made for us. And you know that He made those rules for our good. He didn't make them to be a straitjacket, to restrict our joy, to take away our pleasure.

[13:54] It's only when we live according to His design that we function as we should, that things go as they ought. When we get away from God's rules, it's like a fish getting out of the water.

It can't survive. A fish was made to live in the water. It thinks, oh, I want to be free. And so I'm going to go live on land. But a fish isn't free on land, is it? Because it can't breathe.

And so too, people that get away from God's purpose for them. I don't want to live according to God's Word. It's like a fish getting out of the water. People getting away from God's rules. They think that they're free, but in reality, they're killing themselves.

And so, it begins with God in His way. But then there are men in their own way. Man in His way. And our way is contrary to God's way.

We've gone astray. We've broken His law. We think that we know better than God. And so we make our own way. We love ourselves instead of loving God and loving other people.

[14:52] And so, we don't listen to God's rules. We break them. And so we incur God's judgment. And to help people see their sin, to see your own, you can go to God's summary of the law.

The Ten Commandments. How they summarize those or fill out those two commands of loving God and loving our fellow men. Our neighbor as ourself. And we might meet some rich young rulers in presenting the gospel.

Oh, I've done all of those. Those things. And then you can take them and show them how Jesus understood the Ten Commandments. That it's not just the physical act of murder. But have you ever hated someone in your heart?

Oh, then you've broken the law at that point. And you can go to James 2.10 and see that even if you break the law at just one point, then you're guilty of breaking the whole law. And disobedience is not a small thing, but is rebellion against the holy, just Creator.

And so the way that man chooses is his own destruction. It is punishment. It is hell. When you sin against an infinitely holy God, the punishment must be infinite also.

[16:03] And so this point can't be under-emphasized when presenting the gospel. You can't just gloss over because people don't like to hear about sin and they don't like to hear about punishment.

You can't just pretend like that's no big deal. It has to be clear. And so, for some tonight, you need to understand that you're a sinner, that you've broken God's law, and that punishment is coming.

And so we talk about God in His way and man in His way, but then we come to the glorious news of Jesus Christ. And you need those two things before you get to Jesus. Because if you don't understand that you have a problem, you won't think that you need a solution to that problem.

I don't have the problem. I don't need the fix for it. I don't have anything to be saved from. Salvation isn't that big of a deal. People need to be able to see their sin in order to see their need for the Savior.

And that Savior is God's own Son. This sin that we've sinned against a holy God has created this gap between us and God, a chasm that we cannot cross.

[17:09] Our relationship with Him is broken, and so God sent His own Son to, as we've read in 2 Corinthians 5, to reconcile us to God. To bring us to God.

And so Jesus came and did what we failed to do. He did keep God's law. And then He went to the cross and was punished for our sin as our substitute.

1 Peter 3.18 For Christ died for sins once for all. The righteous, that's Jesus, for the unrighteous, that's us. to bring us, to bring you, to God.

The answer for our wickedness is His righteousness. The answer for our need for forgiveness, our coming punishment, is His substitutionary death.

The only way to be right with God is through Jesus, who can save us from our own way and put us back on the way that God has laid before us. He takes the punishment we deserve.

[18:07] He earns the eternal life we don't deserve. He's not only the Savior, He's the Lord as well. All who trust in Him to deliver them must follow Him, which is living according to God's way.

Glad to love their God and serve their fellow men. But then there must be a response to this glorious message and it's the response of repentance and faith. Our message about Jesus can't omit the very thing that Jesus preached time and again.

Repent and believe for the kingdom of God is at hand. Here's this message. You can't be neutral. And tonight, I'm not just talking about the Gospel. This is the Gospel.

You must repent and believe. There is no neutral ground. You either reject Jesus or you believe in Him. You can't say, well, either way I'll be fine.

No, there's only two responses. Rejection or belief. And so, the right response is to repent, turn from our sin and believe, turn to God, trusting in Jesus for our salvation, understanding that we can

do nothing to save ourselves.

[19:16] A message that can't be ignored. It's of the utmost urgency. Tonight, if you have not believed, you must repent and believe today. Isaiah 55, 6, seek the Lord while He may be found.

That means that one day He won't be found. Call on Him while He is near. One day He will no longer be near. Let the wicked forsake His way and the evil man His thoughts.

That's repentance. Let him turn to the Lord. That's faith. And He will have mercy on Him and to our God for He will freely pardon. That must be part of our message of the Gospel.

A call to respond to it. So there's God's way and there's man's way and there's the glorious Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. And there's the response to that.

We need this Gospel. It must be our daily spiritual food as we come again and again to the cross for comfort, encouragement, forgiveness. And it's the message you need tonight if you are still in your sin.

[20:21] And so evangelism must start with that. You have to have the message. And that's just the briefest and simple of summaries of the Gospel.

We could talk much more about each of those points. But just having the Gospel isn't evangelism, is it? It's telling others that message.

And having experienced the good news for ourselves, we know the blessing that comes from it.

We've tasted and seen that the Lord is good. That He's blessed us.

That He's given us what we don't deserve. And so what should we do with that information? Do we keep it to ourselves? No. No, we're to proclaim it.

We're to preach it. We're to share it with others. We're to be like the lepers in 2 Kings 7 that we talked about recently. The Israelites are under siege by the Arameans.

[21:20] And there's famine in the city. And people are starving to death such that they'll eat their own children they're so hungry. And there's these lepers outside the gate. And they say, well, why don't we go over to the camp of the Arameans?

And the worst that could happen is they'll kill us. We're going to die sitting here anyway, either of hunger or of leprosy. So let's go over to their camp and maybe they'll have mercy and give us food.

And they go over and they find the camp empty.

And they begin to go into the first tent and there's food and they eat and they drink. And then all of a sudden they're enjoying these blessings. And then all of a sudden they realize, woe to us if we don't go and share this good news with the rest of the city.

And often we're too much like those lepers were at the beginning. Oh, we're so thankful for our Gospel and for the salvation that we have and the glorious blessing that it's brought us.

But then we don't go and tell anyone else about it. Mark Dever says, when the message of the cross captures your heart, then your tongue, stammering, halting, insulting, awkward, sarcastic, and as imperfect as it may be, your tongue won't be far behind.

[22:33] As Jesus said, out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks. Is your heart taken with the blessings of the Gospel?

Is your heart taken with Jesus Christ? Is it amazed by Him? If it is, then your mouth will speak about it. Those are searching words from our Savior.

Out of the overflow, the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. What do you talk about? What could people discern about what's in your heart from what comes out of your mouth?

People would know that I love baseball. I'm a Cubs fan. Okay, that's fine. But do they know that I love Jesus? Because if that's what's in my heart, it will come out.

Jesus doesn't say it should. He says, out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks. What comes out of your mouth? It should be the good news of the Gospel if that is what your heart is taken and consumed with.

[23:37] It's what Paul is saying in the passage we read from 2 Corinthians 5. Again, verse 11. Since then, we know what it is to fear the Lord. We've experienced the fear of the Lord.

We know what that is in our hearts. So we shut up and we don't say anything about it. No, that's not what he says. We try to persuade men. We know the fear of the Lord.

Therefore, we try to persuade men. He says we're compelled by the love of Christ for us. Christ who died for us that we might live. We've experienced this remarkable reconciliation with God.

We're new creatures in Christ. Does that message amaze you? It should. Does it fill you with gratitude? Good, it should. But then, verse 18, all this is from God who has reconciled us to himself

through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors.

[24 : 39] As though God were making his appeal through us, we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. Paul is talking primarily about himself and other ministers of the gospel, but it applies to all of God's people as I hope to make clear later when we talk about who should do evangelism.

We are to be ambassadors. We have received this reconciliation. Then we are to go and open our mouths and tell other people how they can be reconciled. And so evangelism is not just having received the good news of the gospel.

It is telling other people that good news and inviting them to respond to it. Evangelism must be both. Informing them. We must understand that truth and inviting them to respond to it.

Calling them to repentance and faith. So evangelism is telling the gospel. You have to know what the gospel is and then tell others about it.

Evangelism is also God-centered or at least it should be. Many times today sadly it is not. But evangelism must be radically God-centered. It must be about bringing glory to His name.

[25 : 52] 1 Corinthians 10.31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Evangelism must never become about our great efforts or the number of souls that we have won for Jesus.

As soon as it becomes about this, the focus shifts from God to us. We've lost the purpose of true evangelism which is God-saving sinners.

If it becomes something less than total reliance upon God to do the work of saving men's souls will descend into man-made manipulation and psychological techniques so that we can save sinners. This is not to say that we can ignore the method or ignore evangelism altogether. Oh, the work of saving sinners is God's. Let us...

We don't want to interfere with that. No, God uses means. We're called by God to do this work. We are the means. One of the means that He can use to bring lost sinners into a saving relationship with Himself.

[26 : 55] But when it becomes about us, then we've missed the point and are not doing evangelism. When it becomes about us, it can become a hopeless project. We'll forget that God has His people and that He will save His people.

We'll present the gospel and there's no response and oh, we begin to despair if it's all about us. But if we remember that what the angel said to Mary or to Joseph, she will give birth to a son and you're to give him the name Jesus because He will save His people from their sins.

God will do the work of salvation. That's the best motive for evangelism there can be. That God does the work of salvation. But when we think it depends on us and we don't see results, we begin to despair and we give up.

And so in our evangelism, we must never forget the glorious truths of election and God's sovereignty and salvation. Those things won't be the focus of our studies in evangelism.

I think that you're solidly grounded in them, but we'll never stray far from them. They're always behind and underneath everything that we'll say. We cannot and must not take them for granted or we will become man-centered.

[28 : 08] I want you to listen for a moment to Packer and the evangelism and sovereignty of God about the danger of only emphasizing man's responsibility in evangelism.

There's both. there's man's responsibility and God's sovereignty, but if you neglect one and only emphasize the other, there's great danger. I want to... Packer says it so clearly.

He says, this shows us the danger of forgetting the practical implications of God's sovereignty. It's right to recognize our responsibility to engage in aggressive evangelism.

It's right to desire the conversion of unbelievers. It's right to want one's presentation of the Gospel to be as clear and forcible as possible. If we preferred that converts should be few and far between and did not care whether our proclaiming of Christ went home or not, there would be something wrong with us.

But it's not right when we take it on us to do more than God has given us to do. It's not right when we regard ourselves as responsible for securing converts and look to our own enterprise and techniques to accomplish what only God can accomplish.

[29:19] for where we are not consciously relying on God, there we shall inevitably be found relying on ourselves. And the spirit of such self-reliance is a blight on evangelism.

Such, however, is the inevitable consequence of forgetting God's sovereignty and the conversion of souls. It becomes all about us. And we must not make that mistake. There are some who would say that emphasizing God's sovereignty and salvation and election would lead to no evangelism.

Well, God's going to save His people. He's sovereign. He's going to save. He doesn't need us. But that's not what the Bible teaches. That's to ignore the teaching of the Scripture. It should lead to the most hopeful and confident sort of evangelism.

What a blessing to know that the salvation of the souls of men is not in our hands. The success of our mission does not rise or fall with the effectiveness of our presentation.

God saves sinners. We don't. We present them the truth and call them to respond to it. All authority in heaven and on earth is not given to us. It is given to Jesus. Therefore, we are to go and make disciples.

[30:28] We are to go and share that news. Because the authority is His. The power is His. Not ours. And so, we're not to sit back and wait for disciples magically to be saved without human means.

No, we go and do the work trusting God with the effects, the results. And won't this be to God's glory? Won't this be the most God-centered kind of evangelism?

Because I didn't win a soul today. God saved that soul. And so, the praise goes to Him and never to us in our feeble attempts.

So clear that it was God's strength being perfected in our weakness that the praise must go to Him.

Well, very briefly, that's what evangelism is. It's telling the truth of the gospel to those that need to hear it, calling them to respond to it.

Doing so in a manner that is God-centered. I want to talk for a moment now about what evangelism is not. And I was helped by Mark Dever in thinking down this road.

[31:35] He gave a list of things evangelism is not. I want to focus in on two tonight. First of all, evangelism is not social action or public involvement.

Evangelism is not building a house for someone. It is not giving them a free meal when they are in need. Evangelism is not helping the poor and needy widow and orphan.

Now, don't misunderstand. these things are good and they are right to do when we're not enabling someone's delinquency. In fact, if we don't do these things, our religion is worthless.

But in and of themselves, they are not evangelism. And don't mistake them for such. Mercy ministry commends the gospel, but it is not the gospel and it does not proclaim the gospel unless it is accompanied by the gospel, whether spoken or written.

These things can make evangelism more effective in some instances because people can see that the truth you're proclaiming really has transformed your life. They can see that there is a genuine care and concern for them, but separated from giving them the truth of Jesus Christ and their own sinfulness, these things are not the gospel.

[33:02] Again, Mark Dever says, when our eyes fall from God to humanity, social ills replace sin. Horizontal problems replace the fundamental vertical problem between us and God and winning elections eclipses winning souls.

I want you to remember everything that Jason preached several weeks ago about the mercy and love that Jesus showed to sinners. We must do the same.

I hope that you hurt for and love and long for the salvation of the sinners around you and I hope that those things drive you to show them mercy by telling them about Jesus.

I hope you don't just offer money or assistance as deliverance from their earthly physical problems, but that you offer Jesus as the deliverance from their spiritual problem, their sin.

Mercy without the gospel is not really mercy at all. And so evangelism is not giving a message about how people can be freed from their problems and their trouble and how they can now how they can have joy instead of sadness and fulfillment instead of emptiness.

[34:14] These things will come for those who are in Christ, but that is not the point of the gospel. They're man-made or man-centered selfish goals. The outcome of the gospel is something far greater and that is peace with God.

Now with that peace with God will come help and trouble. Will come joy. Will come true fulfillment. But if people are just looking for a band-aid for their rough lives and their difficult problems, that's

not what Jesus is.

He's the Savior of men's souls and He must be presented as such. But secondly, evangelism is not, and this will in some ways be repeating what we said about God-centered evangelism, but it's so important it's worth repeating.

Evangelism is not imposing my beliefs on someone, but rather telling them the truth about God and Jesus and their sin. I can't impose my beliefs because I can't change the heart.

I can proclaim the truth of God and trust Him to do that work of changing the heart, but I cannot change the heart. I can present the clearest, most logical, cogent presentation of the gospel, but that won't change the heart.

[35 : 27] Evangelism is not me saving someone else from their sins. the result or the fruit of evangelism is not evangelism.

Don't mistake the two. Again, this is the natural outworking of our understanding of God's sovereignty as we said earlier. Evangelism must never be an emotional manipulation into a decision.

Evangelism is not saving men's souls. It's telling them the truth and trusting God to work and to save men's souls. This is so significant I ran across it in every one of these authors that I've read so far.

I want to share with you some of their thoughts on this point. Dever again says, we don't fail in our evangelism if we faithfully tell the gospel to someone who is not converted.

We fail only if we don't faithfully tell the gospel at all. Evangelism itself isn't converting people. It's telling them that they need to be converted and telling them how they can be.

[36 : 33] Or Ernie Riesinger says, when a preacher or a church tries to affect that which only God can affect, it is shifted from God-centered evangelism to man-centered when it tries to do what only God can do.

Or Metzger in Tell the Truth, any definition of our task that includes results is confusing our responsibility with God's prerogative, which is regeneration.

Regeneration is God's work. And if our definition includes that, then we've confused the issue.

Packer has a similar quote that we could look at. But we must keep that distinction clear.

And it will guard us from errors on both sides when we remember that evangelism is not saving men's souls. On the one hand, it will keep us from despair when we don't see results.

Oh, we don't see results. Oh, so I'm going to give up. I despair. It will also, on that same hand, keep us from trying to use some new innovation. Oh, my evangelism, it's not really evangelism because nobody's being saved, so I need to change something.

[37 : 39] I'll tweak the message to make it more attractive. Or I'll tweak my methods. I'll use some psychological pressure. And I'll use some emotional manipulation.

I'll do whatever it takes to get that response of someone coming to faith in Christ. I've got to get them to pray that prayer. Remembering that God does the work of saving sinners keeps us from running into that ditch of either despair or innovation over here that is unbiblical.

And it also keeps us from a ditch on the other side, and that is pride. When we do see results, I won another soul for Christ today.

I was out soul winning and this man was saved. I won another soul for Jesus today. No.

No, you didn't save any souls. God saved the soul so that God is glorified. So it keeps us from despair and foolish innovation on the one hand and pride on the other hand.

[38 : 45] And either way, God is glorified both in the salvation of sinful men and in the just punishment that comes to unrepentant sinners. Well, there will be various conclusions as we proceed, but let's draw just a few tonight.

First of all, we're a blessed people. We have the message of the Gospel. We hear each Lord's Day here the truth of sinners saved by grace through faith in Christ.

And if we ever think that that gets old or unremarkable and we need to have our hearts warmed afresh with the truth of the Gospel, but we are a blessed people that our sins are forgiven and that we're on our way to glory instead of destruction.

That message through the work of God has come and changed many lives here. He saved many souls here.

Praise Him for it. We're a blessed people to have that truth. And so if you've experienced that greatest of all gifts, it should be evident in the way that you live and in the way that you talk.

[40:07] Do you talk about Jesus and what He has done for you? Do you do it often? Do you delight to tell others how He has changed your life and how He can change?

He is ready and willing to change theirs too. Are you evangelizing? You, brothers and sisters, are one of the means that God uses to bring lost men and women into His kingdom.

Are you rising to that challenge or are you resting back on the sovereignty of God saying that if God's going to save the nations, He certainly doesn't need me to do it. I'm not gifted in evangelism. That's for others. I remind you of William Carey. He was wanting to go to India as a missionary. And he was pushing the churches. He wanted to be sent. And at one meeting, an elderly man who had a great respect for God's sovereignty as well he and we should have.

[41:08] But there was an imbalance. He said, took care. He said, sit down, young man. When God is pleased to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine.

And I wonder, though, none of us would say it in such strong terms. If we don't have that heart sometimes, God is sovereign and He'll save who He will. And He doesn't need me to do it. Contrast that with Carey. Preached a message in 1792 from Isaiah 54 on missions and everyone was stirred up about it. Everyone got excited about it.

But they were about to break up the meeting and nothing had been done. They were just excited about it. And Carey's disappointment was so great that he grabbed this man Andrew Fuller by the arm and said, is there nothing again going to be done, sir?

We need to do something. God calls us to act. To spread that gospel. To spread that good news. And so we must be about the business of it. And so it's well and good to talk about missions and evangelism and to be excited about it.

[42:21] I hope that over the course of these messages our hearts will be stirred. I hope that mine will be stirred. But if we get excited about it and talk about it but it produces no fruit in our lives then it will have been pointless and a waste of time.

And so let us pray that the brief time we spend studying evangelism will be used of God not just to excite us about the work but to inspire us to go and to do it. I challenge you to identify a person in your life who needs the truth of the gospel and to share that truth with them.

You don't need to wait for the how to do evangelism message that we'll get to eventually by God's grace. You know the gospel. Tell them what you have to tell yourself every day about the glorious truth of Jesus willing to save sinners.

You start with your understanding of the gospel and then be about the business that Jesus was so often about. And I challenge you too tonight to take a moment to think about the person that first told you about the gospel.

The person that first took a real interest in your soul and prayed for you and loved you and wouldn't let you go until you had responded to that message of the gospel.

[43:48] Might have been one of your parents. Might still be one of your parents. Might have been a pastor. Might have been a good friend. Might have been a total stranger like Mr. Moody on the train to Milwaukee. Think about the person that first took a concern in your soul.

And imagine what your life would be like without that person had God not used them to bring you to himself. And then you go and do what that person did for you.

You go and find someone and tell them the truth and pray for them. And tonight if you know this gospel and you've never responded to it in repentance and faith, I've got to practice what I preach. Come and respond tonight. Repent and believe Jesus is the only hope for sinners and you are a sinner. And you're in need of salvation. And if you don't respond, then you're rejecting Him.

And you're on your way towards eternal punishment. It doesn't have to be that way. You can come to Christ tonight while there is yet time. And I pray and trust that you will by God's grace.

[45:05] And may God use these studies to stir us to greater boldness and confidence in our witness for Him in a lost and dying world.

Let's pray together. Our Father, we pray that You would be our teacher. That You would teach us to love men's souls. That You would teach us to love them so much that we can't help but tell them about how their souls can be saved.

We pray that You would make us faithful men and women that speak out of the abundance of our hearts. May our hearts be full of Christ. May they be full to overflowing and contemplating the blessings that come to us in Him.

And may that overflow pour out through our mouths to those that we see each day around us. Give us grace. Forgive me for my shortcomings and evangelism.

Forgive me for my unwillingness to open my mouth and speak. Strengthen each one of us for this task and make us bold that You might receive all the honor and the glory and the praise as You do the work of saving sinners.

[46:14] Do it. We pray for Jesus' sake. We want His name to be honored in the earth. Do it for Your own glory. Do it for the extension of Your kingdom.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Please be seated. If you need to go at this time, you're dismissed and welcome to do so. But I'm going to ask Rachel if she would come up and share with us just briefly again what her plans are for the Dominican Republic when she's going.

Again, what she's doing. You may have heard a bit of this before, but to remind us so that we might be better ready to pray for her. So if you'll come.

Just very briefly. By the way, if you want an expanded view of what I'm doing, you can get a prayer card in the back which I believe I saw a couple of light on the table if you have not already gotten one.

I will be flying out this Thursday at around 9, at around 10 on time from the O'Hare Airport and expect to arrive around 7 o'clock in the Dominican Republic which is the same time as us.

[47:26] and I will be teaching around a 200 student school. I'll be teaching English for around 4th or 5th grade through 12th grade and that is in the city of Santiago which is in the heart of the city or in the heart of the country.

Some of you have asked me where that is in relation to Santo Donito. It's completely across the islands in the middle surrounded by mountains. It's not by the water. So, if you want to come visit you can but you won't get a sun can at least not on the beach.

I did want to just really briefly explain to you why I'm going and really the bottom line is the verse that I came across in Jeremiah when I was reading a couple weeks ago and I just want to share that with you.

Jeremiah 1-5 before I formed you in the womb I knew you before you were born I set you apart and what struck me about that verse is that God has set us apart for each of our tasks that you've assigned for us and he has been preparing me for this task all my life and I look back and reflect through my life to see what he has done and how he has done it and I can give him all the glory for setting me apart for this privileged task and not very long ago I was an evangelist Pastor Aaron made that comment you say you're not an evangelist not very long ago I would say definitely not me and God has just been showing himself to me and showing me his glory and showing me the glory of Jesus Christ my Savior and that's made me an evangelist and primarily to young people and so I can only accolade him and be saying not to be strong as the battle not to be swift as the race and I just want to close if you will allow me to read one more section which was our text for the pastor in 2nd Corinthians I thought to myself am I out of my mind for putting myself through torture and separating myself and do the love love and Paul says if we are out of our mind it is for the sake of God if we are in our right mind it is for you for Christ's love compels us because we are convinced that one died for all and therefore all died and he died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again so from now on we regard no one from the worldly point of view though we once regarded Christ in this way we do so no longer we are therefore Christ's ambassadors as though God were making his appeal through us thank you for your prayers thank you for sharing with us we will pray for you we will make you [50:42] I suspect we'll see your name popping up on our website prayer sheet so that you can remember you in prayer but we want tonight to in just a moment pray for you together here before we can proceed down to the fellowship hall to wish and pray for God's blessing I'm going to sing a grace to you a prayer that God would bless his grace bless you with his grace and love and peace so I ask you all to rise and to sing praying that God would bless our sister and then we'll join our hearts today as we pray praise to you praise to you praise to you God's great praise to you may

As you walk through your life In glorious time God's peace, God's peace to you Love to you, love to you God's great love to you As you walk through your life In glorious time God's love, God's love to you Join your hearts open as we pray Father, we thank you that you are our God

That you are faithful That you are the one that can call And equip us for our various callings in life And we thank you that you called Rachel To go to the Dominican Republic for this year And to teach We pray that you would bless your labors there We pray that you would grant her favor With

her co-workers With the students that she will be teaching And we pray that you would give her wisdom And teaching and living in a different culture And we pray that you would help her to Quickly adapt And we pray that you would give her physical health And strength That she might carry out her duties To the best of her strength and ability And we pray that you would grant her opportunities With those children To speak to them the word of the gospel We pray that you would give her grace And open her mouth And speak of Christ And him crucified We pray that you would watch over her In her travels And living in a different place And culture That you would keep her safe That you would be her help Her strength Her God Her friend We pray that you would be A father to her That you would keep her Holding and clinging To Christ And to him alone We pray that you would strengthen her family as well Comfort them As they will miss A daughter and sister Would you sustain them And keep them We pray that you would do our sister good And do many good Through her labor Through her work Through her service We pray that you would Bless and keep her That you would make your face To shine upon her And be gracious to you That you would Lift up her countenance upon her And give her peace Come and do this for our sister Shower down upon her Your grace And your love And your peace That she might indeed Know the peace That passes all understanding We pray that you would Keep her from that anxiousness And worry And let her instead Come to you with prayer And thanksgiving And everything Be her help Her strength Her guide Watch over And keep her Return to us safely That we might hear What you've done in that land And how you've blessed her So do her good We pray Bring about great things In your kingdom We pray We thank you for the food That we're about to partake of together We ask that you would Bless it to our bodies Strengthen us with it That we all might go from here Ready to serve you Whether it's In our own homes Or neighborhoods Or places of work Or schools Or teams Or in another country We pray that you would Strengthen us to serve you better And more diligently More faithfully We ask it in Jesus' name Amen Amen Amen