

Back to the Basics

Pass the Word Along

Memory Verse:
2 Timothy 2:2

You Have Some Good News

When you became a Christian (as studied in lesson two, *Understanding My Salvation*), you received some fabulous news. Your sins were forgiven and you were set free from your bondage to sin. Jesus Christ died on the cross for you and you had followed Him to salvation. You were added to the church, the wonderful body of Christ. (See lesson five, *The Church Built by Jesus*.) Now, the great question for you is this: Are you going to pass the Word along to others lost in sin? Do not be stingy with God's word. Many other people were involved in sharing the Truth with you. All the way from Jesus, to His apostles, to the scribes who copied the books of the Bible, to the translators which translated God's word from Hebrew and Greek to your language, to whom-ever studied with you about salvation. Imagine for a moment if some of those people had decided not to play a part in the spreading of God's word. Would you be saved today?

Now, you may be asking the question, "Why me?" Instead, you should be asking, "Why not me?" Who better to tell the lost about salvation than one who has submitted to the call to salvation? Consider the following reasons why you should be the one to spread the good news of salvation.

- Q **You have been saved.** While we covered this point in the first paragraph, it does not hurt to remind you again of this important fact. If you have obeyed Jesus' command to believe and be baptized, then you have been saved. If this is truly your state, then you should "speak what you know." (John 3:11) You learned the Truth, you were convicted, and you obeyed. Now, go tell others what you know.
- Q **You have the Truth.** You have what the lost needs. Take the Truth to the lost. Within the physical world, if you have something that a needy person needs, then you should help them. (cf. Ephesians 4:28; Matthew 25:41-46; Galatians 6:10) In the same vain of thought, you have something that the spiritually needy must possess. Take them the precious word of God before it is too late.
- Q **You love the lost.** You are to teach the lost because you have compassion on their lost souls. Or, at least you should have compassion on them. (We will examine this point later in the lesson.) You know the lost will die, be judged by God, and will receive a judgment fit for the life they had lived. (Hebrews 9:27; John 5:28-29; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10) The knowledge that they will be eternally lost should provoke compassion within you. This compassion should then motivate you to try to teach the lost.

- q **You want to help fulfill God's will.** It is God's will that no one perish, but that all come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9) You can play a part in the fulfilling of God's will. When you obey Jesus' command to go and teach (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16), then God's will is being done. If we help to fulfill God's will, then we will be serving God like Paul and Apollos. (1 Corinthians 3:5-9)

What Evangelism Requires from You

Having shown some simple reasons why you should be spreading the Word of God to the lost, let us now show what personal evangelism requires from you. Let us begin with compassion. Jesus taught lessons of compassion to His disciples. In the parable of the unforgiving servant (Matthew 18:21-35), the master showed compassion on the first servant by forgiving his debt. However, the forgiven servant refused to show the same compassion to a fellow servant who owed him a much smaller debt. In the story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37), compassion is seen in the actions of the Samaritan as he rendered life saving aid to a Jew. In another example of compassion, the father of the prodigal son showed compassion towards his rebellious son who had returned home. (Luke 15:11-32)

With an examination of the life of Jesus, you will see examples of His compassion for others. One specific example is found in Matthew 9:36-38. Here is what Matthew recorded: *"But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."* (NKJV) While there were occasions where the illnesses of some inspired the compassion of Jesus, in this particular account, it was their lost spiritual state that compelled Jesus' compassion. These people *"were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd."*

Like Jesus, we too should be moved to compassion when we see the lost of the world. We must look away from ourselves and look toward those who are lost. We must open our eyes and recognize the dire state of the lost. Such realization should motivate laborers for the Lord to work the harvest. Let us become the laborers sent out by the Lord to His harvest.

After developing compassion for the lost, we must direct our hearts to serving the Lord in the area of evangelism. In Matthew 20:26-28, we read where Jesus taught His disciples about true service. Jesus said, *"Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."* (Matthew 20:26-28, NKJV) If we follow the example set by Jesus, then we will recognize the need to become servants.

Becoming a servant requires you to renew your mind. (Romans 12:1-8) According to the inspired writings of Paul, you are to *"present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."* Such a sacrifice must include a heart of service to the Lord. You can accomplish this heart of service by being *"transformed by the renewing of your mind."* That is to say, you must set your mind upon the statutes and standards found within the Word of God. You turn your mind to a life of humble service to the Father in heaven. Paul wrote,

“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.” (Romans 12:3, NKJV) In the context of evangelism, you must humble yourself and set your mind upon serving the Lord through teaching the lost.

Becoming a humble servant of the Lord also requires that you esteem others better than yourself. Paul wrote, *“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, . . .”* (Philippians 2:3-5) While the context of this passage is

addressing the relationship between Christians, the practice of looking out for the interest of others would certainly apply to tending to the needs of those lost in sin. This was the same mind possessed by Christ Jesus when He came to this earth and died on the cross. (Philippians 2:5-11)

Once you develop a heart of service, your next step must be in the direction of personal growth. Through inspiration Peter wrote, *“As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.”* (1 Peter 2:2, NKJV) Personal growth is vital to you serving God, especially in the realm of personal evangelism. You must begin with faith and diligently make additions to your faith. Consider the steps of growth as described by Peter in 2 Peter 1:5-8.

- q You begin with **faith**.
- q To your **faith** you must add **virtue**. (Virtue is excellence of character and courage.)
- q To your **virtue** you must add **knowledge**. (Knowledge is the ability to discern through the right understanding which is gained through the Word of God.)
- q To your **knowledge** you must add **self-control**. (Self-control is the ability to control one's life including the passions and appetites of that life.)
- q To your **self-control** you must add **perseverance**. (Perseverance is the ability to endure patiently the various misfortunes, troubles, trials, and difficulties faced by children of God.)
- q To your **perseverance** you must add **godliness**. (Godliness is the attitude and the way of life lived by those who have true reverence and piety towards God and His Word.)
- q To your **godliness** you must add **brotherly kindness**. (Brotherly kindness is that affection and care shown to those of like precious faith.)
- q To your **brotherly kindness** you must add **love**. (This love is a godly love which is not based upon emotions. This love is to be had for all mankind, both sinner and saved.)

If you will follow this pattern of growth, then you *“will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* (2 Peter 1:8) Your *“knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”*

What Evangelism Requires of You!

Compassion for the lost

A heart of service

Personal growth

Evangelistic effort

will provoke you and direct you in teaching those who are spiritually lost. With such knowledge and application, you will not be unfruitful.

In 2 Peter 3:18, Peter wrote, “*but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. . .*” You can “*grow in the grace and knowledge*” of Jesus Christ by studying His word and living by His word. When you grow in the knowledge of Jesus, you will learn:

- Q His purpose for coming to this earth - to seek and save the lost. (Luke 19:10)
- Q That His desire is for all men to repent and not perish. (2 Peter 3:9)
- Q That He paid the price so that man could be saved. (1 Corinthians 7:22-23; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:14)
- Q Jesus’ teachings, which will help you to equip those who would come to the Lord. (Matthew 28:18-20)
- Q About Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, which resulted in the hope of being resurrected to an eternal life in heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:12-20)

By growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, you will always be reminded of what the Lord desires you to do. You will be reminded of your duty to seek and to save the lost. You will have the proper understanding of how and why you are to be teaching the lost.

Now that you better understand the need for personal growth in the realm of evangelism, you must add effort. In other words, you must get busy trying to teach the lost! You need to put forth evangelistic effort. There is a job to be done and you must do it. Jesus said that the fields “are already white for harvest.” Without the evangelistic effort of men such as Peter, Paul, Stephen, Philip, and many others, the church would not have experienced such tremendous growth in the first century. Without intending to brag, but rather to give credit to God, Paul wrote, “*I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.*” (1 Corinthians 3:6-7, NKJV) That same simple pattern will work today if we will simply work it.

There are at least two New Testament passages which teach that God expects Christians to grow to a point where they can teach the lost. Paul wrote to Timothy, “*And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, **commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.***” (2 Timothy 2:2, NKJV, *emph. added*) Then, in Hebrews 5:12, we read, “***For though by this time you ought to be teachers,** (emph. added) *you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.*” (NKJV) All Christians must study the word of God so that they can grow to the point of bringing the lost to Jesus Christ. Every Christian must put forth evangelistic effort. The eternal state of many souls will be directly affected by whether or not we put forth this life saving effort.*

Quite often, evangelist effort is more productive when two or more people go together. Often times, there are strength in numbers. When Jesus sent out the seventy on the limited commission, He sent them “two by two” into every city. (Luke 10:1) This same pattern and practice will certainly work today.

Let's Turn the World Upside Down

In Acts 17:1-9, the Jews were in an uproar over the success of Paul and Silas in converting the lost to Jesus Christ. The mob attacked the house of Jason hoping to find Paul and Silas. When the mob did not find Paul and Silas, they dragged Jason and some of the brethren to the rulers of the city. The mob accused Jason of harboring those “*who have turned the world upside down.*” (The world was turning upside down religiously speaking. The dominant religion, Judaism, was losing its dominance to Christianity. As far as the Jews were concerned, their world was turning upside.)

The only way we can “turn the world upside down” is by engaging in personal evangelism. Godly men and women must be teaching the word of God to the lost. After the stoning of Stephen, Saul and others began to persecute the church. Because of the persecution, many Christians were scattered. These Christians “*went everywhere preaching the word.*” (Acts 8:1-4) Just like those Christians of the first century, you need to be doing your part to help “turn the world upside down.”

Finding Courage

For some people, one of the hardest things to do is to teach the lost. Sometimes people fear rejection. Other times, some are afraid they do not have enough Bible knowledge. Then there are those who may be afraid of failing and turning someone away from Christ. As a soldier of Christ, you must train yourself to overcome any fear that you may experience. Here are a couple of suggestions to help you find the courage to teach the lost.

- ❑ **Make sure your foundation in Jesus Christ is firm and solid.** You need to strengthen your foundation by sanctifying the Lord God in your heart (1 Peter 3:15) and obeying all the commands of the Lord. (cf. Matthew 7:24-27) You should be able to speak about your salvation with assurance, if you have been living a faithful life. (Hebrews 3:6,14)
- ❑ **Trust in the word of God to do the convicting.** It is your responsibility to teach the lost. Let the word of God, the gospel, do the convicting and the saving. (cf. John 16:7-11; Romans 1:16-17) Do not feel the need to “soften the blow” of the gospel. Do not change the Bible. Do not apologize for the word of God. The word of God is perfect to the converting of the soul. As David wrote in Psalms 19:7, “*The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; . . .*” (NKJV)
- ❑ **Remember: People do not reject you. They reject Jesus and God.** Remember the words of Jesus to His apostles when He said, “*He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.*” (Luke 10:16, NKJV)

You can evangelize. You can teach the lost. The question is this: Will you put forth the necessary faith, growth, and effort required to bring the lost to the saving gospel of Jesus Christ? Jesus was willing to die on the cross for your sins. Now, do your part in making sure the lost find their way to Jesus Christ. Pass the word along!

Ten Questions

1. List the four reasons given in this lesson why you should be the one to spread the good news of salvation. _____

2. Who taught and demonstrated compassion for his followers? _____
3. Did Jesus come to this earth to be served or to serve? _____
4. Who wrote, “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby”? _____
5. According to 2 Peter 3:18, in what are Christians to grow? _____

6. What part did Paul and Apollos play in personal evangelism? _____

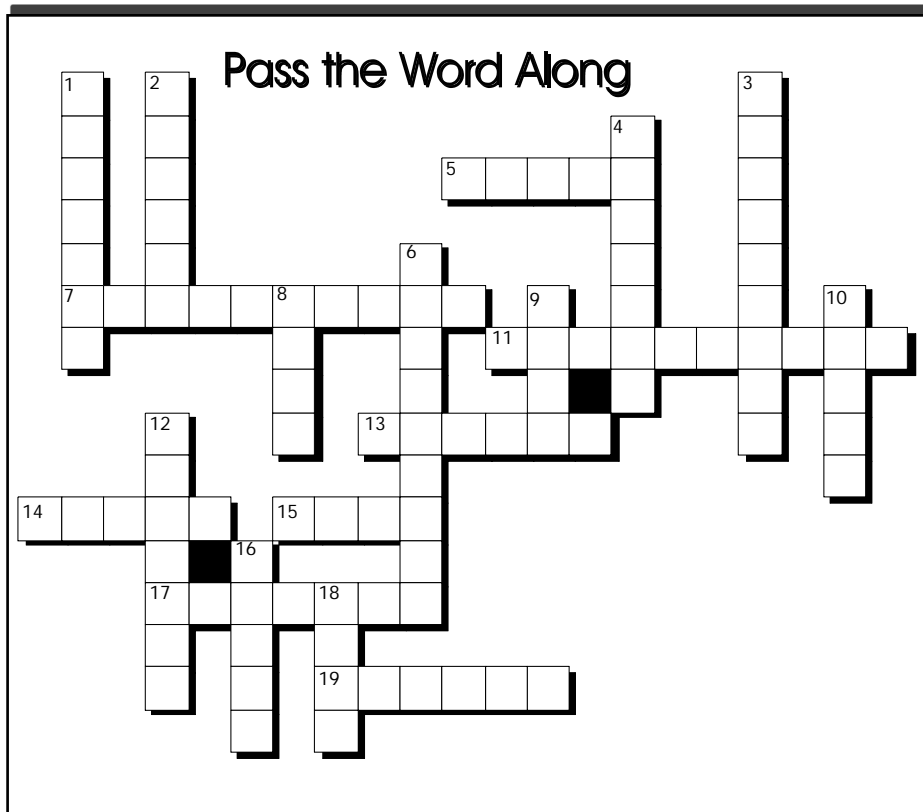
7. What two Bible passages teach that God expects Christians to grow to a point where they can teach the lost? _____
8. Who was accused of turning the world upside down? _____
9. In Acts 8:1-4, what did the Christians do when they were scattered? _____
10. If someone rejects you, whom are they rejecting? _____

True or False

1. T or F : The dire state of the lost should move a Christian to compassion.
2. T or F : Paul wrote, “. . . present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, . . .”
3. T or F : Esteem others better than yourself does not play a part in personal evangelism.
4. T or F : Paul wrote, “. . . But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ . . .”
5. T or F : Evangelistic effort can be more productive with more than one person working.
6. T or F : Bible study is necessary to you preparing yourself for personal evangelism.
7. T or F : Jesus sent out the seventy on the limit commission three by three.
8. T or F : The mob attacked the house of Jason hoping to find Paul and Silas.
9. T or F : Christians should never “soften the blow” of the gospel’s message.
10. T or F : Jesus said, “He who hears you hears Me, . . .”

A Little Fun

(Use the lesson text to answer these questions.)



Across

5. Peter wrote, "but grow in the _____ and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
7. "But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with _____ for them, . . ."
11. ". . . present your bodies a living _____, holy acceptable to God, . . ."
13. ". . . not to think of himself more _____ than he ought to think, . . ."
14. "And the things that you have _____ from me . . ., commit these to faithful men . . ."
15. "For though by this _____ you ought to be teachers, . . ."
17. "I planted, _____ watered, but God gave the increase."
19. Add to your faith _____.

Down

1. "The law of the Lord is _____, converting the soul; . . ."
2. ". . . but in lowliness of mind let each _____ others better than himself . . ."
3. In Acts 8, Christians "went everywhere _____ the word."
4. "As _____ babes, desire the pure milk of the world, that you may grow there-by."
6. Add to your perseverance _____.
8. Jesus came to _____ and save the lost.
9. Who wrote, "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men . . ."
10. "He who hears you _____ Me, he who rejects you rejects me, . . ."
12. ". . . but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your _____ . . ."
16. ". . . who have turned the _____ upside down."
18. Add to your brotherly kindness _____.

Passages in this Lesson

Psalms 19:7	pg 103	Romans 12:3	pg 101
Matthew 7:24-27	pg 103	1 Corinthians 3:5-9	pg 100
Matthew 9:36-38	pg 100	1 Corinthians 3:6-7	pg 102
Matthew 18:21-35	pg 100	1 Corinthians 7:22-23	pg 102
Matthew 20:26-28	pg 100	1 Corinthians 15:12-20	pg 102
Matthew 25:41-46	pg 99	2 Corinthians 5:9-10	pg 99
Matthew 28:18-20	pg 100,102	Galatians 6:10	pg 99
Mark 16:15-16	pg 100	Ephesians 1:14	pg 102
Luke 10:1	pg 102	Ephesians 4:28	pg 99
Luke 10:16	pg 103	Philippians 2:3-5	pg 101
Luke 10:29-37	pg 100	Philippians 2:5-11	pg 101
Luke 15:11-32	pg 100	2 Timothy 2:2	pg 102
Luke 19:10	pg 102	Hebrews 3:6,14	pg 103
John 3:11	pg 99	Hebrews 5:12	pg 102
John 5:28-29	pg 99	Hebrews 9:27	pg 99
John 16:7-11	pg 103	1 Peter 2:2	pg 101
Acts 8:1-4	pg 103	1 Peter 3:15	pg 103
Acts 17:1-9	pg 103	2 Peter 1:5-8	pg 101
Acts 20:28	pg 102	2 Peter 1:8	pg 101
Romans 1:16-17	pg 103	2 Peter 3:9	pg 100,102
Romans 12:1-8	pg 100	2 Peter 3:18	pg 102