

Winning Souls to Christ!!!

Proverbs 11:30 ...he that winneth souls is wise.

Winning [Hebrew *laqach*, to take or win souls to Christ is the lifelong responsibility of the Lord's churches and all Christians. Zeal in soul winning must be according to knowledge. Both the message and methods must be in agreement with God's Holy Word, the Bible. Soul winners take souls to Christ by their fruits of faithful living, words of testimony, and compassion for others.

I. The Great Soul Winning Commission was given by Jesus to churches. The first church was gathered together in Galilee and was commissioned by Jesus: Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

A. The Great Soul Winning Commission is a church commission as shown by the assembly which was present. *Matthew 28:16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.*

1. The Great Soul Winning Commission was given to the first church which was initially comprised of the apostles. *I Cor. 12:28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles...*

2. The Great Soul Winning Commission extends to all churches descended from this first church as shown by:

- a. Jesus' promise of His abiding presence.** *Matthew 28:20 ...lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*
- b. Jesus' promise of perpetuity to his kind of church (assembly).** *Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

B. Every Christian should be a soul winner. The soul winner should witness as a faithful member of one of the Lord's churches. Free-lance, non-submissive, unaccountable evangelism is not supported by Scripture. Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were

added unto them about three thousand souls...

47 ...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

1. Christians violate God's methods of evangelism when they are not church members, or when they are members of man-made organizations that may call themselves churches. Such Christians will be accountable for not obeying God's Word. I Corinthians 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built there upon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

2. God's Word will never go out void. Isaiah 55:11 So shall my [the LORD'S] word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

a. Christians who present the gospel message but who do not follow God's methods are like a man who visits a sick friend in the hospital and drives through yards, runs red lights, and endangers others as he goes to the hospital. When he gets to the hospital, he does encourage his friend; how ever, he disobeys the laws on the way, endangers others, and will be arrested when caught! II Timothy 2:5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

b. Christians who witness but who do not follow God's rules will be accountable for disobedience before the judgment seat of Christ. Romans 14:10 ...for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

C. All Christians should help in soul winning. Christians must warn of God's coming judgment, and warn that the wicked way leads to eternal hell.

1. Ezekiel 33:8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

2. Daniel 12:3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

II. Winning souls to Christ encompasses (1) justification, (2) sanctification, and (3) glorification.

A. Justification is the satisfaction (*propitiation*) of God's justice whereby the sinner is **saved (justified, declared just) from the penalty of sin.** In justification, God's justice is paid (*satisfied*) and can never again condemn the saved sinner to eternal hell. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

1. The soul winner receives a great blessing if he is witnessing to a lost sinner at the moment of new birth. At that instant, the sinner cries out in faith to Jesus. *John 3:3 ...Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God... 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

2. The true witness points souls to Jesus. *Proverbs 14:25 A true witness delivereth souls... John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

B. Sanctification is the setting aside of a soul unto God and a life of holiness. When a lost sinner is justified (born again), he is set aside unto God but his daily life must also be **saved (sanctified, set aside) from the power of sin** as evidenced by sinful practices. Soul winning does not stop at justification. The soul winner now must set an example in word and deed that converts (turns) the believer from sinful actions in his daily life.

1. If the soul winner turns (converts) an erring believer from his sin, that soul winner has won (saved) that believer (brother) from losing his physical life by death, and has helped stop a multitude of sins from being committed. *James 5:19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; 20 Let*

him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

2. If a believer (brother) continues in sin or grievously sins, he will lose his physical life due to his sin unto death. *I John 5:16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.*

a. Samson sinned unto death by continuing to rebel against God (Judges 16:28-31). We know that Samson is a believer (brother) because he is listed with the heroes who obtained a good report through faith (*Hebrews 11:32-39*).

b. The Corinthian believer sinning through fornication was to be dismissed from the church and would have died if he had continued in rebellion and not repented. *I Cor. 5:4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

c. Dismissal by the Corinthian church caused this sinful member to repent and be restored as a church member to the saving of his physical life. *II Cor. 2:6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. 7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. 8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love to ward him.*

C. Glorification is the future act of God whereby the saved sinner in heaven will have a body like that of Christ and be completely **saved (glorified, perfected) from the presence of sin.** The soul winner leads others in the peaceful life of waiting and looking for fulfillment of this wonderful promise. *Philippians 3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

III. The soul winner must use the whole counsel of

God to present the gospel. The gospel brings men to beg pardon of the Holy God. Soul winning examples include the following:

- A. The gospel begins with God and His glory.
1. When Je sus met the Sa mar i tan woman at Ja cob's well, He taught her that God is a Spirit to be wor shipped in truth. *John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that wor ship him must wor ship him in spirit and in truth.*
 2. When Paul addressed the heathen on Mars Hill, he taught the character of God. *Acts 17:23 For as I passed by, and beheld your de vot ions, I found an al tar with this in scrip tion, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him de clare I unto you.*
 3. Paul preached a thorough theology, not a few easy steps to sal va tion. Paul exalted God as
 - a. The Cre ator: *Acts 17:24 God that made the world and all things therein, see ing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in tem ples made with hands.*
 - b. The Sustainer of all life: *Acts 17:25 Neither is wor shipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, see ing he giv eth to all life, and breath, and all things.*
 - c. The Mighty One who raised Je sus from the dead: *Acts 17:30 And the times of this ig no rance God winked at; but now commandeth all men ev ery where to re pent: 31 Be cause he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath or dained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*
- B. The gospel tells men that they have offended the Holy God Who will not ig nore their sin. *Mark 10:18 ...there is none good but one, that is, God. Ex o dus 34:7 ...that will by no means clear the guilty.*
1. *Lost sinners must know that God is Holy, hates sin, and is angry with the sinner. Romans 9:13 As it is written, Jacob have I [God] loved, but Esau have I hated.* To tell the lost sin ner that God loves them and has a won der ful plan for their life is mis lead ing. If they remain unsaved, God's plan of hell is not won der ful for them.
 2. The law of God must be preached until the sinner is slain and convicted thereby. *Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God... 7:11 For sin, tak ing oc cas ion by the com mand ment, de ceived me, and by it slew me... 14 For we*

know that the law is spiritual: but I am car nal, sold un der sin.

- C. The gos pel shows sin ners that the only hope of sal va tion is the grace and power of the Holy God.
1. The lost sin ner must re pent. *Repent* means to change his mind about whatever the sinner trusts and trust Christ alone.
 - a. To accept Christ as Savior is an empty phrase unless the sinner has true repen tance. *Mark 6:12 And they went out, and preached that men should re pent.*
 - b. Paul sum ma rized his life of soul win ning as preaching repentance which is shown by faith ful works. *Acts 26:20 But shewed first unto them of Da mas cus, and at Je ru sa lem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should re pent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.*
 - c. Sin ners must aban don the for mer life of sin to walk in the righ teous ness of Christ. Con fessing of sins is not enough, the sinner must part with sin or part with the Savior. *Proverbs 28:13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Luke 14:33 So like wise, who so ever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he can not be my dis ci ple.*
 2. Repentance and faith occur together as shown by Paul's summary of his sermons. *Acts 20:20 And how I kept back noth ing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, re pen tance to ward God, and faith to ward our Lord Je sus Christ.*
 - a. The new birth gives the dead sinner new life in Christ. *Ephe sians 2:1 And you hath he quick ened, who were dead in tres passes and sins.*
 - b. Faith is the act of a heart quick ened (made alive) by the power of God. *Ephe sians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Je sus unto good works, which God hath be fore or dained that we should walk in them.*
 - c. Repentance is the act of a sinner who has received the gift of spiritual life. Repen tance is also a gift of God. *II Tim. 2:24 And*

the ser vant of the Lord must not strive; but be gen tle unto all men, apt to teach, pa tient, 25 In meekness instructing those that op pose them selves; if God per ad ven ture will give them repen tance to the ac know ledg ing of the truth; 26 And that they may recover them selves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken cap tive by him at his will.

3. Believing and obeying are in se pa rable char ac ter istics of the saved sinner.
 - a. Jesus will not be Savior to any man who does not bow to Him as Lord. *Luke 6:46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? I John 2:4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his com mand ments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*
 - b. Faith is fol low ing Christ, not sim ply agree ment to a series of facts. *James 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith with out works is dead?*
- D. The gos pel re veals that only the Holy Spirit can give the sinner assurance that he is truly a Christian. *I John 3:24 ...And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*
 1. The Word of God gives a repentant sinner assurance that he is born again and now a child of God. *I John 5:13 These things have I writ ten unto you that be lieve on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eter nal life, and that ye may be lieve on the name of the Son of God.*
 2. The soul win ner must not try to con vince a sinner that he is a Christian for that is the work of the Holy Spirit. *II Cor. 13:5 Ex am ine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be rep ro bates? Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the chil dren of God.*

IV. Winning souls in daily life.

- A. Pray for friends, ask ing God to con vict them of their sins. God may use your prayers to bring about the sal va tion of your friends. *Mark 2:5 When Je sus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be for given thee.*
- B. Be a living example who points others to the Christ-like life. *Mat thew 5:16 Let your light so shine be fore men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*
- C. Win your fam ily to Christ by your daily tes ti mony. *II Tim o thy 3:15 And that from a child*

thou hast known the holy scrip tures, which are able to make thee wise unto sal va tion through faith which is in Christ Je sus. I Pe ter 3:1 Like wise, ye wives, be in subjec tion to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may with out the word be won by the con ver sa tion of the wives.

V. Win souls to Christ by in vit ing all to hear the Word of God that is preached and taught in your church.

- A. There are no short-cuts to soul win ning. A few Scrip tures usually are not suf fi cient to bring a soul to Christ. Chris tians must tes ti fy to all the truth of the gospel. This requires the thorough preaching and teaching of God's Word. *Romans 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not be lieved? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?... 17 So then faith com eth by hear ing, and hear ing by the word of God.*
- B. Take friends to Sunday School and church ser vices. Your presence in one of the Lord's churches on the first day of the week (the Lord's day) wit nesses to the res ur rec tion of Je sus Christ and shows others that Jesus is alive today!! *Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the as sem bling of our selves to gether, as the man ner of some is; but exhorting one an other: and so much the more, as ye see the day ap proach ing.*
1. Going on or ga nized church and per sonal vis i ta tions to oth ers is an im por tant part of soul win ning as shown in the ex am ple of the great supper. *Luke 14:23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the high ways and hedges, and com pel them to come in, that my house may be filled.*
 2. To fill God's house is to fill His church. *I Tim o thy 3:15 ...that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to be have thy self in the house of God, which is the church of the liv ing God, the pil lar and ground of the truth.*

VI. The soul winner's labor is not in vain. Isaiah 6:11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he an swered, Until the cities be wasted without in hab it ant, and the houses with out man, and the land be utterly desolate. I Cor. 15:58 ...be ye stedfast, unmoveable, al ways abound ing in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your la bour is not in vain in the Lord. II Tim. 2:10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also ob tain the sal va tion which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

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