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PERSONAL EVANGELISM: THE CAUSES OF LETHARGY,  
THE MOTIVATION, THE METHODS, THE ENLISTING AND  
TRAINING IN THE LIGHT OF EVANGELISTIC LITERATURE  
AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
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Master of Sacred Theology

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by

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## CHAPTER I

### THE SHIFT OF EMPHASIS IN THE FIELD OF EVANGELISM

In the history of American church life there have been four notable evangelistic movements. All of them have had as their purpose and aim the spreading of the Gospel message. Yet each of them has had a separate and distinct method which they employed to bring that message to the people of its era.

During the period of the Great Awakening here in the United States, Jonathan Edwards in the year 1730 began his revivalistic movement in the New England states. The enthusiastic appeal of this great pulpiteer had a profound influence on the people of his day. The great emphasis of this movement was on the new birth, and the method used was that of the mass meeting, at which the great preacher would stir the hearts of the hearers to come to that new birth by allowing the sovereign God of heaven to assume the ascendancy in their lives.

In the state of New York in the middle of the nineteenth century the second phase of evangelistic development began under the leadership of Charles Grandison Finney, a former lawyer. His movement was a reaction against the inconsistencies the average church members displayed between their profession of faith and their life practice. This



evangelistic endeavor was characterized by an appeal for a practical Christianity, vitalized by a vibrant faith.

The Consistory of the North Reformed Dutch Church of New York took an interest in the multitude of castaways and human derelicts in their part of the city. This missionary interest followed in the wake of the financial crash of 1857. In delegating the work of this mission, the Consistory selected Mr. Jeremiah Calvin Lanphier. His method was primarily the passing of handbills to announce the noonday prayer meetings arranged for many of those who were out of work. Lanphier's efforts have come to be known as the Fulton Street Noon Mission. The great stress in this mission was on prayer as the medium of establishing contact with God.

More recently the American scene has witnessed the wave of revivalistic meetings which were a part of the larger movement called mass evangelism. This era saw the founding of such organizations as The Young Men's Christian Association and its counterpart, The Young Women's Christian Association. The great men of the period who used largely the medium of the public platform were Billy Sunday, Dwight L. Moody, and others.

The turn of the century saw the beginnings of the most recent phase of evangelistic development. The shift and changeover in thought was to the great accent on the personal evangelistic approach. In their rethinking, the great



evangelists saw the ultimate collapse of the mass approach which was meeting much antipathy as the movement were on. The great call went up for a return to the New Testament methods of conducting such a mission. The appeal was made to return to the person-to-person idea portrayed by the Savior, by His disciples, and by the early church.

The focus of attention was pin pointed upon the New Testament and its individual methods of gaining men, women, and children for the way of Christ. The spirit of the movement is voiced in the opinions of the great leaders and protagonists of this method. Charles Goodell expresses the sentiment in the words, "Since the evangel of to-day is one of personal experience, it can only be wrought out by a personal work."<sup>1</sup> The reaction to the mass evangelistic approach of winning the thousands through one sermon or lecture is readily understood in the words of a very famous evangelist who lived through the period of the mass movement's heyday. Charles Trumbull in speaking of the harvest being hand-picked states, "You cannot reach a thousand unless you can reach one."<sup>2</sup> This famous worker, who was a lay evangelist, came to the conclusion in his study of the New Testament that

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<sup>1</sup>Charles L. Goodell, "Pastor and Evangelist," Cyclopedia of Evangelism (New York: Ray Long & Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1932), p. 35.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Callaudet Trumbull, Taking Men Alive (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1938), p. 32.



"It was Christ's own preferred method of work, as it is his preferred method for us today. For it is always the most effective way of working."<sup>3</sup>

Two of the main factors which have contributed to the renewed accent upon this type of evangelism are the collapse of the mass evangelistic movement and the crisis nature of the current era.

There went with the wave of enthusiastic fervor being spread by the dynamic speakers and workers of this mass movement a counter swell of violent reaction to the emotional character of this approach. The reaction was vehemently voiced by many people who misunderstood the aim and the purpose of this Christ-centered movement. The slow but certain sophistication of American society would not tolerate such a display of emotional religion for any length of time. To this day many attach this sensational connotation to the word "evangelism". The movement even at its inception carried with it its own seed of destruction, for the simple reason that the predominant note was that of the emotional. Those who at the moment were captivated by the sincere and earnest plea of the speaker soon lost the fervor after leaving the scene and source of stimulation. Archibald analyzing this period, avers, "May it be that by the very fruit-

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 29.



lessness of the modern mass movement, God is forcing us to return to the early church method, 'man after man', which shook Rome to its foundations?"<sup>4</sup>

The second contributing factor to the change in the emphasis is the crisis nature of our civilization today. The international situation presents a constant day-to-day picture of unrest. The American scene echoes this restlessness in the prevalent thinking carried on in the political, social, and educational realms. Statesmen, scholars, and experts in these several fields are rethinking their basic, fundamental premises to reevaluate and reconstruct a defunct civilization.

Men in strategic positions in all phases of civil life are pleading that the church give them the answers to their indissoluble questions. The progressive conscious American is turning his thinking to a crisis consciousness with the specter of the A-bomb and the H-bomb looming on the American horizon. It is becoming fashionable again to be religious and to revisit the church of the childhood days. The bus posters speak of going to church, claiming that thousands have left their troubles there. "The present crisis," says Elmer G. Honrighausen, "demands Christ; it demands an evangelism for the regeneration of national character

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<sup>4</sup>Arthur C. Archibald, New Testament Evangelism: How It Works Today (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1946), p. 47.



through converted individuals."<sup>5</sup> The person to person evangelism is the method whereby the Gospel will come most directly, most convincingly, and most intimately to these individuals. One Christian speaking to the next man of the Jesus Who brought him peace in a time of turbulence, happiness in the midst of a fearful period of upheaval, and hope in a world of despair. Personal evangelism does not wait for an organizational impetus but reaches out wherever and whenever the need arises. Personal evangelism, so the current leaders in evangelism claim, is the approach which the crisis conscious American needs.

The theological world has turned to evangelism for its central emphasis. The Ecumenical Movement has put evangelism at the center of their activities on both continents of the Western World. The Church in its awakened responsibility in moral matters has powerfully energized her efforts in combating a materialistic Communism, which has long used the individual, person-to-person method in its program of propoganda. The infiltration of such a materialistic thought has contributed a stimulus to the Church. From a sluggish inactivity the Church has again risen to a lively evangelistic effort, even to the extent of arriving at the opposite extreme in activism.

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<sup>5</sup>Elmer G. Romrighausen, Choose Ye This Day (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1943), p. 22.



Within this pattern of crisis the Christian has recognized that such conditions present an open door to the world about him. One evangelist has aptly expressed it in this fashion:

When a crisis emerges, the student finds a problem, the pessimist a tragedy, the critic a subject for his dissecting apparatus, the politician a chance for trickery and fine phrases, while the stalwart Christian finds in some way a divine opportunity.<sup>6</sup>

In view of the material thus presented this study in research centers its attention on and addresses itself to the area of personal evangelism. The controlling purpose of this treatise shall be to develop four basic component parts of the personal evangelistic endeavor to assist the layman in carrying out his Savior's command, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. . ."<sup>7</sup>

The component parts or areas of personal evangelism were studied: 1) To make an analysis of the current evangelistic lethargy, a study of why Christian people are not speaking to other sinners of the Christ Who won them and lives within them; 2) To ascertain and develop what is the New Testament thought on the motivation for the evangelistic task of the layman; 3) To study the methodology of the New Testament to discover what attitude the twentieth cent-

<sup>6</sup>Goodell, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>7</sup>Matt. 28:19.



ury evangelist takes toward those methods as applicable to today; to determine the point of contact between the evangelist and the worldling of today; to establish what form the layman's message will take in actual contact; to answer the question, "Does the evangelist press the decision for Christ?" h.) To cull from the evangelistic literature and the New Testament the reasons for lay enlistment in evangelism and the aims and objectives in training that enlistment.

The scope of this research is limited by the following considerations. It is limited by those sections of evangelistic literature and the New Testament which speak specifically to these four areas mentioned above. The study keeps the layman in mind in the entire discussion. The pastor as a personal evangelist is only a secondary matter and enters in for treatment only in the fifth chapter on the enlisting and training of the lay worker. Furthermore, the research was concerned with the speaking side of the witness, being firmly convinced that, ". . . faith comes from what is heard. . ." <sup>8</sup> The research has dealt with personal evangelism as it is carried on in an informal manner outside of the formal congregational setting or organization. The researcher realizes that there is a great need for inner evan-

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<sup>8</sup>Rom. 10:17.



gelist, the salvage work within the congregation. But this inquiry concerned itself with winning the outsider, the unchurched. No attention was given to the fellow through of the personal evangelist. It treats only the initial contact the lay worker makes. Religious education in the form of the adult class is rightly held a part of the total evangelistic program, but it enters in for examination only as an antithesis to evangelism in Chapter II.

Throughout this paper personal evangelism shall be defined as the verbal transmission of the Gospel message from one Christian layman to a lost, unchurched sinner.

The procedure of research followed these lines. The study collected the pertinent thoughts and statements of reputable and recognized evangelists in the four component parts or areas of personal evangelism. Then the study was made of the New Testament, particularly those chapters, sections, and passages which address themselves to the problem. The Revised Standard Version was used as the source for the New Testament work.



## CHAPTER II

### THE CAUSES FOR EVANGELISTIC LETHARGY

In discussing the causes for the evangelistic lethargy of the present day, the study lists five such causes, namely, man's innate inertia for this type of spiritual endeavor; the doubts men have as to the value and necessity of personal evangelism; misconceptions as to the exact nature of personal evangelism; the undue stress being made on indoctrination; and finally the excuses raised on the basis of the diversity of gifts meted out to Christians. These Christians claim that they do not have the necessary gifts for this personal work.

Even in the face of the crisis nature of the era, there are many church people of today who refuse to offer spiritual guidance to those enmeshed in the confusion of personal problems.

In the event of physical suffering, the church people of our time are in most instances quick to assist. When the immediate need of the distress is before them, they very readily offer aid to ease the suffering. The needs are visible to all. Sympathy is quickly aroused to a corresponding action.

These same people show little interest in the spiritual chaos and confusion going on about them. The cult of the



comfortable does not see the need for such rescue duty. The difficulty does not lie in the inability to have sympathy for the individuals in such a condition, but the Christian is too absorbed in himself to see the predicament. One author views the lethargy in this light, "It is not because people have no hearts; it is the lack of vision. We are absorbed in our own selfish ends. It takes time and thought and effort to win souls."<sup>1</sup>

The work of personal evangelism is a time consuming, strength devouring endeavor. When the lay member of the cult of the comfortable is asked to render such service, he finds that such duty is a disturbing to his daily routine. Personal evangelism by its very nature has a tendency to shatter his complacency. It drains the strength, the time, and the ability of the workers involved. Dr. Archibald emphasizes this fact:

To get man back into right relations with his Maker involves a passionate earnest evangelism. It is such a difficult and soul-burdening task that it demands the last ounce of sacrificially consecrated energy of the believer. The 'cult of the comfortable' is a form of selfishness which turns away from such demanding effort.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wade C. Smith, Come and See (Richmond: Onward Press, 1927), p. 44.

<sup>2</sup>Arthur C. Archibald, New Testament Evangelism: How It Works Today (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1940), p. 56.



The cause of this inertia in the cult of the comfortable is a basic self-centeredness. It would appear that the Gospel and its message is made subservient to the convenience of the members of this cult. There is an evident smug attitude toward the needs of the world. Thus the obverse side of indifferentism on the part of the Americans to churches is the indifferentism of the church people toward the needs of the world people. The common excuse stemming from this position is this, "There is no time in a busy schedule for such activity of bringing the Gospel message to the lost of the community." Samuel Cavert, in quoting Wilfred F. Grenfell, states, "We have each to determine whether this world is an arena where we fight to get what we can for ourselves, or a field of honour where we give all we can for our fellowmen."<sup>3</sup>

Yet in opposition to these excuses to personal evangelism stands the record of many sleepless hours spent, the great energy expended in behalf of other secondary, less important matters. Many a minister has seen the layman of his congregation putting forth a supreme effort, laboring long, denying himself much of his needed rest, attending countless numbers of meetings and committee sessions, traveling un-

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<sup>3</sup>Samuel McCrea Cavert, Securing Christian Leaders for Tomorrow (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), p. 10.



counted miles, and doing it all with an intense enthusiasm rarely matched in a spiritual endeavor. All this is done, so that the interests of some luncheon club might be promoted.

This type of innate inertia bred by a total concentration upon self is easily recognized and dealt with. But the concomitant innate diffidence to witness verbally is a more difficult problem.

"Self-consciousness is the most formidable foe to person-to-person ministry. Fear, more than any other one thing, dissuades people from launching upon this most thrilling work of the world."<sup>4</sup> This famous evangelistic writer has pointed up one of the greatest hindrances to the work of the layman in the field of personal evangelism. Many church people are holding back because of the inward prohibition of fear. They are saying much about the secondary issues of everyday life. The weather, politics, and the rise in prices are important and affect their worldly friends. Seldom, however, does the Christian communicate the only lasting and worthwhile message. A false courtesy stifles the communication of this eternal message of Christ. The layman feels that such an intimate subject of conversation is not within his rights to mention. This attitude rises from

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<sup>4</sup>Sidney Powell, Where Are the People? (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942), p. 98.



the thought that such verbal witness bearing would offend the worldly friend.

Underlying these foregoing sentiments is the problem of using the name of God or of Christ in the everyday conversation of the layman. There has been a tendency due to indoctrination efforts of many churches to emphasize the holiness of God's name. The negative side has been stressed to the point that the layman gathers the impression that the use of that name is restricted to Sunday morning worships and to private or family devotion. Such training has the right intention, but it has hindered the expression of the Christian life within the family, at the work bench and in the group of acquaintances with whom the layman speaks everyday.

Charles Trumbull, in quoting the famous French preacher Bousset, testifies, "It requires more faith and courage to say two words face to face with one single sinner than from the pulpit to rebuke two or three thousand persons, ready to listen to everything, on condition of forgetting all."<sup>5</sup> This study would set forth the thought that it is no easy matter to bring the Gospel to the lost person. It does require faith in action, and it may take a period of practice to become somewhat facile in the job of witness bearing. And

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<sup>5</sup>Charles Gallaudet Trumbull, Taking Men Alive (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1930), p. 43.



after long practice, the situation may not change for some people. The problem of this natural fear of speaking is real and not fictitious.

The lay worker may fear to speak of his life in Christ because of the inconsistency between his message and the life which he has been leading. The two are inseparably bound together in any one situation of personal work. The worker is speaking of the life which Christ is manifesting in him. The worldling sooner or later will match the message with the life out of which that message has come. There are many professing to be Christ's men, and it will be difficult for the sinner to distinguish the true from the false. The worldling will, however, ask one question, "Is the life of that person identical with those things which he has been telling me?" Such a comparison is readily recognized by the layworker, and consequently the fear arises that he will have no influence over the worldling.

The fear of being snubbed by the prospect is a common hindrance to the layworker. In speaking of his Savior, the worker fears that his identity as a Christian will be revealed, and that he will lose his standing in the eyes of the prospect. In this evangelistic work the true character of the witness's life will come to the foreground. Such a fear is always attendant upon the witness of the Christian. It does take courage to speak of the Christ who rules and governs the life of the lay evangelist.



Connected with this thought is the diffidence born out of discouragement in previous attempts. The lay worker will always remember that such "Discouragement generally comes from ourselves and not from our surroundings."<sup>6</sup> The worker will realize that he is the bearer of the good news, and that he speaks for Another. In the preparation of the seventy Jesus spoke to them about the possibility of such a discouragement in the words, "He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."<sup>7</sup>

Thus the first cause for the evangelistic lethargy is due to man's innate inertia which is rooted in the self-centeredness, out of which is born the attitude of fear to speak to the worldling.

Secondly, many of the workers being called to enlist in personal evangelism have doubts as to the value and necessity of the urgent message of evangelism.

The worker asks whether people aren't getting along well enough without Christ? In the form of an excuse they say that a man guided by his conscience needs no spiritual assistance. In approaching the worldly man, the worker feels he is infringing upon that man's autonomous rights to his

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<sup>6</sup>G. T. Roberts, Fishers of Men (Chicago: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1930), p. 195.

<sup>7</sup>Luke 10:16.



own religion.

Because of a false conception of man as an individual in relation to God, Christians hesitate to speak to another about the dividing Christ. To approach such a man seems to be impertinence on the part of the aggressor. The lay worker allows every man his own religion and personal habits in his exercise of that religion. This misunderstanding of the relation of the worldling to God and the Gospel message has blocked much of the evangelistic endeavor. The thought of 1 Corinthians 1 and 2 clearly define the relation of the worldling to the Gospel and to God. The lay worker in his study of these two chapters will grasp the idea that man without God has no way of understanding what his relation is to God.

From this misconception the thought has been derived that evangelism is religious imperialism. Some are under the impression that the carrying of the Gospel message to the lost man is an unwarranted interference with another's private life. Such an impression has grown up rapidly within the American structure of denominationalism. The lay worker is of the opinion that he has no right to force his peculiar beliefs down the throat of another.

The confusion has arisen, because the people in the United States are churchism conscious and not primarily orientated in the spiritual emphases of those churches. The laity may be imbued with the thought that they are first and



foremost representatives of one certain church body or congregation. The fallacy is evident in the confusion of churchism with the message of the Christ, Who has called and commissioned the layman to go out and spread the good news of a personal salvation, and secondly then to direct that man to a group of Christians, the Church.

In recent years there has been a violent reaction to the emotionalism portrayed and characterized by the mass evangelistic movement. The reaction has had its effects also within the Christian laity. Many are thinking of evangelism in terms of an emotional appeal. For this reason evangelism in terms of an emotional appeal. For this reason evangelism has received a bad reputation among church people. The evil connotation attached to the word itself has to some extent limited the urgency of spreading the message of evangelism.

The educator has likewise belittled evangelism, by pointing out that the emotionalism of the evangelistic call has taken the place of the growth process. The emotionalistic emphasis in evangelism tends to despise the educational process which must necessarily follow the first appeal.

However, to identify evangelism with revivalism, a particular type of effort and appeal in evangelism, is to confuse a general principle with a particular method. The inadequacy of this method does not vitiate the principle involved. Further discussion of this point of methodology,



namely, what method must be used will be treated in Chapter IV.

Further misconceptions of evangelism have come from those who object to the subjectivism of the evangelistic appeal. The argument which deters concrete action on the part of the layman claims that evangelism is launched under the assumption that the man before the worker has the innate ability to decide one way or the other for Christ and therefore is too subjective and atomistic in its approach. Homrighausen quotes Charles Clayton Morrison on this subjectivism:

Any emphasis upon individual conversion results in an unchristian atomism of Christianity and makes the Christian revelation a subjective affair. Such an emphasis bases Christianity upon the sandy foundation of human experience and forgets the objective manifestation of God's revelation in the visible Church.<sup>6</sup>

Contrariwise, from the intelligentsia has come the contention that evangelism is too absolute to be intelligible to the scientific observer. Evangelism to them implies an absolute which is incompatible to the relativity of science. Such a scientific view of relativity in religious truth will detract from the layman's communication of the absolute Christian Gospel. This thought pattern will become an obstacle to the lay worker when he approaches the intelligent-

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<sup>6</sup>Elmer G. Homrighausen, Choose Ye This Day (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1943), p. 51.



sia of the world.

Some Christians excuse themselves from verbal witnessing by claiming the life example is enough. The Christian layman may labor under the misconception that the life example is sufficient witness to influence the worldling. It is true there will be a life witness, the example of the life lived because Christ dwells within the layman, but the faith reaches its highest expression in words in personal evangelism. The means of communication is the mouth, the natural instrument of communication between human beings.

And finally, there is the misconception that the evangelistic endeavor is always a separate and distinct type of church work carried on only in an organizational fashion, in the form of the canvass, or home visitation. The aforementioned devices are very legitimate and within the scope of evangelism. However, the Christian layman is at all times and in all places a vessel containing the Gospel message and is alert to every opportunity throughout the day's activities to give the reason of the hope within him. This lay activity is an hour by hour expression of the life of Christ within them. This life of Christ will at times also seek expression through an organized canvass or a proposed church plan of evangelism.

Thus in the third place, misconceptions as to the exact nature of evangelism have undermined any activity of the layman to speak. Chiefly, the reaction to the emotionalism



of the mass evangelistic effort and the objections to the subjectivism and objectivism of the Gospel appeal have restrained a wide participation in the work. In addition the Christian witness has been narrowed down to a special evangelistic effort instead of the daily activity of the layman in his chosen callings of the home, occupation, and among the casual acquaintances. Within these callings the witness of the life in Christ, the Christian example, is important, but the crucial effort is carried out when the layman is speaking directly to another of the faith which has taken the important place in his life.

A shift has taken place in the responsibility of the spreading the Gospel man-to-man. The present, prevalent idea has shifted the duty of such work to the direct ministry of the called pastor. The lay emphasis in the process has been minimized. Satan hindered the program of evangelism by overemphasizing:

. . . the distinctions in the divinely appointed division of service as finally to get an entirely equal witnessing brotherhood divided into two companies with the majority in one, and the small minority in another. The small company come to be called 'clergy' and the large company 'laity'. And when he worked the witnessing out of the hands of the 'laity', until it was finally regarded as the exclusive right of the 'clergy'.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>J. E. Conant, Every-Member Evangelism (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922), p. 41.



Thus the idea has evolved that the pastor is the only one who is able and capable of explaining or even speaking of what it means to be a Christian.

In this connection the clergy has also fostered this idea in their stress upon the keeping of the pure doctrine through the indoctrination process. Under this instruction, which is a good emphasis, evangelism has come to be thought of in terms of spreading a certain set of dogmatical principles in one or two or three tolerable forms. In some minds the indoctrination has become the most important part of the Christian witness. One experienced evangelist has set forth the problem in this manner, ". . . have we perhaps been so busy keeping the reservoir filled and the water filtered that we have not given enough attention to the distribution of this water of life?"<sup>10</sup>

J. E. Conant avers, "It is the constant temptation of the shirkers to imagine that none can become soul-winners except those who have an ability, experience, and preparation that they themselves do not possess, and therefore are excused."<sup>11</sup> These people appeal to Scriptures for confirmation of their contention.

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. C. Streufert, Some Missionary Methods of Jesus (Mimeographed).

<sup>11</sup> Conant, op. cit., p. 133.



They cite the words of Ephesians 4:11-12 as one such confirmation. Paul mentions the gifts of Christ to His Church in that ". . . some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ . . ."12 The public ministry is here spoken of and the reference is made to the regularly called men of the church's ministry.

In the study of other passages of Scriptures specifically with reference to the gifts which were given to those in the congregations of the early Church, the study further examined this excuse given by some.

In the discussion of the various gifts distributed to the members of the body of Christ, Paul states:

For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.<sup>13</sup>

The gifts here mentioned were given for the building of the Church. The function of the members with those gifts varies according to the grace given. However, this passage

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<sup>12</sup>Eph. 4:11-12.

<sup>13</sup>Rom. 12:4-8.



does not offer an excuse for verbal witnessing.

Likewise in 1 Corinthians, Paul speaks of the diversity of gifts:

Now there are varieties of gifts. . . but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.<sup>14</sup>

In the detailed breakdown of the passage one recognizes the diversity and the difference of the gifts meted out by the Spirit, verbal gifts as well as other gifts for the various tasks of the Church. There is no indication that these various gifts, given severally as He wills, exclude any certain person from the verbal witness. The Spirit does give them as He sees fit, but the layman cannot conclude that the necessary gifts were not given him for the speaking witness.

The two later passages indicate a responsibility of using all of the gifts meted out by the Spirit. The layman will take inventory of the gifts he does possess and will not minimize those gifts which he has received from the Spirit for the evangelistic task.

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<sup>14</sup> 1 Cor. 12:4-11.



No one person is exempt automatically from the task of witnessing verbally in some fashion. There may be differing gifts and degrees of effectiveness in the use of those gifts in a group of laymen. Yet the excuse that one does not have the gifts has no foundation on the basis of the passages cited.

In the entire study of the causes of the evangelistic lethargy, the study advances the thought that it is a real problem with many facets of difficulty. There are definite personality hindrances to the verbal witness aside from the innate egocentric nature of man. But it is not so much a matter of the feeling and defects of the layman, but the sufficiency of Christ; not so much the difficulty of the speaking but the overcoming of these defects.

From this thought the study proceeds to a discussion of the motivation for the layman in the personal evangelistic endeavor.



## CHAPTER III

### THE MOTIVATION FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM

The Protestant church bodies of America have taken a renewed and vital interest in the field of evangelism. In recent years their church publishing house presses have been producing much evangelistic literature to promote and send forth the call to respond quickly to the task. The layman is surrounded on all sides by this gigantic promotional program. In many sectors the laymen have responded favorably to the call. In other places the lethargy analyzed in the previous chapter still prevails. For this reason much research has been projected into the area of the motivation for evangelism. This chapter addresses itself specifically to those studies and to the New Testament in an endeavor to ascertain the true nature of motivation in personal evangelism. It seeks to answer the questions, "What is the actual motivating force for personal evangelism? Is the Great Commission as such, in itself, sufficient motivation? What is the relation between the personal gratitude for Christ's redemption and the consequent personal work?"

One of the key obligations of any pastor is to set forth before his people the mission call. In his preaching and teaching programs he will place great emphasis in this area of lay activity. Many pulpits are presenting this call very adequately, but many laymen are still apathetic to the chal-



lenge. In answer to this enigma a famous churchman contends, "Evangelism will not become a natural, normal part of the life of the Christian until the motives for it have been clarified."<sup>1</sup>

In an effort to ascertain the motivation for the task, the layman will consider three points of view. He will first look inward for a brief introspection as to the requirements for evangelism and his attitude over against his feelings of inadequacy after such self-analysis. Secondly, he will look upward for instruction and guidance in search for the true motivation. Finally, he will look outward to the people to whom he desires to bring the message.

The lay worker recognizes from the Scriptural account that there are certain requirements for his ministry of evangelism. The command to be a witness to men is evident to every reader of the New Testament. The Savior voices a command to the Christian in saying, "So every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven."<sup>2</sup> The passage, upon some meditation, becomes disturbing to the reader. This command in simple terms comes from his Lord, and it will

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<sup>1</sup>E. Stanley Jones, Evangelize! Why? (Nashville: Tidings, 1946), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Matt. 10:32.



not be disregarded nor neglected. It compels the Christian to make a decision.

On a given Sunday the lay worker hears the pastor of his congregation speak on the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus speaks of the Christian allowing his light to shine before men. The Christian, so the layman understands, is the salt of the earth, a seasoning influence in his community or personal sphere of influence. The layman is quick to agree with the author who emphasizes, "Every Christian can be a successful worker, but of one thing be assured: the life must be consistent with the testimony."<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, the requirements, as ideally stated, call for a desire to save lost souls. This desire is to express itself in an avid interest in the neighbor instead of self. The lay worker in addition should be a first-class Christian who loves people, individually. He is one whom others love, because of his winning ways of address. The worker will be an optimist in his compassion for souls. There will be a ring of sincerity in the layman's voice as he brings that message of Christ to the people. The worldling will sense the concern the lay worker has for him and his individual problems. The worker is not content to conceal the joyous message, but he desires to share it. These thoughts

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<sup>3</sup>Wade G. Smith, Come and See (Richmond: Onward Press, 1927), p. 21.



attach themselves to the task of the lay worker.

The third requirement is the surrendered will dedicated to this service of evangelism. The innate desire to speak of one's faith is not an inherent part of the layman. The will of the worker must be changed to that bent of mind. One writer in speaking of the dedication to this task maintains, "The first and supreme qualification is a heart consecrated to God and dedicated to His service."<sup>4</sup> This consecration will manifest itself in compassion for the lost man, in an all out desire to save the lost.

The requirements are clearly defined for the task. At first glance the responsibility of such an endeavor is crushing in its demands. In view of this fact the layman does feel incompetent to carry out the command. In the instruction and assistance of the layman it is important to develop a constructive attitude toward the "insurmountable" obstacle of supposed insufficiency.

In further study of the Word the evangelist will discover similar attitudes and experiences in the lives of other evangelists. The weakness so evident in his ministry of evangelism was a part of the experience of others before him. Paul, the example par excellence of the evangelist, felt the identical weakness.

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<sup>4</sup>H. K. Hartmann, We Have Found the Messiah, (n.p., 1936), p. 67.



Paul in the description of his ministry and message bearing speaks in these words, "For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us."<sup>5</sup> In his witness bearing the stress was upon God and not upon the human element in the ministry. In the elaboration of the human side of this ministry, the Apostle speaks of the lay worker as being a vessel, a container in which the treasure is kept. The earthen vessels are of minor significance, for the vessel serves the higher purpose of holding and pouring out its contents, the treasure. The worker is but the instrument through which this message of Christ comes.

After a study of this insufficiency in the light of 2 Corinthians, the Christian voices the prayer aptly stated by one writer, "O Lord, thou knowest my capacity is very small and I can't hold much, but, Lord, I can overflow a great deal."<sup>6</sup>

To any layman who is holding back because he feels inadequate, Paul's words about the vessels are of inestimable comfort and encouragement. The important part of evangelism

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<sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. 4:6-7.

<sup>6</sup> J. E. Conant, Every-Member Evangelism (Revised edition; New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922), p. 133.



is not the instrument but the treasure which these human vessels contain. ~~"The treasure is the Gospel. The earthen vessels contain.~~ "The treasure is the Gospel. The earthen vessels are the minister and the laymen,"<sup>7</sup> says Dr. Blackwood.

The Apostle further elaborates upon the missionary ability which he possessed in 1 Corinthians. Paul declares:

When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Christ Jesus and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in much fear and trembling; and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power. . . .<sup>8</sup>

Earthly wisdom and high sounding phraesiology were not the essential elements of Paul's verbal witness to these people. He came to them in the weakness of his own personality. The wisdom which Paul possessed and spoke of was the wisdom of Christ and not that of his previous educational pursuits. Despite the weakness and the trembling in which he came, Paul determined to know nothing in wisdom but Christ and Him crucified, the identical pattern the evangelist follows today. The lay worker of the twentieth century will look to this Paul, who feared and trembled before his task.

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<sup>7</sup>A. Blackwood, Evangelism in the Home Church (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942), p. 17.

<sup>8</sup>1 Cor. 2:1-4.



And in a final analysis the very weakness which the Christian abhors is the condition in which there is strength. Paul in speaking of the thorn in the flesh views this weakness by stating:

. . . but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong.<sup>9</sup>

Paul evaluates his weakness and infirmity in terms of God's design and plan for the Gospel ministry. God speaks to him of the strength for the task in terms of the very weakness which Paul himself detested. Hearing these words from God, Paul glories in the weakness. The infirmity did not deter the Apostle from the duty at hand, because in this human weakness the Lord was strong. Paul knew that he was but the instrument of the Lord in his life mission of spreading the Gospel. The Gospel and Jesus Christ were the important matters not the message bearer nor the excellent forms in which that message was delivered to the people. He was content to work despite any weakness, insults from people, hardships, persecution, or calamity for the sake of Christ.

The evangelist of this current century uses the identical gifts of personality in the personal work of evangelism

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<sup>9</sup>2 Cor. 12:9:10.



which he uses in every phrase of his earthly living. There is a tendency to wait until the personality has been developed to a certain degree before launching out into the work itself. The weakness or personality flaw holds back the would-be witness. One evangelist deprecates this attitude:

Do not sigh nor wait to be 'specially gifted' to do personal work. Simply and faithfully use those same 'gifts' you are exercising everyday for your own schemes in business, social life, health seeking and pleasure, and you will find in them new dignity and new glory as instruments designed for God's use as well - indeed, as primarily for God's use.<sup>10</sup>

God empowers the personality and uses the personality for His work with the worldling. The layman will not consequently draw the conclusion that his personality is set aside because of this empowering. The personality remains intact, but it is now conditioned by the work of the Holy Spirit. The evangelist uses the words, the facial expressions, and the body movements which constitute the whole Christian as he works with the prospect before him. Conant concurs in this opinion by insisting, "This does not mean in any sense of the word that surrender to him will set aside our personality. He empowers our personality and uses just what we are and have."<sup>11</sup>

The layman as mentioned above realizes that the charac-

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<sup>10</sup>Smith, op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>11</sup>Conant, op. cit., p. 159.



ter impact of a witness is a magnet for the worldling which conditions the unchurched sinner to hear the message. The layman remembers in this connection the catalog of Christian character graces so vital in his own work. From a study of Galatians 5 where the graces are listed he comes to the conclusion that his character for this work of evangelism as well as for life is received, not achieved. The nine beautiful virtues that make up the Christian character, namely, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control are all the "fruit of the Spirit".

To become more effective in the job of witnessing the Christian man will desire to grow in these graces, and through the working of the Spirit to grow in them from strength to strength. The goal in this growth is to become a man of God in the full stature of Christ that in turn he may use these gifts of grace in his work of evangelism.

Taking this inward look, the layman is convinced that he is unable to obey the evangelistic command of the Lord, because he is nothing. He further recognizes that he cannot obey, because he can do nothing. And finally he cannot obey because he cannot of his own accord give anything in a spiritual way to the worldling.

Charles F. Beach, a famous evangelistic writer at the turn of the century points out:



It is elementary theology that the power to render acceptable service in the Kingdom of Christ, is from above. The doctrine is succinctly and forcibly stated by the apostle when he says, 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.'<sup>12</sup>

The power for the work of evangelism is likewise from above. To this motivation, namely, the upward look, the study now turns its attention.

The Great Commission uttered by the Savior and recorded in Matt. 28:19-20, has become the standard for the evangelistic stimulation of the laity. The research would raise the question whether this command in itself is the motivating factor for the layman.

The command in the first place is a commission given to the Church and not to a particular contingent of that Church. The Christian ministry by its very nature has the command, but no less is it the prerogative of the Christian Church as a whole. The evangelization of men, in bringing the Gospel to the world is the task of the entire Church.

Consequently, this command is a personal commission to each individual Christian to make disciples of all nations. One evangelist maintains that "The Great Commission . . . is a personal command to every Christian to go into every nook and corner of his personal world, and seek, by witnessing in

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<sup>12</sup>Charles F. Beach, Individual Evangelism (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1908), p. 27.



the power of the Holy Spirit to the Good News of God's saving grace through the shed blood of Christ, to win every lost soul in his personal world to salvation."<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, the verbal witnessing in the form of public preaching is the climax and culmination of the private witnessing carried on by the laity. The Book of Acts gives examples of this public preaching which is the culmination of the work previously carried out in personal work of the Christian preachers of that time. The pulpits of today in their public proclamation reach a climax in witnessing to the worldling. Before the sermon was uttered many of the laity in their own small, personal worlds had been spreading the same message. This arrangement of the private witnessing preceding the public preaching Conant avers, ". . . alone is the New Testament program of evangelism."<sup>14</sup> The content of the proclamation in each case of public or private witnessing is identical, though the forms are different.

The decision to follow this Great Command is not left to the whims of the lay worker to obey or disregard. This is an imperative commission given to all Christians in all ages and stands incontrovertible to the Church of today. The authority of the Savior has been stamped upon this com-

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<sup>13</sup>Conant, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. x.



mission. The Christian lay worker is confronted here with no alternative. It is binding and demands an affirmative reaction.

And the command does not state to wait until the worldling comes to hear the message, but it states, "Go". Many articles of commerce are being brought to the man of today. All manner of earthly necessities are delivered to the houses and brought into the living rooms of those homes. The many corporations of America have countless salesmen bringing their particular commodity to the attention of the potential buyer. The command to the Christian man in this spiritual endeavor is simple and plain, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation."<sup>15</sup>

However, this command, per se, cannot be the motivating factor for action in the personal work. The command still remains law, and the commission is sufficient authority for an every member activity in evangelism, but, ". . . it is not and cannot become sufficient motive. We may be authorized, and urged, and commanded to take the Gospel in person . . . but the power to go does not lie in a command; it lies in a Person."<sup>16</sup>

Many laymen in receiving this command as it came from

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<sup>15</sup>Mark 16:15.

<sup>16</sup>Conant, op. cit., p. xi.



a pulpit or from his reading of Scripture has of his own volition and decision firmly resolved to keep that command. Many, however, have soon become discouraged and abandoned the good intentions and the evangelistic task. The attitude of frustration set up the Law in such a situation is only solved by Christ Who dwells in the Christian. The Spirit through the Gospel destroys the frustration which the Law engenders when the layman is confronted with this command. The Spirit of Christ instills the motive power to reach out to the worldling with the message of Christ. "This is the attitude toward Christ that puts self out of business so completely that we become entirely unconscious of . . . inability in our consciousness that Christ is within us all he requires us to be, and to do, and to give."<sup>17</sup>

Further stimulation to the task of individual work comes from the words of Acts 1 and Luke 24, which speak of the Christian being a witness. These words further define the motivation for the task of personal evangelism.

Witnessing may be defined as the outward manifestation in action or speech that Christ is at work in the layman. Thus witnessing is the life of Christ shining through a Christian life. This act of witnessing is inseparably bound up with the power received from the Holy Ghost as the Word

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 159.



states, "But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."<sup>18</sup>

The supreme example of this witnessing is the record of the disciples and the laymen of the ancient church. In their actions, but to a greater measure through the medium of speech they witnessed to the life which Christ was working in their lives. The sermons of Peter, the persecution and consequent speech of Stephen, Paul's journeys and sermons to the people are all concrete studies of the living witness flowing out of the lives of these men of God who had been animated by the Christ whom they had seen and heard.<sup>19</sup>

Once again, as one evangelist discloses:

. . . the great command of the Lord to bring the good tidings to the dying world is not only a command to the Church as a corporate body, not a commission confined only to the apostles, to the trained pastors and missionaries, no it is a command to every Christian, every man, woman, or child.<sup>20</sup>

The witnessing is handed down in the form of a command, to the entire Church. The apostles of the ancient church received this command and were motivated by what they had seen

<sup>18</sup>Acts 1:8.

<sup>19</sup>Acts 2:32; 3:14; 5:30-32; 10:39-41.

<sup>20</sup>F. C. Stroufert, Some Missionary Methods of Jesus (Mineographed).



and heard, so that they exclaimed, "We cannot but speak of those things which we have seen and heard."<sup>21</sup>

In this witnessing, the power for motivation is the message, the Christ to which witness is given. The entire content of verbal witnessing is centered in the Jesus who spoke the words:

Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of These things.<sup>22</sup>

To the Church has also been given the ministry of reconciliation as Paul outlines the same in 2 Corinthians. The founder of that Corinthian church writes to his people, "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation . . . All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation."<sup>23</sup>

In this passage the layman reviews the divine succession in the work of evangelism. The succession begins with God, was seen in Christ, was passed on through Christ in redemption to the Church, and through the Church to the worldling.

In the entire matter of spreading the Gospel, God has

<sup>21</sup>Acts 4:20.

<sup>22</sup>Luke 24:46-49.

<sup>23</sup>2 Cor. 5:17-18.



a very profound interest. It is the desire of God that all men should be saved and learn of Him. The great apostle speaks of this earnest desire on the part of God, "This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."<sup>24</sup> The layman realizes from the beginning of the witness situation that God has a deep interest in the man before him.

God's desire and compassion for souls was revealed in the Christ of Calvary. The lay worker was included in that redemption plan of God. In pondering this reconciliation in Christ, the evangelist receives the motivation to reach out to the lost sinner with that same message of Christ and the reconciliation. Conant speaks very forcibly of the effect the cross and the resurrection have on the task of evangelism:

By his cross he saves us out of self; by his resurrection he saves us into service. By his cross we die to fruitlessness; by his resurrection we rise to fruitage. By his cross is ended that spirit of lovelessness that lets all around us go into eternity without a direct effort to save them; by his resurrection is begun that active operation of divine love within us that impels us to spend our lives in rescuing the lost.<sup>25</sup>

In recognition of the cross and its purpose, the lay worker who lives in Christ will no more live to himself but

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<sup>24</sup>1 Tim. 2:3-4.

<sup>25</sup>Conant, op. cit., p. 168.



will live to Him Who died for him and rose again. In meditation upon this fact, the consciousness of lack of ability in evangelism is eliminated by the Spirit's help. The motivation then becomes the indwelling life of that Christ Who died for him.

The prospective but hesitant lay worker will furthermore remember that he and the worldling have been bought with a price, an eternal price. The life of the worldling has been purchased for eternity.

At all times, the layman will take cognizance of the fact that the power to reveal the Father to another man is a power given to him. When the seventy returned from their initial contact with people as missionaries and had met with success, Jesus counseled them, "All things have been delivered to me by the Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."<sup>26</sup>

In this respect the Christian is an ambassador of the King.<sup>27</sup> The ambassador is one who has received from the King the commission. The power to act is not of the ambassador's will or desire. The King has commissioned him for the task to go and tell. The ambassador is the representative of the

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<sup>26</sup>Luke 10:22.

<sup>27</sup>2 Cor. 5:20.



King to all men within his sphere of contact and influence. The lay worker is the agent for the Savior and the representative of the King Who bestowed on him the ambassadorship. Finally, the ambassador in his approach to people watches for the opportunities and is alert to grasp every chance to bear the message of the King. In this task he is also a diplomat.

From time to time the thought is projected that the lay evangelist carries out the command of the Savior because of an acute sense of gratitude for his salvation. The Christian is grateful for the gift of salvation, but he can in no manner, of his own accord, return the favor of salvation to God through activity in lay evangelism. The lay worker is entirely dependent upon the power of God for such labor in His behalf.

Rightly understood, the gratitude incentive will accompany and be a by-product of the initial motive power which is Christ and Him alone in the work of the evangelist. The gratitude born out of the love of Christ working in the layman will be evident to the worldling and will take the form of a conditioning factor for the worldling. The gratitude of the worker will express itself in the atmosphere of joy, happiness, and patience which surrounds the Christian and flows out of his life.

Having taken the upward look to God for motivation, the Christian looks out to his own little world. He particular-



ly sees the people who are in his range of acquaintance or influence. His first sentiment is the feeling of the tragic condition of the lost soul wandering aimlessly about him.

The lay worker is filled with the Spirit of Christ and has a deep concern and interest in the soul of the lost man. Charles Trumbull in quoting H. Clay Trumbull comments on this point, "That is one of the first evidences of the Christian spirit and life,- an interest in another soul, and forgetting self in the care for another."<sup>28</sup>

The layman in his evangelistic work is aware of the fact that his worldling friend will either be taken alive for God and His kingdom as stated in Luke 5:10, or that person will be taken alive for the Devil as Paul states in 2 Timothy 2:26. The economy of God's plan is decisive to that degree, and the worker is sensitive to that sharp distinction. The first outward look is one of deep concern for the worldling who is confronted with this alternative.

Christian men and women are endowed with a diversity of gifts, and they are invested with different degrees of spiritual power and capacity for service, but "no disciple of Christ is intellectually so feeble, or occupies a position so humble as altogether to escape the observation of the

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<sup>28</sup>Charles Gallaudet Trumbull, Taking Men Alive (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1938), p. 161.



world."<sup>29</sup>

The husband or wife or the children who truly own the name Christian are aware that they are making a constant impression upon everyone whom they meet during the course of a day's activities. Every Christian's life is either influencing the next man positively or negatively. The example being made is either building up or tearing down the worldling who is hypercritical of the actions of the so-called Christians. The layworker is sensitive to this witness which he is giving.

The witness will be positive such as was that of which Paul spoke:

You yourselves are our letters of commendation, written on your hearts, to be known and read by all men; and you know that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.<sup>30</sup>

The manner of living is an illustration of the spirit and of the principles of the Gospel. His life is the embodiment and the acting out of the spirit of Christ by which his heart and mind are animated. It is on this ground that the world forms an estimate of the religion of Christ. It is for this reason that Paul spoke to a group of his Christian people, "Do all things without grumbling or questioning that you

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<sup>29</sup>Beach, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>30</sup>2 Cor. 3:2-3.



may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world . . ."<sup>31</sup>

In all the actions of the layman love is the controlling factor. This love is the all-compelling motive for the Christian life. "For the love of God controls us, because we are convinced that one died for all . . . And he died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sakes died and was raised."<sup>32</sup>

This love or agape, the term used in the New Testament original, is the conditioning force which prepares the evangelist for service after receiving the motivation. The faith in the cross seeks expression in men through love. This is the primary emotion that the evangelist is concerned with in his evangelistic endeavor. First to love God, and to love the fellowman is the watchword of the evangelist. One writer has termed agape in this manner:

Love is a positive thing; it is the antithesis of the soft sentimentalism of the cheap novel and the cinema. It is neither static nor passive. It is a dynamic, a mighty energy which must find expression, in giving of oneself even to the utmost.<sup>33</sup>

Agape is a fixed and deliberate attitude of one's whole being which at all times puts the best interest of the one

<sup>31</sup>Phil. 2:14.

<sup>32</sup>2 Cor. 5:14-15.

<sup>33</sup>A. J. William Myers, Educational Evangelism (London: National Sunday School Union, n.d.), p. 94.



the lay worker loves above his own, no matter what the cost happens to be. This agape gives evidence of itself to the worldling in the form of sympathy with his problems, of kindness in all difficulty. In this matter of agape the layman is dependent upon the Spirit for this gift. The worldling in all transactions with the Christian will notice the difference in the man before him in whom Christ lives. Conant contends, "This active presence of Christ means the constant inflow of his life to be used in the constant outflow of our service."<sup>34</sup>

This constant attitude of agape is essential in maintaining the perspective and focus of individual work. The active love will assist the worker in avoiding the frustrations one meets when he attempts the evangelization of the world. The focus of attention will be upon the needs and the tragedy of one individual at a time. The perspective will be preserved in that the love of the worker will reach out to the individual worldling. The single worldling will be the center of concentration.

Love is the agent which breaks down the barriers of the heart. It opens the lines of communication and keeps those clear between any two people and in particular the two people involved in any one evangelistic situation. Love is the conditioning factor which points up the needs of the world-

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<sup>34</sup>Conant, op. cit., p. 77.



ling. Love is the one thing the worldling will understand. He may desire to know what make the Christian different from the rest of the world which hates instead of loves, which becomes jealous while the Christian continues to praise, which lusts while the Christian remains content with his lot.

The study has outlined thus far the motivation for the evangelistic task. The study pointed out that there are definite and inescapable commands given by the Lord for the task. The investigation further discovered that these commands per se were not the direct means of motivation, but that Christ Himself is the motivation. In describing the inward and the upward and the outward look, the research would propose that the feeling of gratitude in itself is not the motivation for the evangelistic work nor is the feeling of concern for the lost could necessarily be the initial motivating power. These are at best the by-products of the initial love which Christ pours out into the hearts of the layman through the Spirit and His Word.

Having grasped a knowledge of the source and means of motivation, the question is still asked by the layman, "How do I go about this work of personal evangelism?" The research of this paper now endeavors to develop the answer to that question in the investigation of the methods which are at the disposal of the lay evangelist.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE METHODOLOGY OF THE PERSONAL EVANGELIST

The methodology of the lay evangelist has been a favored topic of most evangelistic authors. These volumes of instruction in the field of evangelism have been strong in their emphasis upon the correct method employed in soul-winning. The layman involved in a program of personal evangelism is deeply concerned with the methods which are proper for this work. This chapter of the study will concentrate upon the actual scene of verbal witnessing. The focal point of interest is on the lay worker as he opens his conversation with the worldling.<sup>(1)</sup> The research at this point was concerned with uncovering the New Testament devices and techniques.<sup>(2)</sup> In addition, the research sought to determine the attitude which the modern day Christian takes toward these methods in adapting them for his own particular task.<sup>(3)</sup> Consideration is given also to the point of contact between the Christian and the worldling.<sup>(4)</sup> And finally, the study makes an attempt to answer the query, "Is it the bound duty of the lay evangelist sooner or later to press the claims of Christ upon the worldling to an ultimate decision for Christ?"

In an overview of the New Testament, the researcher discovered that in all the examples of methodology there was no literalistic set of devices outlined. Three samples will



suffice to illustrate the point.

Luke 19 relates the story of Jesus seeking out Zacchaeus in the visit to Jericho. The setting and circumstances were simple in this instance. Jesus in traveling through the town stops at the tree and looks up, and says, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today."<sup>1</sup> The balance of the personal work of Jesus was carried out in the tax collector's home.

Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, performed his personal work under somewhat different circumstances. The two brothers had been longing and seeking for the Messiah. From their childhood they developed a yearning for His coming. Being a disciple of John, Andrew had the opportunity to hear the Savior. Without any hesitation he comes to his brother Peter and says, "We have found the Messiah."<sup>2</sup> And following the proclamation, he brings his brother to the Christ.

In the Book of Acts the personal work of Philip takes place in an entirely different and distinct setting.<sup>3</sup> Philip is commissioned to leave his village preaching stations and go to the desert of Gaza. He spies a chariot in which is seated a wealthy man of Ethiopia. In the subsequent ride

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 19:5.

<sup>2</sup>John 1:41.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 8:27-38.



down the desert road near Gaza, Philip carries on his individual soul-winning by bringing the good news to this foreigner.

The three instances cited bear out the fact that no one pattern of approach in method was employed as each evangelist went about his task. Each evangelist adapted himself to the attendant circumstances which presented themselves. Each approach was tempered by the individual involved with the worker. No two approaches portrayed were identical in the three examples.

No Scripture passage states in which manner the work of evangelism must be projected. The Great Commission as well as the other passages calling for witnessing speak of going to the task, but nowhere is a legalistic pattern of techniques specified.

The witness given in the two latter cases was made through Christian men who came to the scene of evangelistic action with what they possessed as personalities. In each instance the message was the same, but at the same time each evangelist approached the person before him in the manner dictated and suggested by the situation. Jesus had a deep concern for Zacchaeus and sought to dine with him. Philip's task was accomplished in the eunuch's chariot riding down the desert road. Andrew was intent on telling Peter the great news of the Messiah and brought Peter to the Messiah to prove his witness.



The attitude of the twentieth century lay worker toward the methods in the New Testament will follow these principles. There is no one established way of carrying out the personal work. The situation and circumstances of the moment will dictate the type of method and approach to be applied. The New Testament methodology does offer guidelines to the modern layman. The spirit and goals of the New Testament personal evangelism will be retained, but the devices and the techniques will be adapted to the individual worldling. Austen de Blois sums up the thought in these words:

Evangelism may and should change its form and methods, adapting itself to new conditions and wisely use all helpful agencies of the time to emphasize afresh the spiritual principles which it incarnates; but its realities are persistent and its values imperishable.<sup>4</sup>

Any method or device is acceptable for personal work with the provision that it be dignified and of worthy character. The method best suited to the situation is the best avenue of approach to the worldling in question. In every method the important matter in hand is the goal of proclaiming the message in an intelligible manner. Any worker coming into contact with the sinner will be mindful of this aim and purpose.

The technique employed will always be a dignified one. The approach which breaks down the lines of communication be-

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<sup>4</sup>Austen Kennedy de Blois, Evangelism in the New Age (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1933), p. 56.



tween the evangelist and the worldling is out of order. The lines of communication must be kept open even before the actual message has been proclaimed. Paul's practice in this respect of a dignified method is stated thus, "We have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways; we refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's Word . . ."5

In the modern application of the New Testament methodology, many lay workers are tempted to select one method which has proven successful in previous undertakings. This method becomes the only device. The layman forgets there are as many types of approach in the field of personal work as there are people confronted. Each new person presents a new way of life, an entirely different challenge to the worker. Further comment as to the adaptation of the worker will be treated further down in this chapter.

Regardless of the method employed in any circumstance of personal work, one approach is basic and common to all. Prayer will saturate the entire purpose and program of lay evangelism. Evangelist Smith avers, "Prayer must precede, accompany, and seal every step in the whole program of soul-winning."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>2 Cor. 4:2.

<sup>6</sup>Wade C. Smith, Come and See (Richmond: Onward Press, 1927), p. 57.



Prayer in evangelism prepares the worker to launch out on his daily calling as a Christian factory hand, executive, or salesman. Before stepping out of the door to go to work, the evangelist already in his morning prayers has included an intercessory petition for certain individuals with whom he works. Prayer constantly awakens the concern for individuals and their peculiar needs. Sidney Powell points out that the men who pray for the individuals are the ones who go out seeking them. This writer cites the example of the disciples who were taught to pray for laborers in the harvest in Matthew 9. In Matthew 10:5 these same disciples are sent out into the villages and towns to spread the message of the Savior Who taught them to pray.

The effectiveness of the lay worker with the worldling depends on the blessing of the Spirit working through him. From the first turning of the lay worker's will to the final and eventual communication of the message, the work is in the hands of the Holy Spirit. The evangelist seeks the help of the Spirit in this highest of all human callings. The method and manner in which the Spirit accomplishes this work is a mystery to the evangelist. He does not know precisely how it comes about, ". . ." but we do know that unless both our witnessing and soul-winning ministry are commended, carried on, and consummated in prayer, little or no illumi-



nation will attend our work."<sup>7</sup> The same author contends, "We always advance in our evangelistic work only so fast as we advance on our knees."<sup>8</sup>

There is a fourfold use of prayer in lay evangelism. The worker prays that God would keep him alert and sympathetic to the spiritual frustrations and daily problems of those with whom he comes into contact. The evangelist is aware that by nature he is self-centered and blind to the crying needs of the worldling about him. He prays for this grace to respond understandingly to the needs. The evangelist in this connection prays for faith to believe what the Savior promised the disciples, ". . . for what you are to say will be given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you."<sup>9</sup>

A prayer is raised that God would give power to the words which pass from the worker to the worldling in the course of their conversation. Power to win the worldling does not lie in the persuasiveness or facility of the worker but is always a divine power.

After the interchange of words has ceased between the two, the evangelist prays that the Word spoken to the world-

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<sup>7</sup>J. E. Conant, Every-Member Evangelism (Revised edition; New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922), p. 99.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Matt. 10:19-20.



ling will not lie in fallow ground but that it will take root according to the promise of God. At this same moment a prayer of thanksgiving will also rise to God Who has permitted him to bring the Good News to one who has been without hope in the world.

Another integral part of methodology is the consideration of the point of contact in personal evangelism. By the point of contact the study understands that common ground between the worker and the prospect which is used as a spring board for the evangelistic work. In a larger sense much theological thought have been expended upon this issue and is commonly termed der Anknüpfungspunkt. The study seeks to specifically determine this point of contact in personal evangelism.

Sidney Powell in quoting Anne Morrow Lindbergh states, "I think of people and not of ideas and plans and organizations."<sup>10</sup> The layman's view of evangelism is inclined to begin with an organizational plan for evangelism. The common opinion of the laity has centered largely in one congregational program of neighborhood canvass or house visitation. Much of lay energy and talent has been absorbed in such endeavors, and rightly so. However, this type of thinking has sidetracked and deemphasized the personal on the scene

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<sup>10</sup>Sidney Powell, Where Are the People? (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942), p. 20.



contact of the layman. His energy and capacity for work has become operative in only one form of activity, which in its aims and goals has diverted the personal worker away from the personal encounter.

In reality from the Christian's viewpoint there is no direct, spiritual point of contact with the worldling. The Gospel, which he is commissioned to carry to men, is a skandalon to the worldling and his thinking. The sinner outside of the grace of God is blind, dead, and an enemy of God as Scripture discloses.<sup>11</sup> The pure Gospel message is foolishness to the worldling, and he refuses to hear it spoken to him or despises its message when delivered and heard.

The study proposes that there is an indirect point of contact between the worker and the sinner. This contact is found in the tragic sense of life which issues as Elmer G. Honrighausen says, ". . . from man's universal failure to gain the clue to his need and the cure to his wound unto death."<sup>12</sup>

Thus in this indirect means of finding the point of contact, the lay worker will understand that every problem of the world about him and the peculiar problems and needs of the world's individuals are ultimately theological. Since this is true, the practical contact is to be found in the

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<sup>11</sup>1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1; Rom. 8:7.

<sup>12</sup>Elmer G. Honrighausen, Choose Ye This Day (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1943), p. 104.



agitations of the human spirit in the immediate circumstance in which the laymen finds them. Dr. Homrighausen concurs in this thought by maintaining, "The present sense of frustration, nihilism, and futility is a point of contact for the Christian evangelist with this generation."<sup>13</sup>

Consequently the Christian evangelist will be aware of and sensitive to the stress and the strain of the people with whom he comes into contact daily. His business is to be his brother's keeper, to recognize the spiritual frustrations and the physical needs of the men, women, and children of his neighborhood and locality. In these situations of trial and tribulation, he has a potential point of contact for the witnessing job for which he has been commissioned and equipped.

To develop this sensitivity, the lay evangelist must rediscover the individual personalities of the society in which he lives. Current modern society with its complexity of life has submerged the personality of men beneath the crust of a very impersonalized social structure. Thinking in terms of the mass has become the prevalent American pattern. Material production is made for the mass and in the mass. The men and women producing these materials have become insignificant, impersonal parts of a gigantic machine

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<sup>13</sup>Homrighausen, op. cit., p. 110.



The propaganda of the government has taken on the same proportions, and only recently has the cry gone up that freedom is everybody's business. Aaron Meckel opines:

The individual has been lost in a cold, impersonal life with masses of people. He is lost in the file as a card or on a membership list. We are to have an eye for persons.<sup>14</sup>

The openings for assistance of the worldling are on every side of the evangelist, if he opens his eyes to them. There is no need to seek far and wide for the opportunity to speak heart-to-heart with another of the Jesus, Who has won the heart of the layman. The opportunities are as great as the number of daily contacts the layman makes. Those closest to him may need the message most. The lay worker will not overlook the persons in his home, in his college dormitory, or in the same train or bus. In all of these situations in a casual way, the child of God is bearing witness to his faith, and this "Bearing witness to his faith is a principle of life. At the office, in the shop, across the counter, across the fence, in social gatherings, and in the family circle his meat is to do the Father's will and to finish his work."<sup>15</sup>

The opportunities are particularly evident in the earth-

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<sup>14</sup>Aaron H. Meckel, New Day for Evangelism (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1947), p. 108.

<sup>15</sup>H. W. Gockel, "The Casual Approach," Today, III (October, 1948), 17.



ly callings. The chosen profession or vocation of the laity is a fruitful area for personal evangelism. In the ancient New Testament church the witnessing to a large extent was carried on within the vocations of the Christian. Mott quotes the historian Gibbon in declaring, ". . . it became the most sacred duty of a new convert to diffuse among his friends and relations the inestimable blessings which he had received."<sup>16</sup>

In the New Testament days the men and women naturally weaved the message of the Gospel into their everyday conversation as they walked and worked in their world. For this reason one can explain the wide spread propagation of the Gospel message. An evangelistic writer describes the program of personal work of the New Testament in these words:

The mechanic talked to those of the same craft, the soldier to his fellow soldiers, the slave to other slaves, the mother in the home to her children, the tradesman with those of his calling, the student with his fellow students. This constant collision of individual souls explains the marvelous propagation of the gospel in those pioneering and foundation-laying days.<sup>17</sup>

Each Christian was about his Father's business in his business, the profession, the vocation, or other callings of their life. For the early Christians every calling was a

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<sup>16</sup>John R. Mott, The Larger Evangelism (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1944), p. 61.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.



ministry of the Gospel to the world.

In these callings the lay evangelist will keep alive the sensitivity to the physical needs of the people about him. If a workbench friend is taken ill, the worker if possible will seize the opportunity to visit him to encourage and comfort him in his distress. This outgrowth of love for the individual might be the opening he has been desiring for years to achieve. For in the misfortune of sickness the worldling may be more ready to receive the Gospel message than when he was healthy and robust.

The direct point of conversational contact is arrived at in the meeting of the two individuals involved in the personal work. The point of contact is attained by beginning at the point where the prospect is thinking or working. At this juncture in the paper, the study looks at the actual physical meeting of the two men to ascertain the right approach to the individual.

The classic example of arriving at such a point of contact is the story of Jesus with the woman at the well in Samaria, recorded in John 4. The Savior opens the discussion with the woman by employing the common denominator of the well and the water. He began from the point where He and the woman were on an equal level of thought. From this point of departure, He led over to other more pertinent topics which brought about the consequent repentance of the woman, and the saving of many of her relatives in the city.



Similarly Philip in his work with the eunuch in Acts 8 began with the book the Ethiopian was reading, and from that point of contact went directly into the Book of Isaiah itself. The result of his personal work led to the baptism of the treasurer of Queen Candace.

These two illustrations demonstrate the fact that the lay evangelist will many times find the point of contact in the thinking or the action of the prospect before him. Wade Smith speaks of this approach in this fashion, "It is throwing yourself 'in gear' with him, though for a moment it may be to throw yourself 'out of gear' with yourself."<sup>18</sup> Making a contact is as easy as asking for a drink of water as in the case of the Savior in John 4.

The layman in working with the worldling thinks of him and his needs and not of the particular method of approach he is going to use. The concentration is off of self and on the next man. It may take ten seconds to ten years to find out the particular need of the next man, but the thought is constantly riveted on him as a person who needs the help of God. At the exact moment of contact this other man is the only important one in the whole universe. It is the lay worker's design and plan to draw the other into a close relationship with himself. In this initial meeting

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<sup>18</sup>Smith, op. cit., p. 56.



there is no place for a haughty or moralistic pride of the Christian over against the prospect. He thinks of himself as an equal sinner who needs the grace of God as much as the prospect. Humility at this stage as well as throughout the contact is essential to an effective ministry to the worldling. Paul's attitude in this respect is eloquently and fervently voiced in the words, "To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means win some."<sup>19</sup>

As the conversation opens, the lay worker will begin with the person where he is mentally. The conversation will revolve around what interests the other at the time in an effort to seek out the interest areas of the other. Dr. Blackwood suggests, "Begin with the other person where he is, mentally. Talk about what interests him at the moment."<sup>20</sup> This is the human touch of an individual, genuine concern expressed in the personal word of a friend which in many instances will engender the confidence of the other. It is the contention of one writer, "Everyday the miracle of the loving personal touch is wrought when people go to others in the Spirit of the Master - a friendly handshake, a word of encouragement, a loving invitation, and the 'chords that were

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<sup>19</sup>1 Cor. 9:22.

<sup>20</sup>A. Blackwood, Evangelism in the Home Church (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942), p. 100.



broke vibrate once more."<sup>21</sup>

One approach which has been suggested by the proponents of personal work is the use of commendation. Commendation which is sincere and truthful tends to disarm the belligerent worldling and to draw him to the lay worker. In the employment of commendation the interest and the profound concern for the next man is apparent. Warning must be given that this commendation should be a sincere and honest compliment to the other; for if there is the least bit of sarcasm or insincerity connected with it, the lines of communication have begun to weaken. The identity of the worker with the prospect will be a constant throughout the conversation.

The good worker in personal evangelism is always a good listener. Listening is an art which must be developed by all lay workers. For all men as well as Christians there is the ever present temptation to foist personal thoughts and ideas into the discussion where they do not belong. Sidney Powell emphasizes this feature of the approach:

To fail to be good listeners, to interrupt the speech of another with our brilliant ideas as though his were unimportant, or to assume an argumentative, dogmatic, or censorious attitude, is to demonstrate our own personal egotism, a thing generally despised. This is one of the best ways to doom our effort to defeat.<sup>22</sup>

In this connection a word is in order about tact. Much

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<sup>21</sup>Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 105.



has been said concerning the use of tact in the inside workings of the personal endeavor. Tact is essential in the approach to the next man, and it is born out of love for the neighbor. In evangelistic work tact is the one element and attitude which helps to dispel the prejudices of the other. It is at the beginning tolerant of the faults of the next man, patient with the fullness and the indifference of the worldling. Yet throughout the meeting with the other man, the evangelist with the tactful approach presses toward the goal of personal work, namely, to draw more closely to the heart and the life of the worldling. In a study of 2 Corinthians, B. G. Mueller noted some of the ingredients of the Apostle Paul's tact.<sup>23</sup> In the work of Paul, a deep concern for the person was foremost. Paul was careful never to set himself upon a pedestal, and in all his dealings with the people never spoke down at them. He was honest and straightforward in his praise of their well-doing, but at the same time determined to keep Christ and Him crucified before his hearers.

Tact, however, can be a hindrance to the progression of the work of personal evangelism. By stressing the procedure of tact, some laymen are frustrated in their efforts and consequently make contact with the worldling but accomplish

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<sup>23</sup>B. G. Mueller, "A Tactful Missionary Named Paul," Today, I (December, 1946), 9-12.



little or nothing in the way of message bearing for fear that they will offend the next man. Charles Trumbull speaks out of his lay evangelist experience by testifying:

Never to the present day can I speak to a single soul for Christ without being reminded by Satan that I am in danger of harming the cause by introducing it just now. If there is one thing that Satan is sensitive about, it is the danger of a Christian's harming the cause he loves by speaking of Christ to a needy soul. He has more than once, or twice, or thrice, kept me from speaking on the subject by his sensitive pious caution, and he has tried a thousand times to do so. Therefore my experience leads me to suppose that he is urging other persons to try any method for souls except the best one.<sup>24</sup>

A threeway contact has now been established in the evangelistic situation thus described. The lay worker in his effort has confronted the worldling. God is concerned with this contact and is interested in the two men involved. He has commissioned and motivated the layman to go and seek the sinner. The question still remains, "In what form will the message of the layman come to the worldling?"

The evangelists are the ambassadors of Christ, and as such remember the words, ". . . God making his appeal through us."<sup>25</sup> Therefore the appeal of the message must be made in thoughtful consideration of the hearer. The evangelist is not merely concerned to spread the Gospel, but that this Gospel make an inroad into the life of the worldling. Thus

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<sup>24</sup>Charles Gallaudet Trumbull, Taking Men Alive (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1938), pp. 44-5.

<sup>25</sup>2 Cor. 5:20.



the message as he brings it will be intelligible to the receiver. The kerygma, or proclamation will be directed and pointed to fit the individual who stands before the evangelist.

In the actual statement of the Gospel, many evangelists have difficulty in choosing the right words, the right dress for their verbal witnessing. Dr. Caemmerer claims:

The Christian's witness, the kerygma of Christ, is not a matter of profession or acumen. It is the simple statement to the next man that the witness has known Christ and has found Him to be Lord and Savior and wants to share Him with others.<sup>26</sup>

The actual form of the kerygma will not be a lengthy discourse on the doctrinal aspects of Christology but in simple terms presents Christ and what He has done for the Christian.

The previous statement pointed up the idea of desiring to share the Christ with others. A study of this sharing idea in the epistles of Paul proved to be very fruitful. In many instances of his letters there is a personal allusion to what the Savior meant to him. Much of the personal witnessing of Paul comes through those letters in that fashion. Particularly if the layman reads the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians, he will find one phrase and sentence heaped upon another in expression of what the Apostle experienced in his personal life and in his ministry. In his pleading

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<sup>26</sup>Richard R. Caemmerer, The Church and the World (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1949), p. 74.



with this church, or in his joy over that church, Paul speaks much of the redemption of the Savior but makes the reference a personal one. One instance will suffice to demonstrate this sharing idea of Paul through the written page:

For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Let your light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.<sup>27</sup>

In other parts of the same epistle similar instances may be cited.<sup>28</sup> In all examples the personal allusion is the important feature of witness.

In any conversation of this nature in the personal, the kerygma must get through to the worldling, for in it is the power of God. It was the resolve of H. Clay Trumbull, ". . . justified in choosing my subject of conversation, the theme of themes should have prominence between us, so that I might learn his need, and, if possible meet it."<sup>29</sup>

The use of Law and Gospel is a pertinent topic of consideration in this vital matter of bringing the message to the sinner. Some theologians have thought that in evangelism much of the message of the Law is toned down in the interest of keeping the prospect in communication with the

<sup>27</sup>2 Cor. 4:5-6.

<sup>28</sup>2 Cor. 2:14-17; 4:7-12; 5:14-15.

<sup>29</sup>Charles Trumbull, quoting H. Clay Trumbull, op. cit. pp. 68-9.



evangelist. The claim is made that some Christians would make Christianity palatable and therefore tone down the Law.

Both the Law and the Gospel will be a part of the total message of the layman. The Law will show the separation of man from God. The same message will be employed to bring about the recognition of the need of the worldling. It will point up in bold type the dire necessity and need of the Gospel message, of the forgiveness which is freely offered in the Savior. The presentation of the Law is, ". . . an essential requirement in the conversion of the sinner is a personal conviction of sin and that this personal conviction will come only through a personal encounter with the Law."<sup>30</sup>

Just as the Law in its demands confronts the sinner with the deep need of salvation, so contrariwise the Gospel offers the answer to that need. In the blood of Christ the deepest sense of guilt and remorse over sin is resolved. In the Gospel message, which is the only word which will save the worldling, the bridge between God and man is fixed. The walls are torn down, and God and man become one in Christ.

It is interesting to note in the example of John 4 that Jesus does not begin his meeting with the woman by prefacing his remarks with the words of the Law but begins with other matters at hand and then goes into the discourse on the water

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<sup>30</sup>H. W. Gockel, "Don't Tone Down the Law!" Today, V (August, 1950), 9-10.



of life. After which time the woman comes to the realization of Jesus as the Messiah.

The kerygma is not, as commonly thought, the invitation to come to church. Some very commonly draw the conclusion that the Great Commission means, "Come ye out of all the community into our church and hear the Gospel preached."<sup>31</sup> It is true that the invitation to attend divine worship will come in the course of the conversation, if the conversation has progressed to that extent. Yet there is no command in the New Testament which speaks in terms of bringing the people to church or to speak to the pastor. The commands speak of bringing the message to the people where they are.

In connection with this thought Richard R. Gaemmerer maintains that the evangelistic movement, ". . . partakes of the nature of an underground movement."<sup>32</sup> This author contends that the local congregation and its members do not invite people to themselves but to the Church. In this respect the layman does not use the methods of the materialistic world which holds out that which glitters and has a materialistic magnetism to win the adherence of people. Such a material method of approach may hinder more than it helps the cause. There is the constant danger that while the church buildings were built to glorify God that they may hinder the effective-

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<sup>31</sup>Conant, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>32</sup>Gaemmerer, op. cit., p. 64.



ness of the message in the evangelistic contact.

Some thought of the evangelistic writers has been directed to the use of the Bible passage in the bringing of the Gospel message to the sinner. In the initial stages of the interview the Word as such may not be the ground of common interest, and the quick recitation of a passage out of the context without due explanation and background may be an obstacle to the ensuing discussion. Every worker must be prepared to be used as a channel of the Holy Spirit, ". . . so that channel will flow freely and purely as an agent of the Spirit, without hindrance of 'self'. From us must flow God in Christ, not merely Scripture passages and 'texts'."<sup>33</sup>

The lay evangelist will employ his own terminology and not resort necessarily to theological terminology which is foreign to the worldling. The evangelist shares the Good News in his own style, unaffected, plain, and simple.

The daily use of the Word by the lay worker himself, however, is an important part of his equipment for the task. The witness will foster regular habits and habits of routine in the private use of the Word to feed himself. Through such use the worker is equipping himself with the power of love and for the ministry of the kerigma.

And finally, there is no room for argumentation in the

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<sup>33</sup>Cornelius N. Schooland, Reformed Evangelism, edited by Martin Monsma (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1948), pp. 257-80.



verbal witness. The transfusion of life through the Gospel is no cold, logical process of argumentation. The message comes from the heart which is eager to share the living and comforting Savior. As Charles Beach declares, "The manifestation of unfeigned Christian love . . . touches the heart and wins to Christ where the most conclusive and convincing argument altogether fails."<sup>34</sup>

It is not apologetics which the common man needs but an understanding compassion. Such wrangling over the merits of two systems of theological orientation tend to keep two men farther apart than to bring them together. At the same time such disputation in more instances than not removes the emphasis from the real purpose of the evangelist to a peripheral matter. The central issue is shelved until an amnesty or reconciliation is first effected. Argumentation in the form of an attack confirms certain people in their preconceived biases and prejudices. In the entire discussion of apologetics the layman will never forget, " . . . that the primitive preaching, the Kerygma of the New Testament, was the proclamation of salvation procured by Christ, and not an apologia of its meaning and method."<sup>35</sup>

The message is always a positive one, and the layman

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<sup>34</sup>Charles F. Beach, Individual Evangelism (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1908), p. 67.

<sup>35</sup>Francis Davidson, "Evangelism for Today," The Evangelical Quarterly, 17 (October, 1945), 241-7.



does not leave the impression that Christianity is summed up in not gambling, not drinking, not cheating, not lying, and the like. These topics may enter the conversation, but the approach in such cases will be from the positive viewpoint.

In conclusion on the matter of argumentation, the study would point out that argumentation should never be allowed to sidetrack the worker from his objective. In the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, Jesus disregarded the argument of the two temples and brought the woman back to the central issue. This example will be a guideline to the Christian evangelist.

In the study of methodology, the researcher was met time and again with the terms decision and commitment. These words are well known in certain churches of the Protestant world, and these terms are a natural part of their evangelistic terminology. One of these writers claims, "The real object of personal evangelism is to persuade men through the ministry of friendship and faithful personal dealing to decide deliberately and wholeheartedly to accept Jesus Christ."<sup>36</sup> The study deemed the discussion of these terms as a necessary part of a treatment of methodology.

Decision as understood by these men is defined by a representative of the Protestant church in this fashion:

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<sup>36</sup>Mott, op. cit., p. 59.



Decision means separation, being cut off from, making a sharp differentiation. Decision means bringing the discussion to an end in favor of one side or the other . . . it marks the parting of the ways . . . cleaves life in twain; it severs the ties that bind us with death and sinful history. It dethrones man and puts Christ in command of life.<sup>37</sup>

Decision is the attitude which says, "No," to the old and, "Yes," to the new. In this connection the same writer speaks of repentance and faith in the following manner, "Repentance and faith are the human attitudes whereby many may appropriate the forgiveness and power of God in Christ."<sup>38</sup> The nature of the decision partakes of the nature of a crucial issue in one's life. A radical change must take place in the self-directing ego of the worldling. This will change does not involve merely a remorse for perverted thoughts, affections, and deeds, but a radical repentance about what the human being is. A radical decision on the part of the individual is essential.

Commitment has been defined by one writer as follows:

Commitment is positive. It is a giving over of something to another's keeping. It means to entrust, to pledge, to surrender. One who is committed is pledged to a line of action. In the case of Christian commitment it is more than decision: it is an actual personal trust in Jesus Christ and his guidance and way of thought and life. It is faith.<sup>39</sup>

Commitment is further described as, ". . . the 'open' atti-

<sup>37</sup>Comrighausen, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 59.



tude which waits continually upon God in Christ for all good gifts. It is the highest human activity."<sup>40</sup>

The place of the lay evangelist in the matter of decision and commitment is described by E. Stanley Jones in these words, "And we as Christians can stand at the place where the switch is thrown - at the place of decision - and we throw that switch away from the old unto the new."<sup>41</sup> An opposite view is expressed by another writer when he speaks of the conversion of the worldling, "It is not we who win the lost by the help of Christ, it is Christ himself who does the soul-winning through the lives and lips of yielded disciples."<sup>42</sup>

The writers on the conversion of the prospect make a distinction between two types of conversion. One type is termed "the cataclysm" or "revolution", and the other "the gradual growth process".

A. J. William Myers states, "In one group this experience approaches more or less a cataclysm, a revolution, a real turning about, as in the case of Paul, Luther, Augustine, Hadley, and multitudes of others."<sup>43</sup> On the other hand

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>41</sup>E. Stanley Jones, Evangelize Why! (Nashville: Tidings, 1946), p. 32.

<sup>42</sup>Conant, op. cit., p. xi.

<sup>43</sup>A. J. William Myers, Educational Evangelism (London: National Sunday School Union, n.d.), p. 108.



this author continues, "The second approaches more nearly a gradual growth, development, process, such as that typified by Andrew, Peter, Thomas, John, Mary, Timothy . . . and multitudes of others."<sup>44</sup>

Some of the writers also warn in this discussion of the decision and commitment to be careful not to press the claims of Christ too early before due instruction has been carried through. These men fear that urging decisions in such cases where the individual is not prepared by previous instruction will give rise to suspicions and antagonism.

The various expressions of decision and commitment confronted the researcher with a confusion as to the exact meaning and implication of such terms to the conversion of the worldling. Honrighausen emphasizes, ". . . decision and commitment always refer to what God has done for us and what he proposes to do in us."<sup>45</sup> And yet the same writer contends that commitment is the highest human activity even though this commitment is an 'open' attitude which waits continually for the gifts of the Lord. This commitment he termed faith.

There seems to be a discrepancy of thought throughout. There likewise appears to be a confusion of thought in the understanding of the words faith and repentance which are

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Honrighausen, op. cit., p. 63.



termed wholly the attitudes of the human being. There is no clear cut differentiation between the human and the divine elements in the concept of faith and repentance.

The Scriptural understanding of conversion is pertinent at this juncture. In 1 Cor. 12:3 the Apostle is very clear in stating, ". . . no one can say 'Jesus Christ is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit." The work of the Holy Spirit is further delineated in John 16:7-11, where John points out that the Spirit is the One Who convicts man of sin, the step which must be taken before the Gospel message of the Comforter comes into the heart and the life of the worldling. And finally in Titus 3:5-6, the means whereby the Spirit effects this conversion is clearly set forth, ". . . he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior."

The story of the Philippian jailer does contain the evangelistic imperative, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."<sup>46</sup> The appeal of Paul and Silas was to the will of the jailer. Dr. Blackwood points out that this evangelistic imperative is the means or form in which the present day decision is pressed upon the prospect.

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<sup>46</sup>Acts 16:31.



Paul's imperative to the jailer gives no evidence that the jailer had the power to accept the terms of this statement. One writer points out that the Christian uses the imperative, ". . . not indeed because his listener has the power to answer his call, but because his call has the power to generate faith in the heart of his hearer."<sup>47</sup>

The Christian evangelist will use the imperative in his personal work, for he remembers that God is making an appeal through him. He will, however, keep in mind that the call itself has the dynamic within for the actual conversion of the worldling.

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<sup>47</sup>H. W. Gockel, "Is There a Lutheran Evangelism?", Today, III (May, 1948), 16-18.



## CHAPTER V

### THE ENLISTING AND TRAINING FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM

The task of personal evangelism in the United States is large in scope and proportion. To accomplish this tremendous task laid before the Christian Church of today, a large share of the work will have to be laid on the shoulders of the laity. As Austen de Blois states, "The hope of the churches, and the future lies with the men and the women and young people who are animated by the true Spirit of Christ and are busily seeking the coming of the Kingdom through their consecrated energy."<sup>1</sup> It shall be the purpose of this final chapter to discuss the problem of enlisting this lay group for the task of personal evangelism and to point up the objectives and the character of a proposed training program for this enlistment.

Some have asked why there must be a special enlistment of the laity for the Christian endeavor in evangelism. The need is apparent to all, but many claim that this burden of evangelism is the specific duty of the called ministers. The congregations have called these trained men to be their commanders in chief in charge of all spiritual matters. To many this indicates that the lay activity is merely a subsidiary

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<sup>1</sup>Austen Kennedy de Blois, Evangelism in the New Age (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1933), p. 25.



factor in the consideration of the total task of the church to which they belong.

The New Testament does not picture a clergy controlled organization in the work of evangelism. A study of the New Testament from this viewpoint reveals that the called ministers did play a very significant role in the church's activity. Yet lay activity came to the foreground throughout the study. The Lord set the pattern for all ages by selecting not only his disciples, but in the account of Luke 10 he chose seventy laymen for the specific task of spreading the Gospel. Jesus did not propose to save the world through a single effort of His own power. It is also significant that in the Great Commission he eventually placed the entire task of evangelizing the world into the hands of men, both ministers and laymen, a combined unit whose objectives were to be bent toward the one goal. Jesus as the leader" . . . selected them, inspired them, instructed them, and led them into the work."<sup>2</sup>

In the early church the apostles followed the same procedure of their Lord. These disciples spent much time and energy of their own, but they soon gathered recruits to assist in the overwhelming task of keeping in touch with the scattered peoples of the Mediterranean world. It is very

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<sup>2</sup>Sidney Powell, Where Are the People? (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942), p. 43.



significant that at the time of Stephen's death we read, "The laymen preached of that hope that was within, not the apostles, for the apostles were left behind."<sup>3</sup> In the account of this preaching in Acts 8:1-4, these laymen were scattered because of persecution, and wherever they went they, ". . . went about preaching the word."<sup>4</sup> Wherever these men traveled, they set things afire as individual firebrands.

The Dark Ages produced a virtual standstill in lay work and particularly so in the lay evangelistic effort. In the Reformation and its light this lay work came back into focus as a necessary part of the Church's operation. Luther rose in violent indignation against the hierarchy of the church and once more brought the place of the layman to its rightful understanding.

However, through the succeeding centuries the division between the clergy and the laity has persisted, and to this day the line of demarcation between the two stands to the detriment of effective evangelism. In reality the two classes of workers in the Church are not antagonistic to each other. The public ministry has not been established to hand down the ultimate from on top. Charles Beach argues, "In the establishment of the Christian ministry it was not the design of God

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<sup>3</sup>F. C. Streufert, Some Missionary Methods of Jesus (Mimeographed).

<sup>4</sup>Acts 8:4.



to commit the work of the world's evangelization to a class of men set apart exclusively to this service."<sup>5</sup>

The two spiritual forces are not in anyway competitive, but each supports and sustains the other in a complimentary manner to attain their common goals. In fact the statement should be made that there are in actuality not two forces but one spiritual force, made up of two groups of individuals. In this one force there is but a difference as to the personnel, namely, the called ministers and the laity. There is a difference between the minister and the layman in this that the pastor has been specifically trained and called to spend his entire energy and time in building up the body of Christ as outlined in Eph. 4:11-14. Yet this in no way detracts from the obligation of each individual member of the Body of Christ has in building one another in the Body of Christ as a whole. That is the obligation and prerogative of each member of the Body.

Charles Goodell therefore maintains, "It is time when laymen must cease to call religion an experience for ministers, and must go out, like the laymen who laid the foundations in the first century, to bring their brothers and their friends

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<sup>5</sup>Charles F. Beach, Individual Evangelism (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), p. 59.



to Him who is the light of the world."<sup>6</sup> Experience has proven that the testimony of the layman reaches a far greater number of persons than does the limited field of operation of the pastor, whose duties are varied and whose range of influence and contact is narrower in scope.

Similarly it has been pointed out that the testimony of the layman in certain instances is far more effective than that of the pastor, for as Robert Van Kampen claims, ". . . a layman's testimony often carries greater weight with the skeptical or indifferent unbelievers because they realize the layman speaks from conviction rather than by reason of position."<sup>7</sup>

This research would not give the impression that the lay evangelism of today is at a standstill. They layman throughout all centuries as well as today have been winning and is winning the victory in the field of evangelistic endeavor. These men, women, and young people with no previous training have been carrying on an effective witness in their daily lives as they move in and out among the worldlings. In a study of the victories of evangelism, A. B. Strickland concludes, "I have come to the conclusion that the greatest victories in the Christian Church have come because ordinary,

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<sup>6</sup> Charles F. Goodell, "Pastor and Evangelist," Cyclopedia of Evangelism, edited by Charles F. Goodell (New York: Ray Long & Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1932), p. 35.

<sup>7</sup> Robert C. Van Kampen, "The Nonprofessional Missionary," Hoody Monthly, XLVI (December, 1945), 208, 244.



every-day church members have done their duty, have let God work through them."<sup>8</sup>

Starting from the premise that the work of the Body of Christ can only be accomplished through the work of the entire body, the pastor looks to his part in the enlistment of the laity. It is the task of the pastor to win men to this Christ-centered challenge of personal evangelism. The lost battalion of laymen must be given that evangelistic vision to see the plight of the worldling without Christ. The pastor will further arouse the layman to see his individual abilities and aptitudes as an instrument of the Savior in the great effort of reaching out for and with Christ to the next man. The pulpit and class instruction work of the shepherd will be spearheaded by the true motivation for this lay work.

In this problem area of enlistment the pastor will endeavor to draw the layman into the actual battle which the Church wages. Sidney Powell expresses the pastor's task in this way, "Instead of remaining spectators the laity must be drawn into the great encounter. Their torches must be lighted. The pastor should endeavor to pass his own spiritual enthusiasm on to them until they develop a sense of their own mission."<sup>9</sup> To aid this sense of mission the pastor as command-

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<sup>8</sup>Wade C. Smith, quoting A. B. Strickland in Come and See (Richmond: Onward Press, 1927), p. 32.

<sup>9</sup>Powell, op. cit., p. 55.



er in chief will go with his men, leading them into the work. This encounter of the men of Christ against the forces of the enemy does not call for the commander in chief to be a desk sergeant but a field commander, a platoon leader.

One method of enlistment for the lay task is via the volunteer system. The workers choose themselves, and throughout there is a friendly, cooperative understanding between the pastor and the people. These volunteers have come to do what their heart most desires, and the pastor upon hearing their intentions wishes them God-speed and offers all the assistance at his command to make that witness of the volunteer most effective.

After this enlistment, "The best service any minister can render, evangelistically, is to train personal workers, both men and women."<sup>10</sup>

In the training of the lay evangelist the pastor or instructor will keep in mind the objectives for such a program, whether it be handled in a formal way through class instruction or via the pulpit or in an individual interview.

Regardless of the method employed in training, the pastor will emphasize that witnessing verbally is a way of life and not primarily a formal expression of faith when participating in a congregational plan of evangelism. He will ex-

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<sup>10</sup>A. Blackwood, Evangelism in the Home Church (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942), p. 105.



plain that, ". . . individual evangelism is the normal expression of a person's faith in Christ."<sup>11</sup> The pastor will define the purposes of the individual work, namely, what it means to be an instrument or vessel of the Savior to carry the Message to the worldling. Furthermore, the pastoral guide will uncover the true motivation for the task which lies ahead of the lay worker, and in so doing saturate all the instruction with that motivation. And in connection therewith he will direct the attention of the layman to the opportunities which are available in the everyday sphere of activity of the layman. In so doing, the pastor is endeavoring to create through the help of the Spirit and His Word a passion for souls.

The instruction will dwell on the topic of what the worldling must know and do to come into the right relation with his God. The pastor will not becloud the issue by leaving the impression that the lay worker must be in full command of the theological terminology on conversion before going out. The teacher will merely demonstrate that witnessing consists in the simple statement of one's faith. He will explain further that individual work calls for, ". . . unshaken, unshaken knowledge of what Jesus Christ has done for us, and that deep-rooted purpose to share that knowledge with oth-

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 113.



ers.<sup>12</sup>

Good instruction will assist the layman in overcoming the innate fear of speaking to the next man by explaining the approach of the ambassador of Christ. Methods of approach and contact could be discussed, and sword drill, or a mock situation might be demonstrated to the group in an effort to break down misconceptions as to the correct approach. A particularly well suited study could be made of the instructions tendered by the Savior to the disciples before they went out on their mission.<sup>13</sup> Such a period of training will offer the opportunity of explaining that some of the work being done is merely the harvesting of the seed sown by previous workers. The Savior pointed out this fact in the words, "I . . . One sows and another reaps". I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."<sup>14</sup>

In presenting the cause of personal evangelism to any one group within the congregation, the pastor will keep in mind that certain types of appeal have more significance for men than they do for the women. The challenge approach will appeal more to the masculine temperament, whereas the approach

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<sup>12</sup>Charles Gallaudet Trumbull, Taking Men Alive (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1936), p. 52.

<sup>13</sup>Matt. 10:16-32.

<sup>14</sup>John 4:37-38.



to the women will take on a different bent of emphasis. The enthusiasm of youth lends itself well for the evangelistic endeavor. The appeal will capitalize on that enthusiasm, which the pastor will seek to channel into the work. In each case the appeal ultimately rises out of a Christ-centered motive and is entirely orientated in His love for men's souls.

The planner of such a training program will keep in mind the character of this type of spiritual training. In the first place, the training will be positive in nature. The layman will be warned to avoid certain detrimental approaches in methodology, but on the whole the affirmative emphasis in approach, point of contact, and the message will come through. Secondly, the instruction to a large extent should be indirect. Conant avers:

No one can ever learn to win the lost by studying books or listening to sermons and addresses. He can fill his mind with the Word of God by study, as he certainly should do, and he can get suggestions from others as to how to deal with various classes of the lost, but when it comes to actually knowing how to win a soul to Christ, he can learn only by going out into the field and doing it.<sup>15</sup>

For this reason the caution is in order as stated by one writer, "There is a grave danger . . . that we stress the element of 'technique' far beyond its due importance."<sup>16</sup> An

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<sup>15</sup>J. E. Conant, Every-Member Evangelism (Revised edition; New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922), p. 25.

<sup>16</sup>H. W. Gockel, "The Plus That Counts," Today, I (August, 1946), 10-11.



overemphasis on methods may cause fear and diffidence among those who are simple Christians, and who do a better job on their own without a labyrinth of methods given them. The instruction in methodology is given to help the people avoid mistakes which may be detrimental to their cause. But an overemphasis upon them may discourage the lay worker and cause him to think that the evangelistic task is for experts, and experts only.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE CONCLUSION

The research has endeavored to develop four areas of personal evangelism in an effort to gain an understanding and insight into the particular difficulties the layman faces in this peculiar spiritual effort. The study has selected the four areas of the causes for evangelistic lethargy, motivation, methods, and enlisting and training as the most important areas of exploration in advancing to the goal of this research, namely, to assist the layman to carry out the command of his Lord to evangelize the world.

With respect to the causes for lethargy the study outlines five such causes: man's innate inertia; the doubts men have as to the value and necessity of evangelism; the misconceptions as to the exact nature of evangelism; the undue stress of indoctrination; and finally the excuse made on Scriptural grounds that certain laymen do not have the talents necessary for personal evangelism.

The innate inertia, so this study maintains, grows out of a basic self-centeredness and preoccupation with the material of this world. We further conclude that the innate or acquired fear of speaking to another about Christ, often manifested in self-consciousness, is a real problem with no easy solution. Certain laymen have more ability and talent for the personal work than others. However, the observation is made



that all men, women, and young people are talking much about secondary matters, on which topics they have little difficulty in expressing themselves. The answer to this enigma seems to lie in the fact that laymen in general are not accustomed to speak of Jesus in their everyday conversation. Secondly, they may fail to speak, because their life is inconsistent with the content of their message. And lastly that many do not have the evangelistic know-how and are thus not confident nor clear as to their approach to another man.

The second cause of lethargy stems from a false notion that evangelism is a form of religious imperialism. In this frame of mind, the layman supposes that the other man has an autonomous right to his own religion and refuses therefore to infringe upon that man's personal life with his God. The study concludes that this attitude has no foundation, for the urgency of the message and the concern of God for the worldling supersedes any so-called autonomous rights the worldling might claim to be his own.

Thirdly, misconceptions as to the exact nature of evangelism have hindered many in their witnessing activities. The reaction to the emotionalism of the mass movement approach has given the very word and the cause of evangelism a bad reputation. The research maintains that the inadequacy of this one form does not vitiate the principle involved. Furthermore, in answer to those who claim that evangelism is too atomistic or subjective in its approach, we agree that the worldling has



no innate ability to accept the message, and therefore true evangelism in its approach does not begin with that premise. Those who claim the other extreme that evangelism is too objective and incompatible to the relativity of science are forgetting that the Gospel message is an absolute which is to be preached to all men. Science and its theories of relativity are not an argument against the message of evangelism, for whereas science deals with changeable factors, the Gospel remains a fixed fact. The study recognizes as a further misconception that many have understood evangelism to mean the organizational plan or operation. This misconception has centered activity into a neighborhood canvass and has minimized the day to day witness activity of the layman.

In the fourth place, the paper makes the claim that indoctrination in its good intentions has hurt the cause of evangelism in its stress upon an intellectual grasp of Biblical facts which has toned down the dissemination of those facts in evangelism. Indoctrination has a tendency to substitute for evangelism. The researcher claims that these two elements will work together in a cooperative venture. Indoctrination is but the extension of evangelism and at the same time a direct growth from it, and that personal evangelism is but a part of the larger task to go and tell and make disciples of all nations.

Finally, in answer to the fifth cause for lethargy which is voiced in the excuses of the layman that certain of them do



not have the gifts for such work, the study concludes that the passages of Scripture used to back these excuses do speak of a diversity of gifts noted out to the Church. However, these passages do not confirm the contention that therefore some people are exempt for this reason from the personal evangelistic effort. Contrariwise, these statements of Paul's epistles call for introspection on the part of the layman, and a reevaluation of his talent for this work.

In the discussion of the motivation for the task of evangelism, the study concludes that the true motive for the task is not found in the compelling force of the Great Commission or similar commands. The real motive for winning souls comes from the indwelling Christ, Who gave the command and through His Spirit and His Word also gives the layman the power to follow through with the command.

Furthermore, we conclude that the supposed motivations of gratitude for one's salvation and the tragedy of a lost soul are but by-products of evangelism and not the central motivation for the task. In the outward look after the motivation has been received the layman will view the tragedy of the lost soul and will remember that he is at all times influencing the worldling by his life witness. For this reason the layman in an effort to get to the worldling will use his God-given agape in being a conditioning influence upon the worldling. The Christian will live and breathe the life of Christ, so that they may see his good works and glorify God.



There is no literalistic or legalistic set pattern of methodology established in the New Testament. The study concludes that the twentieth century evangelist will use these methods as guidelines and adapt them for his own particular evangelistic situation. As the New Testament indicates, each case approach should be adapted and suited to the individual and the setting confronting the Christian witness.

In the study of the point of contact between the worldling and the layman, the study concludes in the first place that there is no direct point of contact between the two, because the Gospel message is a skandalon to the worldling. However, there is an indirect point of contact between the two in the suffering, confusion, and chaos experienced by the worldling as he walks day by day with the layman. The study maintains that in those problems, the layman finds a contact with the man of the world. For this reason he is aware of individuals and sensitive to their peculiar difficulties. Furthermore, the layman has the greatest opportunity to assist the worldling in his everyday callings of life. In these callings the Christian is available at all times to show an interest and concern in the problems of the next man.

To establish a point of contact in conversation with the man of the world, the study concludes that the point of contact must be reached in the area where the worldling is thinking or acting. The layman throws himself in gear with the next man. In this connection tact is essential and flows



out of agape. The researcher warns, however, that tact may at times prohibit witnessing. The witness in seeking to say the right thing at the right time never finds the right words nor the time.

In answer to the question of the layman, "What shall I say to the worldling?", the study concludes that the kerygma is stated in very simple terms. The kerygma in personal evangelism is the simple statement of the faith of the Christian as the Lord has been working out the same through his life.

Both Law and Gospel will be used in the evangelistic message. The Law is used to develop and create a sense of need in the worldling. The Gospel, however, is the only message which will draw him to the Savior. In the matter of using Law or Gospel on the first contact with the man of the world, the example of John 4 is applicable, where the Savior did not start with the Law.

The object of the kerygma is not to win people for the local congregation, but first and foremost the objective is to win to the Church. Furthermore in speaking of the message, the research contends that the direct statement of Bible passages are not absolutely necessary in voicing the kerygma. And finally, the study concludes that there is no room for argumentation in personal endeavor. Argumentation will never win a soul for Christ, and in most cases will hinder the progress of communication between the worldling and the lay evangelist.



On the topic of pressing the demands of Christ to a decision, the study marked a confusion of thought on the part of the decision proponents. On the one hand they commit the entire working of conversion into the hands of God. Yet on the other hand they claim that commitment of the individual to Christ is the highest human activity. Hourighausen in his elaboration of the word commitment, calls it faith. There seems to be a misconception of the terms repentance and faith in their entire discussion of pressing the decision.

The paper concludes that the Holy Spirit is the one who convicts the world of sin, and through His means of washing and the word regenerates, without human assistance whatsoever.

The layman will keep in mind, however, that the evangelistic imperative can be used as in the case of Paul and Silas and the jailer at Philippi. God through such a statement in an imperative is appealing through that word to the worldling. The lay evangelist uses this imperative not with the view that the man of the world can accept the message given to him of his own free will, but that this message has the power within it to convert.

In enlisting the layman, the pastor will keep in mind that the Great Commission was given to the entire Church. The study of the New Testament confirmed the opinion that lay workers are an integral part of the evangelistic arrange-



ment established by the Lord. These two groups, the clergy and the laity work together in a complimentary fashion. One supports the other in their tasks of personal evangelism.

The pastor's part in the training of the laity is to lead them into the personal encounter through his example of personal work and also through his assistance of the layman in any phase in which the lay worker might require guidance.

The objectives of a training course or program are to open the eyes of the layman to the fact that personal evangelism is a way of life and not primarily a special exerted effort of a compartmentalized congregational program. The pastor further endeavors in this training to stimulate the layman through the motivation of Christ to desire to win the souls of the men of the world.

The training should be of a positive nature throughout. The warning is also given by the study not to discourage the simple layman through an extensive discourse on the methodology of personal evangelism. An overstress of the methods of the personal work might deter more than aid such activity on the part of the lay evangelist.



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