

How Jesus Reached the Lost

Lesson 3: Does God Call All Believers to be Evangelists?

OR

Does God Distinguish Between the Work of Called Servants and of Laypeople?

1. Jesus clearly spoke these words to His apostles, thus to His called servants:

^{ESV} **Matthew 28:18** And Jesus came and said to them [*the eleven disciples*], “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ **teaching them** to observe all that I have commanded you....”

2. Does the Bible make a distinction between the *twelve disciples* and *other disciples*?

^{ESV} **Acts 6:2** ...the twelve [disciples] summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.”

- i. Apostles are oftentimes called disciples.
- ii. Others, besides the apostles, are referred to as disciples: ^{ESV} **Luke 6:13** And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles...
- iii. All apostles are disciples, but not all disciples are apostles.

3. How does the NT use the term evangelist(s)?

- a. ^{ESV} **Acts 21:8** On the next day we departed and came to Caesarea, and we entered the house of Philip the **evangelist**, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him.
 - i. One of seven men who were chosen to assist the apostles in caring for the physical needs of the people (Acts 6:1-6).
 - ii. The same Philip from Acts chapter 8 who was used by the Lord to teach and baptize the Ethiopian eunuch (vv. 26-39).
- b. ^{ESV} **Ephesians 4:11** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the **evangelists**, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

So all of the positions listed in v. 11 were given to accomplish the purposes stated in v. 12.
- c. ^{ESV} **2 Timothy 4:5** As for you [*Timothy*], always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an **evangelist**, fulfill your ministry. // So what is the work of an evangelist?
 - i. ^{ESV} **2 Timothy 4:1** I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

- ii. So the work of an evangelist is to do the work of those who are called and trained to serve in particular positions within the Church as noted in Ephesians 4:11.

4. This passage identifies God's work of reconciliation for everyone:

^{ESV} 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us [Paul, Timothy, and the believers in Corinth] to himself...

Dr. Kretzmann: "This reconciliation was brought about by Christ for all men, by His vicarious work; it is a historical fact." (NT II:192)

5. This passage moves into the work of God's called servants:

...and [God] gave us [Paul, Timothy, and all called servants] the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Dr. Kretzmann: "And now the second act of God's mercy comes into consideration, namely, that he has given to the apostle and his fellow-workers, to the ministers of the Gospel at all times, the ministry of the reconciliation, He has entrusted to them the office of proclaiming the fact of the reconciliation of all men, the fact that God is actually reconciled to all men through Christ." (NT II:192)

6. There is a definite distinction between *called servants* and *laypeople*, regarding their use of God's Word:

^{ESV} **Colossians 4:3** ...pray also for us [Paul and Timothy], that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison-- ⁴ that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. ⁵ Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶ Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

- i. Called servants *initiate and proclaim*: Paul asked the believers in Colossae to pray for him and Timothy in their speaking of God's Word.
- ii. Laypeople live *for Christ and in readiness to answer*: Paul instructed them to "walk in wisdom," use "gracious" speech, be ready to answer each person.

7. Within the context of how all believers are to respond when persecuted, the Bible speaks of the need of every believer to be ready to kindly defend what he / she believes:

^{ESV} **1 Peter 3:13** Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them [who want to harm you], nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy [because He is our only Savior, the One for whom we live], **always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you**; yet do it with gentleness and respect [thus having compassion upon those who do not yet know Jesus as Savior], ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

Therefore, God *does* distinguish between the work of called servants and of laypeople. The called servants, as part of their calling, must proclaim God's Word; however, for laypeople, they should grow in the Word, live for Christ, and be ever-ready to tell those who ask them about their Savior!