

Lord's money or use it in His work? And what greater work is there than evangelization?

Thank God for those members and congregations who are evangelistic minded. They should be an encouragement to us all – may it be so. Be encouraged by these also: Etta, at almost 84 years old, went door knocking (the preacher had arranged for a door knocking prior to a Gospel Meeting). Sadly, others younger and more able than she, did not go – only a few went. At another place Ken, a full-time preacher almost 80 years old, is still involved in door knocking. Barbara, in her late 70's and with some health problems that hinder her from walking, went door knocking walking on the hard sidewalks.

I am not saying one has to door knock – this is just one way of evangelizing. Personally I think a good mixture is best: radio programs, TV programs, newspaper articles or ads. I do think door knocking should be a part of a congregation's evangelism – it is more personal. Of course, not all are able to go door knocking, but some make excuses where they should not – let it not be recorded in Heaven of it being so with us.

But all of these efforts can be somewhat thwarted by a congregation that is not friendly to its visitors. For well over a year now I have intended to write about our experience while visiting a congregation, but have not gotten to it. Briefly, it was a congregation of about 50 plus and their local preacher was out of town. An elderly preacher from another congregation was filling-in, whom I talked to, but not one member there spoke to any of us! One person did speak to us, but he also was a visitor there. In all things let us strive to be Christ-like and greet visitors as Christ would – in truth and sincerity, not pretense.

As far as evangelism goes, I believe the very best is for every member to be involved in inviting others to services. As one brother wrote:

If fear of failure keeps us from trying
...have we already failed!?!
(Eccl. 11:4)

“He that observeth the wind shall not sow;
and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.”

Let us take good “heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip” (Heb. 2:3 cp. Mark 16:15). ♥



“Hold fast the form of sound words”

SW

(2 Tim. 1:13 cp. Tit. 1:9; Jude 3)

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Changing Our Mindset

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Jesus “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38). Jesus' good works did not depend on how the people reacted. We must get into our minds that doing good works must not be dependent upon how others react to them! Are we going to let others hinder us from doing God's will? I am sure you have heard statements like this before: “I am not going to come back to services as long as ole hypocrite Joe is going there.” Well Joe may indeed be a hypocrite and if so, and if it is provable, then the church needs to deal with him scripturally. In the meanwhile are you willing to walk on the road to Hell because of ole Joe being a hypocrite, or maybe just a perceived hypocrite by you? We may not do this, but at the same time allow other's reactions to hinder us from doing good works.

Let us look at Jesus' good works. Oftentimes Jesus was rejected and even asked to leave: “And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts” (Matt. 8:34). In fact Jesus knew that many followed Him for the wrong reason: “Jesus answered them and said, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled**” (John 6:26). Sadly, “From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him” (John 6:66). How discouraging! But did Jesus quit? Where would we be now if He had??? I am thankful Jesus kept on doing good works – the works of God.

What about when we quit some good work? How many souls have been and are affected when a good work is stopped? How many precious souls did not obey the gospel because they never heard, or

were never encouraged to do so because we gave up on some good work??? Only eternity will tell!

We must change our mindset. Not everyone is guilty, nor every congregation – thank God. There are a lot of faithful workers who will not stop, they will not let other’s evil hinder them. Like Jesus, Paul, Peter, John, and a host of others, they keep on keeping on doing good works. But, there are those, and even whole congregations who have allowed others to stop their good works. How many times have you heard, “It won’t work here”? I was reminded of that statement not long ago when a brother said a door knocking effort was conducted in 1971 (brethren, that was **43 years ago!**), and they were disappointed with the results of it. Evidently they were so disappointed in the results that they have not door knocked since that time – 43 years ago. Well, that is one way to get out of work, but we will never get out of giving an answer to God.

In my opinion they are dead. I suppose they have had similar results with radio, newspaper articles and other evangelistic efforts for none are going on as far as I could tell. The evidence of being dead was seen in many ways. The sad thing is many congregations are in the same boat. And they wonder why they are getting so small!

Now for those who are against door knocking, are you also against mail-outs? radio programs? TV programs? having gospel meetings, etc.? And for those who do use one or more of the above, but are against door knocking, have you considered how few responses you get? Have you considered the Mormons? Some say, and with good evidence, that they are the fastest growing religious group in the U.S., at least in a lot of areas. You know they door knock. But more than just door knocking, they are grounding their young people in their doctrine by preparing them to door knock, and by door knocking their doctrine is embedded more and more in their young.

We have been criticized for door knocking. I suppose this makes some, who perhaps are doing no evangelism at all, feel justified. I think most understand their strategy. In fact, we have been criticized for “dressing up” for worship to Almighty God, who does demand and deserves our best (see article March 2011 SW). The question we hear most often from church members concerning our door knocking is:

“Is it working?” Our answer: **“Yes.”** It is working for many reasons. First and foremost we are doing something to evangelize. We are sowing the seed of the kingdom. However, I will admit it is an ever so lowly a work compared to what some are doing. Some have

“knocked” door knocking and want you to buy their paper to mail out. That is fine, in fact, I personally think the printed page is perhaps the best means of reaching out to people, but door knocking is personal, not just a mass mailing like you get from retail stores. Don’t get me wrong, I am not against mass mailings. And I am not against radio and television, or the internet. In fact, I think the internet is a very great evangelistic tool.

Personally, I think we need to be using every available means of spreading the saving Word of God to a lost and dying world. However, I think congregations need to do so wisely. For example: in many places we have radio or TV programs saturating areas where the church is abundant, whereas some of that money could be used to have a program in an area that is not covered by any such means. How about those some 717 counties in the USA that are without the church?

We must change our mindset from “It won’t work here” to “It is working **if** we are working.” Did Jesus fail when He went to the Gadarenes (Matt. 8:28-34)? No, and neither do we fail when we are doing what God says to do even when the people do not react positively. We only fail when we do not do God’s will. If we find ourselves lost in a devil’s hell because we stopped some good work on account of someone(s) rejecting us (our work), how will we feel about that throughout eternity? “It won’t work” translates “I won’t work,” or “I don’t want to spend any money on that.” Don’t let those who feel condemned by your good works hinder you. They need to repent instead of kicking against the pricks. You keep on keeping on and maybe in time you can win them over to some good work of God.

It is difficult for some people to understand that door knocking is a success even if no one obeys the gospel, or even visits with the church. We have done what Jesus would have us to do: we have taken the truth to them as is commanded. What they do with it is up to them! The seed has been planted and God gives the increase.

I heard a Bible class teacher teaching about evangelization, he was preparing the congregation for some door knocking in their area. Let me draw your attention to the difference between this congregation and the one mentioned above. This congregation was not dead and their attendance and good works showed they were not. The teacher said, “If we spend \$20,000 or \$30,000 and convert only one soul would it be worth it?” I do not doubt for a moment that some brother or sister somewhere may secretly think, “No, it is too much money.”

I told the teacher after class it would be worth it even if not one person was converted!!! How about you, would you rather sit on the