

Evangelism Part 1
9-8-13

When the first Pilgrims arrived to form the Plymouth Colony, they believed that it would survive by the collective efforts of the community. However, with about six months, half of the colonists had died, and it was clear that the effort was a failure. The new governor (the old had died too) William Bradford realized that the people needed to be about their own work, rather than the community work. He broke the community gardens into family gardens. That year, no one starved.

This is an illustration of a problem that is both in the world (denominations) and even in the brotherhood. We will call it (for the sake of this lesson) corporate religion, and define it as follows:

Corporate religion: spiritual identity is in a church

Personal religion: spiritual identity is personal

The Bible teaches personal religion, not corporate.

Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

Galatians 6:4-5 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load.

James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Christianity is personal accountability

Matthew 3:9 "And do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones."

Ezekiel 18:4 "The soul who sins shall die"

This is a lesson about personal work. We need to determine that the greatest work that can be accomplished is not by the church, but by the individual Christian. The church has authority to work in certain areas, but that is not the same things as saying it has supremacy, effectiveness, or preference. As Paul told Timothy, it is better for works (in the case of I Tim. 5, benevolence) to be done by the individual, and the church is the last resort.

Simply stated, if we leave evangelism to the church, we will starve to death.

First, we need to understand the Lord's work. Too many think like denominations, that the "Lord's work" is the prevue of a few "called" people. ALL Christians are "called"!

1 Corinthians 1:9, 7:22 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son,For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave.

Romans 1:67 Among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Called for what? For the works that the church too is called to do.

Ephesians 4:16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Consider these commands; are they to the church, or to the individual Christian?

Be ready with an answer – I Peter 3

Turn a sinner from his error – James 5:20

Restore one in trespasses – Galatians 6:1

Correct those in opposition – II Tim. 2:25

We need to make it clear: You Are Called to Reach the Lost! As Christians, we need to understand that we are all called to the Lord's work. We need to realize that PERSONAL Evangelism is greater and more effective than CORPORATE Evangelism. We need to see this as our personal responsibility; the church will die without it.

Long ago the nation of Israel was dying. God needed an evangelist to bring them around. In Isaiah 6 we see a young man who was cleansed by God. When God said someone needs to work, he said "here am I send me". We are called now.