

18. Isn't this your job, too?

October 21, 2007

When a person get a job, the first thing that person is told is a job description he is supposed to perform. If he follows through this job description well, he will be recognized as a good employee. But if he doesn't, either he can be fired or reprimanded.

Have you ever thought about your job description as a born-again Christian? What are you supposed to do? What kind of work does our Lord Jesus Christ want you to accomplish before you go to heaven? How are you going to do that?

This morning we are going to see Jesus giving commissions to seventy of His followers to do the very thing we just talked about. Let's learn from Him.

A. THE HARVEST IS FULL, BUT...

Luke 10:1-3 After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. 2 Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. 3 Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves.

This event should not be confused with the sending out of the Twelve in chapter 9. There are similarities in the charges given, but this is to be expected since both groups were sent by the same Master to do the same basic job. The 12 Apostles ministered throughout Galilee, but these men were sent into Judea, and the men in this chapter are not called Apostles. They were unknown disciples.

Speaking of a job description as a Christian, one of them is spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to non-believers.

Matthew 28:19-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

However, the majority of Christians think that telling others about Jesus Christ is a part of job descriptions of pastors, elders, deacons or evangelists only. They think that they don't have to do it. Or they are scared to do it.

Instead of praying for someone to evangelize to the people who don't know Jesus, all of us should pray that the Lord uses us to do that job. As a matter of fact, we should be eager to do so like Isaiah did.

Isaiah 6:8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."

In reality, there are three known fears why Christians do not talk about their faith to others:

1) Fear of public speaking

According to the Gallop Poll, the fear of public speaking exceeds the fear of death in the majority people's mind. God is not telling all of us to do public speaking like Billy Graham, rather one on one table talk to someone you know.

2) Fear of rejection

Here is another fear. "What if they don't want to receive Christ?", "What if she reject what I tell her?" Since nobody wants to be rejected, this would be a well-founded fear. I don't either, but I don't want anyone to miss out an opportunity to know Jesus as his or her Savior and Lord. That is why I invite people to receive Jesus into their hearts at the end of almost every service.

3) Fear of ignorance

However, the real fear for the most Christians is based on their lack of knowledge of the Bible. The vast majority of them don't crack their Bibles until they bring them to the church on Sunday. More and more churches that use overhead projection like we do, display respective Bible verses on the screens so that people think it is not necessary to bring their Bible to church. Hello?

They don't know how to lead people to Christ because they are not prepared and they don't know the Scripture as they should.

In spite of our general objections, the Lord Jesus Christ gives a commission to all of us. Let me repeat it once again, "TO ALL OF US." That means that there is not one exception..everyone should spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to those who cross our paths.

Here is a simple step you can utilize to tell them about Jesus. Yes, it takes a little bit of your effort to memorize the Scriptures. If you can memorize a song lyrics, this would be a cake walk.

1) Let the non-believer realize that not everyone goes to heaven.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

2) Let the person know that our good work will not meet God's standard.

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

3) Let that person know the result of his or her sin, but the gift of God is eternal life.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

4) Let him or her know that Jesus is the Way to heaven.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

5) Let him or her know the reason why God prepared all this.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

6) Let that person accept Christ into his or her heart by committing one's life.

Romans 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Another very important thing in witnessing is your own testimony. It may not be polished or win a Pulitzer's award for literacy. But it is a living proof of what Jesus has done in your life when your life can reflect the change.

If you get a rejection, that is a OK. Because you did what the Lord led you to do.

1 Corinthians 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

V3 is a rather sobering verse for those who serve the Lord. Anyone who takes Jesus Christ seriously becomes the target of the devil, but most of Christians do not give satan enough trouble to arouse his opposition. However, the blessings from the Lord are so much more than all the harassments we would get from satan.

B. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR THEIR MINISTRY

Luke 10:4-9 Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. 5 But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' 6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. 7 And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. 8 Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. 9 And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

1) Depend on the Lord, not people, nor things.

Our survival depends on the Lord, not on things nor on people we meet along the way. In Jesus' culture, greetings were lengthy and more like visits, which could really eat away at a person's time, energy and focus. There is an urgency in God's work, we have very little time left before the soon coming Lord.

2) Distribute the peace of God, not men's.

By the selfish nature of men, we cannot keep man-made peace all the time, because someone will eventually get upset for something. But the peace of God will exceed anyone's expectation all the time. Our Prince of Peace Jesus Christ is whom the people truly need.

3) Trust the Lord to provide what you need.

In light of the corruption accusation against Richard Roberts, the President of Oral Roberts University, all of Christians should be above reproach, especially in the eyes of non-believers. I've seen one too many Christian leaders abused their positions for personal financial gain.

V7 through v9 bring out an important point to any church congregation. Some Christians think that to keep their pastor humble, they have to keep him broke. In addition to that, the majority of the church congregation thinks that the pastor's salary should be paid by someone other than them. These are two main reasons why more than half of the pastors in America live below the poverty level. I say, "Pay pastors the amount needed for a decent living." Please let me make this clear, this doesn't apply to me, because I get paid enough from our church with the Lord and our church board's approval. Besides, I have two other jobs.

C. HANDLING THE REJECTIONS

Luke 10:10-16 But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 11 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.' 12 But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city. 13 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than

for you. 15 And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. 16 He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.”

God doesn't expect us to dispense His judgment to those who reject His invitation. He'll take care of places like Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum – places where the people turned up their noses at the offer of God's kingdom.

The point is this: Don't take it personally when people reject God's message. He's the One they're criticizing. Shake the harsh words off your feet like dust, and move to a more receptive person.

More often than not, people reject Jesus because of our own obnoxious manner and "Holier-Than-Thou" attitude. Non-believers are not saved, but they are not stupid. If they see that we love them and care about their souls, they would be open next time when we approach them with the Word of God again.

D. THE JOY IN THE SERVICE TO GOD

Luke 10:17-20 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

How exciting it must have been! These seventy had an authority that directly came from Jesus over the spiritual and physical realms. But the Lord cautioned them and us that the true joy should be in Jesus, not what happens around our lives.

What did Jesus mean when He said this in v18? The Bible actually mentions four falls of Satan.

- 1) **From glorified to profane** – Ezekiel 28:14-16, Isaiah 14:12-15
- 2) **From having access to heaven to restriction to the earth** – Job 1:12, 1 Kings 22:21, Zechariah 3:1, Revelation 12:9
- 3) **From the earth to bondage in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years** – Revelation 20:1-3
- 4) **Out of the pit a short while, but to the lake of fire** – Revelation 20:10

In this case, it would be the first one. Satan is a conquered enemy, and when we act in the name of Jesus, victory is assured.

Some people get "drunk" on the idea of spiritual power and miracle. After God uses them in some special way, they have an arrogance as if the power and miracle happened to have something to do with themselves. There is only One person for us to boast about. His name is Jesus.

E. A TRUE REASON TO REJOICE

Luke 10:21-24 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. 22 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." 23 Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which

see the things you see; 24 for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it."

The Son of God was genuinely excited here for what the Father did:

- 1) **He didn't reveal this plan to the superior class people, but common people.**
- 2) **His unity with the Father**
- 3) **Including the ones who put their trust in Him**

Out of the millions and millions of people throughout history, these twelve men were selected to see the Son of God up close, to perform miracles in His name, to hear His most intimate words. These are things about which the greatest of prophets and kings of the Old Testament only dreamed.

We are privileged as well, because we can personally know the incarnate and resurrected Christ through the Word of God, the Bible. For this reason, the poorest follower of Jesus is richer by far than the wealthiest king of this world.

F. APPLICATIONS

- 1) **We should consider it as our utmost honor and privilege to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to the people around us, rather than a drag.**
- 2) **When we step out and do what Jesus tells us to do, we should expect that He would bless us with even more than He told us to expect.**