

## 10. An Exciting Way to Get Involved (3Q 2020—Making Friends for God)

**Biblical Material:** Gen. 1:1, 2, 26; Exod. 18:21–25; 1 Cor. 12:12–25; Acts 16:11–15, 40; Acts 4:31; Acts 12:12; Matthew 9:37, 38.

### Quotes

- Evangelism is not a spare-time activity. *Thomas Cosmades*
- Every single believer is a God-ordained agent of evangelism. *R. B. Kuiper*
- When a Christian presents the good news about Jesus he is preaching treason in the devil’s kingdom. *Doug Barnett*
- In order to “be a light” we need to “plug into” The Light!” *Evinda Lepins*
- The work of the church is not survival. She exists to fulfill the Great Commission. *Brother Andrew*
- A few nights after his conversion he asked how long this Gospel had been known in England. He was told that we had known it for some hundreds of years. “What!” said he, amazed; “is it possible that for hundreds of years you have had the knowledge of those glad tidings in your possession, and yet have only now come to preach it to us? My father sought after the Truth for more than twenty years, and died without finding it. Oh, why did you not come sooner?” *Hudson Taylor*

### Questions

Does the word “evangelism” excite you? If not, why not? Is it because all too often our experience of outreach efforts has been disappointing, if not traumatic? How can we truly share God’s good news in the way that would both be pleasing to God and helpful to others? How does the Great Controversy perspective fit into all of this?

### Bible summary

Gen. 1:1, 2, 26 references the creation of the world and God making us in his image. Exod. 18:21–25 records Jethro’s wise words to Moses regarding delegation. In 1 Cor. 12:12–25 Paul presents the concept of the different parts of the body as a picture of God’s people. Acts 16:11–15, 40 details the conversion of Lydia who became such an asset to the church. The early church was spirit-filled (Acts 4:31). The home of Mary, John Mark’s mother, was where the believers met together for prayer (Acts 12:12). “He [Jesus] told his disciples, “The harvest is large, but there are only a few workers. Pray to the Lord of the harvest, and ask him to send more workers for his harvest.” Matthew 9:37, 38 FBV.

### Comment

*We are ambassadors for Christ—every last one of us who are Christians.* If this is so, what are we to do, and what are we to say? While we are very much in this world, how are we not “of” it? Does this mean some kind of haughty disengagement? Then what of the practical application—for the theory may seem clear, but in practice...

Some criticize our involvement in what we see as human organizations. But are we not called to witness for God and the truth wherever? Most importantly, how will those outside our community come to know the God we love and admire? It is not just a question of traditional evangelism—it is how we live our lives before the on-looking universe.

“For God was in Christ bringing the world back from hostility to friendship with him, not counting anyone’s sins against them, and giving us this message to change his enemies into his friends. So we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God is pleading through us: ‘Please, won’t you come back and be God’s friend?’” 2 Cor. 5:19, 20 FBV. We are ambassadors for Christ because he has given us his message of reconciliation. So how do we explain what this message is, and how do we demonstrate it unless we become involved?

Yes, we all need to be involved. But this does not mean a cookie-cutter mentality, everyone forced to do things the same way. We are given creativity and individuality, and we need to be sharing the truth in our own unique ways. The problem with our evangelism is that all too often we have a stereotypical view on what should happen. Instead God gave us all our own special voices to speak his truth in the way that affects us most. Witnessing means a very personal approach, and while we all do need to be active in this, it is not for other to say how this should be done. We are witnesses of what God has done for us and what he means to us. Anything less is second-hand news.

And it should be exciting—especially as we see what does in our own lives and the lives of others. As we get involved in spreading the good news we begin to understand that though our salvation means so much to us, it is not the central issue. It all comes back to God, and to how his gracious, loving character is vindicated. For he is not “winning the war” by force or any form of manipulative coercion. He is simply revealing who he is—a Being whose primary focus is always on others.

It is my sincere conviction that we have not so much a duty but an amazing opportunity to share with all people at all levels the wonderful good news of God as he truly is. We are to demonstrate that he is not as the Enemy has described him, and that he will save and heal us, while at the same time revealing his nature to the universe, as his character is understood and appreciated by all his admiring children.

### **Ellen White comments**

There are no drones in the household of God. Every member of the household of faith has his work appointed to him... If he is a learner in the school of Christ, he will learn how to give a testimony, how to pray, how to be a living witness for the Master. {TMK 62}

All that the apostles did, every church member today is to do. We are to work with as much more fervor, accompanied by the Holy Spirit in as much greater measure, as the increase of wickedness demands a more decided call to repentance. Every one on whom is shining the light of present truth, is to be stirred with compassion for those who are in darkness. From all believers, in clear, distinct rays, light is to be reflected... At this time, when the end of all things is at hand, should not the zeal of the church exceed even that of the early church? Zeal for the glory of God moved the disciples to bear witness to the truth with mighty power. Shall not this zeal fire our hearts with a longing to tell the story of redeeming love, of Christ and him crucified? Should not the power of God be more mightily revealed today than even in the time of the apostles? {BTS, January 1, 1911}

Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator-- individuality, power to think and to do. {Ed 17}

But while you are to blend as one, neither of you is to lose his or her individuality in the other. God is the owner of your individuality. Of Him you are to ask: What is right? What is wrong? How may I best fulfill the purpose of my creation? {AH 103}