



The Good News

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Personally Evangelizing

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This Sunday and next Sunday we will be studying Mormonism and Millennialism. This being the case, I thought it an opportune time to write an article discussing the subject of evangelism. After all, why spend time studying these concepts if we aren't going to try to teach our friends and neighbors? So what does personal evangelism mean to you? Is it that stuff that the preacher is supposed to do? Is it that vague and abstract concept that has never been specifically defined for you? If so, let us try to make it less vague and abstract in our minds.

Consider a definition of evangelism: *"The zealous preaching and advocacy of the gospel."* Notice the key words *"zealous"* and *"preaching"* and ask yourself where in the Bible we find this concept is required of Christians. Of course, we can look at Paul or Peter and see *"zealous advocating of the Gospel"* from them, but they were apostles and preachers. Where do we find that we, as everyday Christians, are commanded to *"personally evangelize"*? Consider the spirit with which we are to serve God in **Rom. 12:11**, *"not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord,"* Notice keywords *"diligence"*, *"fervent"*, and *"serving"*. In what ways can we diligently and fervently serve the Lord? Serving suggests that we are obeying what God has said and might also serve the purpose of God's plan to save souls. While abstaining from sin helps us, it doesn't necessarily help further God's plan. Worshipping God doesn't necessarily help further His plan either. So, what does? We often talk about and pray about spreading the borders of God's Kingdom. We read in multiple places that we are to let our example *"so shine before men"* (**Mt. 5:16**) that others may eventually become Christian's themselves. Being a godly example is a byproduct of a godly person, but it is also valuable in our efforts to *"spread the borders of the Kingdom"*. Why did the early church spread the way it did? Yes, we understand the driving force behind it was persecution, but the saints could have spread out and kept quiet, not risking detection by the Jews. But we learn

in **Acts 11:19** that ordinary saints, not just Spirit-filled men, were traveling far and wide *"preaching the word"*. We learn in **I Thess. 1:2-3** that the Thessalonian saints were involved in a *"work of faith"*, and a *"labor of love"*. This *"work"* and *"labor"* was certainly not limited or confined to just the brethren, but towards all in Thessalonica. In **Acts 18** we learn of three individuals who were involved in personal evangelism. We learn that Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos aside privately and *"explained to him the way of God more accurately"* (**Acts 18:26**). We learn that Apollos then turned to the Jews and attempted to teach them. Seen throughout the New Testament is the understanding that personal evangelism isn't just some abstract or vague action that just preachers are supposed to be involved in, but rather a very real and concrete practice in which all Christians are to be involved. This involvement is found both in the example we set and what we teach. It's a part of our service to God, and we are to take part diligently and fervently.

Remember, evangelism is the *"zealous preaching and advocacy of the Gospel"*. So, in what ways can I *"personally evangelize"* and advocate the Gospel? By standing up for truth in the workplace or school; by informing friends and family of what the Bible actually says versus what they have been told it says; even simply inviting people to a Gospel meeting, worship service, or Bible study advocates the Gospel and identifies you as a Christian to others.

Therefore, as we learn more about Mormonism and Millennialism today and next Sunday, let's seriously consider ways that we can put this knowledge to work by talking to our friends and neighbors who perhaps have asked questions about these concepts. Let's aim to please our God by diligently and fervently serving Him *"acceptably with reverence and godly fear"* (**Heb. 12:28**), showing love for the lost souls around us who desperately need the truth of the Gospel shown to them.