

Urgency to Share in Evangelism

By Senior Pastor Prince Guneratnam

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16)

THE SCRIPTURE presents God a person. God has a will, intellect and emotions. In fact, John 3:16 declares God to be the greatest personality. He has the ability to love the world full of people even though some are not easy to love. He made the greatest decision to give His only Son, the greatest gift the world has ever received. God created all things for man but nothing is greater than God’s Son. He had the best plan for all men to be redeemed and offer the greatest invitation to ‘whosoever’. Salvation is not by works but by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8). Finally, we see the greatest fulfillment of God’s greatest LOVE, DECISION, GIFT, PLAN and INVITATION, and that is ‘we will have eternal life’.

The Bible says “the soul that sinneth shall surely die.” Man’s sickness, poverty both spiritual and material, wars, fears, failures, and the list can go on, are the curse of sin upon the human race. The Good News is, God gave His Son that whosoever believes, “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses (him) from all sin’ (1 John 1:7).

This is the message our world needs today. There is hope for people in the world. God’s Son can change men’s destiny from death to life everlasting. Paul says, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). Again, he says, “We are more than conquerors” and “if God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31 & 37)

We are faced with the challenge to sound this message near and far. The time we have on earth is brief and besides our life may be taken at any time. The Bible has given some indication as to the return of Jesus when all things will come to an end. We will have to face eternity with or without God, in heaven or in hell. Indications are that the coming of Jesus is sooner than we think. As it is, researches estimate 2.7 billion people who have not yet been exposed to an adequate presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Why the Urgency?

Let me compare the urgency of evangelism to an event in the Book of Esther.

“Mordecai wrote in the name of King Xerxes, sealed the dispatches with the King’s signet ring, and sent them by mounted couriers, who rode fast horses especially bred for the King. The couriers, riding the royal horses, raced out, spurred on by the King’s command. And the edict was also issued in the citadel of Susa” (Esther 8:10, 11).

Why was there such a hurry to hasten the King’s command?

The King had earlier decreed the slaying of all Jews in his kingdom. But through the intervention of Queen Esther, the King now issued another decree repealing the earlier one, thereby providing a way of escape for the Jews.

How true it is with the need of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ to all the peoples of the world. The decree of death is upon all who have sinned, but the offer of ‘eternal life’ is available to those who will believe. There is a way of escape. We must go! We must tell! We must do so to the best of our ability. The church must be ready to use the best methods and not be afraid or fall behind when the world is advancing in its technology and communication. This does not mean the church has to be extravagant, though.

Responsibility of Sharing

The story of the ‘Good Samaritan’ comes to me as a message to understand what it means to share in evangelism and missions (Luke 10:30-37).

The question that Jesus was dealing with is, “Who’s my neighbour? The application of this message is to love God first with all your heart, your soul, your strength and your mind and to love your neighbour as yourself (Luke 10:27).

It was the ‘Good Samaritan’ who was a good neighbour and he loved his neighbour as himself.

In evangelism and missions, the principle has to be the same. It is love of God and what He did for us that motivates us to love others. It is also because of the love of God that we do our best for others.

There were two other men besides the ‘Good Samaritan’ that came down that way. I would like to draw some lesson from all the three men.

The Priest: He is a good type to represent people who are only religious, The Scribes and the Pharisees were people who Jesus seemed to rebuke more often than others. Jesus said, “For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20).

The Levite: He is the good type to represent people with good principles of life. They are righteous but have no goodness and mercy in them. Jesus was not only a man without sin but He was a good man; the Gospel tells us so.

The Good Samaritan: He was not only 'good'. He saw the wounded man and had compassion on him. It takes more than seeing the need; there must be love for the lost, the hurting and those dying in their sin. If there is love as well as vision, we will be willing to do what it takes to help the lost and dying.

The Cost of Evangelism and Missions

It will cost you to know your neighbour, to have a vision and to love the lost.

When God decided to get involved in missions, it cost Him His only Son. When Jesus was willing to be a Saviour of the world, He gave His life on the cross. What did it cost the Samaritan when he got himself involved in saving the dying man? It cost him his oil, wine, donkey and money, without mentioning time and other things. We must understand that it costs to be involved in evangelism. There is a price to pay, but each of us will have our own price as God shows it to us. This world can be reached for Jesus if we pay the price for evangelizing it.

Missions Begins at Home

Evangelism is not only an urgent task. It is our responsibility to give to missions. Missions begins at home. The Bible says, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

In commissioning the disciples, Jesus did not leave out Jerusalem, which was the home ground of the disciples. This means He did not make a distinction between home and foreign missions. Missions is clearly the primary ministry or calling of the church, and it begins at home.

Go and Do likewise

Jesus told the lawyer in the story in Luke 10, "You must do likewise – to be a good neighbour. Sinners are not able to come on their own to Christ. They need the love of Christ to save them from sin and a shepherd to lead them."

How many of us meet people every day who need to hear the Good News? Let us be a good neighbour and help them find healing, peace and joy. We can all do something for missions. Let us do what we can and even make the sacrifice that is needed. We must go, and we must do our best for Jesus!