

Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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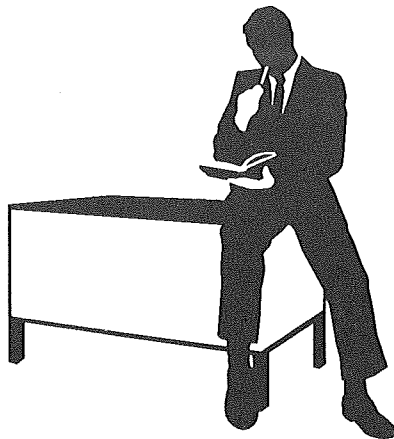
Number 9

THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST

By
Gene E. Stilwell

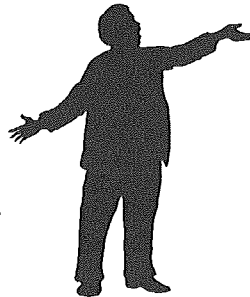
[Gene is one of our instructors. He preaches full time at the Midway Church of Christ, Sarasota, Florida. He has served this congregation both as an elder and preacher. We know you will appreciate his contribution to the school more when you read the article he has submitted. Editor]

The person who has dedicated his life to the proclaiming of God's word is referred to in three different ways in the world: the evangelist, the preacher and the minister. I believe when we look at all three of the names, we can truly get the idea of what the work is of an evangelist or minister.



Studying

When I think of the word evangelist, I think of a missionary first of all; one who travels throughout the world with the message of God. The word "evangelist" in the Greek is defined as a messenger of good, a preacher of the gospel (Acts 21:8); one who proclaims glad tidings and good news. Missionaries are evangelists, as being preachers of the gospel.

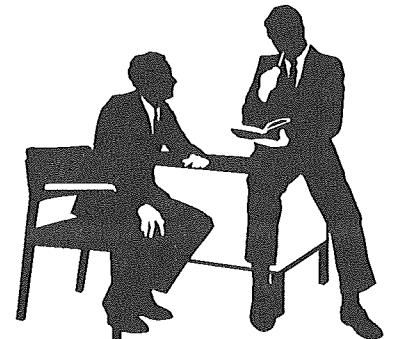


Speaking

Another word used for the evangelist today is "preacher" which Vine defines as "to be a herald, the preacher of the gospel; one who gives a proclamation." Thayer defines kerrusso as "to be a herald, to officiate as a herald; to proclaim after the manner of a herald; always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed."

It has been said that the preacher or evangelist should have three outstanding characteristics: (1) He should have a note of certainty in his voice when he speaks. (2) He should have in his voice the note of authority because he is speaking for the king, announcing the king's commands and the king's decision. (3) His message comes from a source beyond himself; it comes from the king.

We can see these characteristics in the preaching of



Helping

John the Baptizer. He tried to direct men to Christ and not to a loyalty to himself (John 3:28, 30). John also had a ring of certainty in his voice when he told the religious leaders they must bring

forth fruits worthy of repentance (Luke 3:8).

We can also see by the definitions of the words "evangelist" and "preacher" that one of the works of the herald of God is the declaration of a message from the Lord Jesus Christ, designed to save men from sin for an abundant life now, and eternal life with God in heaven.

In order for one to do the work of an evangelist and be effective in proclaiming God's word, he must have certain characteristics as mentioned by Holland: First, He must be converted to Christ. A man who plans to serve Christ must first be converted to Christ. The second of these characteristics of God's man is conviction. The preacher must be convicted of the truth he represents. The lack of conviction will ultimately manifest itself in the preacher's basic indifference toward his work as a gospel preacher. A third characteristic of the preacher of God's word is consecration. The man of God is dedicated to the Lord and His service. A fourth necessary characteristic of the preacher is courage. The faithful preacher must have the courage to reprove and rebuke those whose lives do not conform to God's will. A fifth characteristic of the evangelist is compassion. The preacher must have a deep and strong emotion for the ills of others. Christ was this type of man as He walked on earth and taught others. The last characteristic of God's man is competence. The preacher, in order to have this characteristic, must be industrious, studious, and

therefore, knowledgeable.

The man who is a herald for Jesus Christ, or one who serves as an evangelist, does not proclaim his own message, but preaches the message from the King. We can see now that one of the works of an evangelist is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

When looking for other works of an evangelist, we can look at one of the other names by which an evangelist is called, a minister.

The word diakonos in the Greek is translated "minister" in the New Testament and means one who ministers, serves or attends. It signifies to be a servant, attendant; to wait upon or to minister.

Paul told Timothy he must make full use, or proof, of his ministry (2 Tim. 4:5). The words "make full proof" are the translation of a Greek word which means "to cause a thing to be shown to the full, to carry through to the end, to fully perform". "Ministry" is from a Greek word which speaks of Christian work in general, covering every mode of service. One of the chief temptations of the minister is laziness and neglect. Paul had lived a tremendously active life and was telling Timothy, the minister, this is what is expected of him. A minister's life is fully a life of service to others.

One of the main things the minister becomes to the people is an example (1 Tim. 4:12). He is an example to those who are members of the Lord's church and also to those who are

not. Everything he says must be for the glorification of God to the fullest extent. A minister who does not exhibit a good example will be unable to lead people in the way of truth.

There are many works and responsibilities of a preacher concerning the congregation of the Lord's people where he is located. He actually "labors in word and teaching" (1 Tim. 5:17), but does not have the position of the elders which are mentioned. Let us look now at the preacher's duty to his work, to the church, to the brethren and also to himself. When we have studied these in brief, we will have a very good concept of the true work and responsibility of a Christian evangelist.

An evangelist devotes full time to his work and is supported by the congregation where he labors. This means he helps to develop the church where he works in all phases. Paul told Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5). Generally speaking, this means

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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

that the evangelist must live an exemplary life (1 Tim. 4:12), read, study, and teach the gospel (2 Tim 2:2). Too many times the preacher just doesn't have the time to truly preach the gospel as he should because he has been involved in too many other menial tasks and didn't have time to study. The obligation the preacher has to his work is to study and read so as to be able to commit that gospel to others that they may also teach (2 Tim. 2:2).

A gospel preacher also has specific duties to the church which include: Setting in order anything that is amiss within the congregation (Titus 1:5). This is to be done through the word of God which he has been diligently studying. There is too often the case in the Lord's church where the preacher just sort of conveniently overlooks certain things that are wrong because he doesn't want to hurt anyone. Paul told Timothy he was to rebuke before all those that sin (1 Tim. 5:20). Paul said he had never shunned to declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). The gospel preacher has the responsibility of seeing to it that the church Jesus built on the foundation of His blood is functioning exactly as commanded in the Holy Scriptures, and that it never deviates from that pattern.

The preacher has a tremendous responsibility to those he serves. He is to supplement the work of the elders though not taking over their authority. He is to train leaders and speakers, to stimulate the church in being the radiating center for the gospel, to

help develop all members of the congregation as personal workers, and to teach them the word of God in reference to their daily lives.

The preacher has the responsibility to live as close to the people as he can in order to be available for visiting, teaching and counseling. Our Lord Jesus never refused an audience and

"The work and responsibility of today's preacher is tremendous, and not just everyone is suited or able to do such a work."

was always available when needed. The preacher is a servant of the people and must conduct himself in such manner. Jesus said he came to minister, not to be ministered unto (Mt. 20:28). The gospel preacher needs to realize his role within the church and be responsible accordingly. The word "minister means to be a servant; a servant to God and to his saints."

Paul also told the young preacher Timothy that he had a responsibility to himself. This dealt with his own personal conduct. Notice what he said: "Take heed to thyself and unto doctrine" (1 Tim. 4:6) He was also told to "exercise thyself unto godliness" (1 Tim 4:7).

The evangelist has a tremendous task in keeping himself up to par as far as his personal life is concerned.

Everyone who does so is to be "loved for his works' sake." His influence for good is invaluable, and the eternal results of his work will be known only to God.

The work and responsibility of today's preacher is tremendous, and not just everyone is suited or able to do such a work. Paul told Timothy to "fight the good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6:12). He also told him to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5). He never told him it would be easy, only that it needed to be done. We have the same challenge delivered to us today and not just everyone can "do the work of an evangelist."



THIRTY YEAR ANNIVERSARY 1999

You may have already received news about some of the things we have planned for 1999. This will be the Thirty Year Anniversary of *The Florida School of Preaching*.

We want you to be informed and to be a part of the major events of next year.

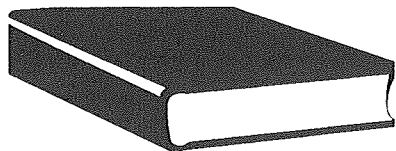
History

Brother B.C. Carr has just completed a chapter for the 1999 Lectureship (January 1999) in which he takes us through the developing years of the school. You will better understand the school and its present status by reading this chapter.

Lectureship

The Lectureship book will have special sections to enhance the significance of this publication and

to make you want to have this special edition. The theme for 1999 is—



**“What Does It Mean
To Be
A Christian Like Paul?”**

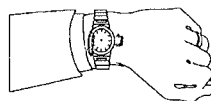
Today there is much emphasis about the “roots” of religious organizations. I received a call from a Christian Church Preacher recently asking about the “Stone Campbell Movement” and my evaluation of it. My feelings are direct and simple. Stone and Campbell are not the foundation of my religion. The New Testament is the only reliable foundation for true religion. By a look at Paul we may better appreciate our roots and help others to do the same.

The Lectureship Book will be dedicated to brother and sister B.C. Carr.

**Anniversary
Watch**

We are in communication with a company that prepares our popular Day Calendars and Pins. They prepare an anniversary watch that will have a face that will have the statement, “Thirty Year

Anniversary, Florida School of Preaching.” The order form states that these “3-hand quartz-movement watches feature a genuine leather band and alloy case and are a brilliant way to mark the occasion. We’ll [the manufacturer, JMS] custom imprint each face in gold with your anniversary, the date and the name of your company. Custom-fitted gold gift box included.” The watches come both in a women and men’s style.



The price should be no more than \$20.00 per watch. We are receiving orders for the watches now. They should be here before the year ends so that they will be available for the entire year of 1999. These could be used as gifts. I plan to purchase a number of these for my family, why not do the same.

These could be worn with appreciation and advertise the school for years to come. If you have not expressed your interest in these, do so soon that you might be included in the order.

You may write or call the school indicating your interest. The watches will not need to be paid for until you pick them up near the end of 1998.

**Anniversary
Banquet**

The Year will end with the annual appreciation banquet. This will be the grand finale for the year. It will be in October of 1999. It should be an event that any person interested in the Florida School of Preaching would want to attend.



Much has happened in the Lord’s church in the last thirty years. Some efforts at training preachers have not succeeded. The role of preaching is depreciated in some circles and truth is compromised in others. Some efforts that were begun have ceased to be.

It is not easy to operate a training school for preachers totally on free-will offerings. Our student aid alone each month is between \$9,000.00 and \$10,000.00. We must continue to raise funds for daily operation of the school as well.

Men from foreign countries require assistance and you have come to our rescue time and again. Every good word you speak for us pays dividends. For all your support and encouragement, we remain humble and indebted.



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