

THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE- Teacher's Edition

What is our purpose in life? What are we to do?

These questions certainly plague those who do not know Christ, but all too often, believers are just as clueless as to what their purpose is on a daily basis. Since this is just a brief study, I will summarize what the goal of human life is in Christ, remembering that “the Church” refers to the brotherhood of all who claim Christ alone as the means of their salvation:

The work of the Church is prayer. Ministry is the reward the Church receives for doing the work. The ministry of the Church is saving souls.

Ultimately we are to follow the example of the life of Christ. When Jesus came, He devoted Himself to prayer and His single hearted purpose was stated in Luke 19:10-
He came to seek and save that which was lost.

This is our life and mandate! We are to pray and seek and save that which is lost through the process of **evangelism**.

Consider what the Word says about evangelism or “soul-saving”. Proverbs 11:30:
“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.”

This shows what great blessings righteous people (those living in communion with Christ) are to the places where they live, and therefore how much to be valued.

1. The righteous are as **trees of life**; the fruits of their Spirit-led life, their instructions, reproofs, examples, and prayers, **their interest in heaven**, and their influence upon earth, are like the fruits of that tree in the garden of Eden, precious and useful, contributing to the support and nourishment of the spiritual life in many; they are the ornaments of paradise, God's church on earth, for whose sake it stands.

2. The wise are something more yet; they are as **trees of knowledge** but in this case the knowledge of God. He that is wise, by **communicating** the wisdom that he has received from the Word and in **his prayer closet**, wins souls: gaining favor so as to bring them in love with God and holiness, and so wins them over into the interests of God's kingdom among men. Those that would win souls have need of **wisdom** to know **how to deal with them**; and those that do win souls show that they are wise.

Consider this as well, from Daniel 12:3- **Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.**

What God is communicating is that those who are thoroughly instructed in Christ's **word and doctrine**, which includes all who have gone through discipleship and study, shall shine-shall be eminently distinguished in this world by the **holiness of their lives**, and the **purity of their creed**, just as the stars light up the sky. But God goes one step further. Though the stars amaze us by their corporate brilliance, there are **especial**

stars- ones that **stand out** even among all the rest. So is the disciple who not only studies, but **goes and wins souls**. Those who by preaching Christ crucified among their spheres of influence and win friends and neighbors to Christ will be like “North Star” luminaries in this dark age!

In a nutshell, we have our goals in life: to be first a people of prayer and then to be a people **of witness**. Since we speak ad nauseam about prayer, I want to give a few brief Biblical insights regarding evangelism.

First, the word “evangelism” does not actually occur in Scripture. The Greek word for gospel, “euangelio” is its root and actually focuses on the actual **proclamation of good news** of any sort. The verb form of the Greek word, “euangelizo”, is used over 50 times of believers who were **presenting** the good news of God’s love through Jesus Christ with the intent of **persuading** men and women to repent and receive God’s forgiveness. Early Christians **spontaneously** evangelized as they chatted, chattered, proclaimed, and preached the Good News everywhere they lived and everywhere they went.

If you study it closely, you will see that evangelism ultimately is a call to be a **witness**. [Consider Acts 1:8 & 22:15.] Now here is a major revelation for many. The word for “witness” is “**martus**” whereby we get “**martyr**”. It literally means one who **testifies to a truth he has experienced**, one who has **knowledge of a fact** and can give information concerning it. [The word actually doesn’t imply death, but so many early Christians died giving witness that this word evolved to its present meaning.] Think about this! We are called to testify to that which we have seen, heard and experienced through our salvation, baptism in the Spirit, answers to prayer, and what the Lord has shown us of Himself in our prayer closets! What a joy and honor!

In recognizing this call to being a witness, it is important to see that He will **empower** us by **His Spirit** to make it happen. That recognition and a subsequent relying on His help begins the process for being truly effective. Don’t attempt to extend the kingdom without His help and direction.

It is this help of the Spirit that will help you proclaim Good News and not bad. As we pray for the lost, **God works on them**. Jesus said, “I am going to send the Holy Spirit, and when He comes He will convince of sin, righteousness and judgment.” This is the hardest lesson for us to learn! We must **allow** the Holy Spirit **to convict** and not try to play the role of the Holy Spirit ourselves! **Our prayers** will bring the working of conviction and **our words** will bring them to Christ! Remember that our call is not to point the bony finger of self-righteousness in gleeful condemnation of others to hell. If we **exalt Christ** with our lives, our joy, and our words, that light will cause enough darkness to be convicted without the help of a flamethrower.

To be evangelistic means we share the truth that the wages of sin is death, but that the good news is people **don’t need to die**.

To be evangelistic means to offer **an invitation**, not to practice a coercive **“sell job”**.

To be evangelistic means that we depend on the **supernatural power of God**, not on human **programs and techniques**. The preaching of the simple Gospel when backed with Pentecostal prayer leads to conviction, conversion, baptism and miracles!

Biblical evangelism involves:

1) **Information**. The Good News is the **person of Jesus**! We don't meet opinions with opinions; it is the **TRUTH OF GOD** that we are to wield; and applying the edge of the sword of the Spirit to man's opinions will bring true conviction. Never forget, it is not opinion people need, it is **truth**. It is not theology, it is **God**. It is not religion, it is **Christ**. It is not literature or pop psychology, but the knowledge of the free love of God in the gift of His only-begotten Son.

The one true resting place where doubt and weariness, and the stings of a pricking conscience and the longings of an unsatisfied soul would all be quieted is **Christ Himself**. Not the Church, but **Christ**. Not ceremonies, but **Christ**. The Gospel is defined in **1 Corinthians 1:15**- *“And now I want to remind you, my brothers, of the Good News which I preached to you, which you received, and on which your faith stands firm. That is the gospel, the message that I preached to you. You are saved by the gospel if you hold firmly to it — unless it was for nothing that you believed. I passed on to you what I received, which is of the greatest importance: that Christ died for our sins, as written in the Scriptures; that he was buried and that he was raised to life three days later, as written in the Scriptures.”*

Biblical evangelism involves:

2) **Intent**. The Greek word “euangelizo” ultimately meant to persuade others of the Good News and to trust Jesus to save them from their sins. Early believers were not content to just **convey information** about Christ. They were intent, as His ambassadors, to **persuade others** to be reconciled to God through Christ. We must be persuasive with our passion and if those around us do not see tears in our eyes, then let them hear tears in our voice as we plead with them for their souls.

Acts 8:4- *Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.* We must be intent on this purpose of evangelism. Intend to share as you go.

Acts 8:25- *After testifying and preaching the word of the Lord in Samaria, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem. And they stopped in many Samaritan villages along the way to preach the Good News to them, too.*

It takes a well **thought out**, “**pre-prayed**” day to live an evangelistic lifestyle- so pray and go- there are souls to be won everywhere!

2 Cor 5:20- *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.* Be passionate in your witness! Intend on pleading with people!

Finally, Biblical evangelism involves:

3) Individuals. There are those who are called into the office of an evangelist (see Ephesians 4:11, 12). However, we are all called to do the **work of an evangelist** as seen in Paul's word to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:5- *But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.* No matter what we do vocationally, we are to follow the footsteps of the One who gave us the blueprints of our lives- we must help seek and save that which is lost!

Mark 14:37-38

Then he returned and found the disciples asleep. "Simon!" he said to Peter. "Are you asleep? Couldn't you stay awake and watch with me even one hour? Keep alert and pray. Otherwise temptation will overpower you. For though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak."

Luke 10:2

He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Matt 10:8

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.