

Sunday Morning Message

November 4, 2018

Pictures of Soulwinning in Luke's Gospel

Topics – soulwinning; compassion; compelling

Text – Various Passages from Luke's Gospel

Congregational Reading – Luke 19:9 - 10

Introduction

Throughout the Bible there are encouragements to the child of God to influence the world around him with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Simply put, we cannot get away from the fact that we are commander to preach the hope of salvation to every person on planet earth. As a New Testament church, we do this through organized outreach programs such as churchwide visitation, the bus ministry, the various programs that we have at senior care facilities, and also simply through inviting our friends and family to church. We also participate in a worldwide missions program, wherewith we send our monies to ministries throughout the world who are doing pretty much the same thing that we are doing here.

Each one of the four gospel accounts – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – remind us of our responsibility to share our faith with others:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 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." (Matthew 28:19-20)

*"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
(Mark 16:15)*

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." (John 20:23)

"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." (Luke 24:46-48)

Luke also records in his historical account of the early church in the Book of Acts Jesus' words just before He ascended up into Heaven.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

The message throughout the New Testament is:

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10)

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Timothy 1:15)

Jesus wants everyone to know that He loves them:

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

*"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
(Romans 5:8)*

Our job is to communicate that love to the lost world around us – to people who have not yet experienced the love of Christ, by telling them that Jesus died for them.

We are currently reading through Luke's Gospel in our daily devotions, and we have just begun a series of studies on Wednesday evenings, going through the Gospel of Luke verse-by-verse. As I have been immersing myself in Luke's writings, it struck me how often the theme of soulwinning repeats itself throughout both the Book of Luke and the Book of Acts.

For instance, in Luke 19:1 – 6, we have the story of Zacchaeus. This is somewhat similar to the story of the Woman at the Well in John 4. Jesus is travelling through the town of Jericho, and though there are multitudes of people crowding around him, there was one man, a tax collector, who was really interested in meeting Jesus.

Read Luke 19:1 – 10

Practical Point – I wonder how many people like Zacchaeus there are within the multitudes that we come in contact with every day. People who may not, on the surface, seem to be interested in God, but when presented with Jesus, they receive Him and allow Him to radically transform their lives.

Luke's gospel is full of soulwinning stories, but it is also replete with pictures or illustrations that teach about God's heart toward lost people.

On Thursday morning, we read Luke 14 – 16 and it amazed me that in all three of those chapters there is a soul winning illustration. I understand that the proper interpretations of these passages does not primarily involve the New Testament Church and winning people to Christ, but they picture God's heart toward those that do not know Him. I think you will be able to see the practical application.

1 In chapter 14 I see the **Compelling** of the soul winner. (Luke 14:16 – 24)

"And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." (Luke 14:23)

I have noticed that we have gotten to the point in our soul winning presentations that we are almost apologizing for bothering people. If you got word that there was an explosive device about to detonate in your neighbor's house, would you apologize for bothering them? No, you would compel them to leave the house immediately. We need to take our soul winning presentations up another notch: we need to go beyond mere bidding (inviting) and start

compelling people to trust Christ. I think our problem is that we deep down inside really don't believe it all, or we really don't believe time is running out.

2 In Chapter 15, I see the **Compassion** of the soul winner. Chapter 15 is also about lost things that need to be found. There is a lost sheep and a lost coin, and then a lost son. (Luke 15:1 – 24)

“And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.” (Luke 15:20)

The father had the right attitude. He was longing for the return of the son. He was ready to receive him whenever he “came to himself”. The older brother, on the other hand, had the wrong attitude. He was not too excited about the reconciling of the younger brother to the father. He was perfectly content keeping the situation as it was. After all, the younger brother didn't deserve another chance. He made his bed, and now he should have to sleep in it. Is that your attitude toward the lost soul that desperately needs Christ, or the wandering saint that needs to come back. We need to have compassion on people. We need to love them as Jesus loves them.

3 In chapter 16, I see the **Consequences** of not soul winning. (Luke 16:19 – 31)

“And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house—for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’” (Luke 16:27 & 28)

Now I cannot to be sure that the rich man had no man in his lifetime that attempted to reach him, but let's assume that he did not. What a shame that not only this man, but also his five brothers will spend eternity in Hell because of a lack of soul winning. Let me remind you, they are without excuse. God's law was written in their hearts; they could see God in creation; and there were synagogues on every corner just as there are churches on every corner today. But how much better were his chances for salvation had somebody had compassion on him and attempted to compel him to be saved.

Conclusion

We have seen very clearly this morning that winning souls is very important to the Lord. We get involved in a lot of things here at the church, but everything we do needs to surround the practice of loving people and reaching them with the gospel.

Practical Point – What are you doing to reach the people that you love with the message of salvation?

Have you invited them to church?

Have you witnessed to them?

Have you lived a godly testimony in front of them? Is your life consistent with your message?

Have you given them a gospel tract or some other literature that will help them?

Have you prayed for them?