

# ***To Talk or Not to Talk***

By Victor Beshir

With the burning desire to evangelize, we are all eager to talk about the Lord and our church to everyone. Yet, when we meet people sometimes we are hesitant to talk or unsure if we should talk or not. Later on, we feel guilty because we didn't have the courage to evangelize or we had the chance to evangelize but failed to do. So, what to do? First we need to learn a few important lessons.

- 1- The purpose of evangelism is to lead a person to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord says, "**No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him**" (John 6:44). He repeated the same meaning when He said, "Therefore I have said to you that **no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father**" (John 6:65).

Therefore, unless the Father draws a person, the person cannot come to the Son. Subsequently, all our evangelistic work is in vain-regardless of our knowledge, evangelistic methods, or ability to convince others-unless a divine work is involved.

The Bible also clearly mentions, "**no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit**" (1 Corinthians 12:2-4).

Therefore, the Holy Spirit is behind the scene in every case involved faith in the Lord. He is the invisible worker, Who penetrates the hearts and minds and enlightens them to accept the Lord.

- 2- Then, to have a successful evangelism, let God first deal with people before we utter any word. How do we ask God to work on someone's salvation? The only method is through prayer. Prayer here does not mean praying once or twice, but praying for as long as it takes until the Holy Spirit starts working.
- 3- Prayer should be done sincerely and with all of your love and supplications.
- 4- In response to those deep caring repeated prayers, God will not only draw to Him the people whom we pray for their salvation, but He will also create a passion for the lost sheep in our hearts. Little by little, our prayers will turn to cries of the heart.

- 5- Our hearts will then be changed from praying for the salvation of one individual to praying for an entire group, or a whole city or a even a country or a continent. All of this will occur without giving up our special prayers for certain individuals.
- 6- When we start working on evangelism, we follow our own directions and our egos play a big role. Once our ego disappear through real submission to God, we will be able to listen to His instructions. Then we will speak and act based on His directions. Of course, this transformation may take years to occur in our lives.

In order to answer the question, "To Talk or Not to Talk," we need to meditate on the following:

### ***The Invisible School of the Holy Spirit:***

A- **Moses** has a burning desire to save his Jewish brothers. He worked on it for one day. On the second day, he had to flee the country; God sent him to a special school. Before helping his people, Moses needed to learn very valuable lessons by attending the invisible school of the Holy Spirit. For forty years, Moses was a good student in that school. Those forty years taught him the necessary following lessons:

- 1- The work of saving people in its entirety and its details is **directed by God**
- 2- The work also is **done by God**
- 3- He **should not make any move or speak any word except with the approval of God.**

In reviewing Moses' life after those forty years and the decisions he made, we could easily see his faithfulness in following God's directions in each step. Moreover, we read about his consultation with God in every matter.

B- Similarly, we see the same pattern in the life of **St. Paul**:

"But when it pleased God... to reveal His Son in me, that **I might preach Him among the Gentiles**, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but **I went to Arabia**, and returned again to Damascus. " (Galatians 1:14-18).

Arabia is a desert south of Judea. St. Paul went to Arabia to devote his entire time to prayer. Some people said he spent about three years in Arabia. In those three years, he learned to submit his will to the Holy Spirit and let the ego disappear to show only God as first and last in his missions.

#### c- **The Apostles:**

- 1- "Then **the Spirit said to Philip**, "Go near and overtake this chariot" (Acts 8:29).
- 2- "Then **the Spirit told me (Peter)** to go with them, doubting nothing" (Acts 11:12).
- 3- "So, **being sent out by the Holy Spirit**, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus" (Acts 13:4).
- 4- "Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, **they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit** to preach the word in Asia" (Acts 16:6).
- 5- "After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but **the Spirit did not permit them**" (16:7).

#### **Advancement in the School of the Holy Spirit:**

After years of being a faithful disciple in the invisible school of the Holy Spirit, a person becomes full of the Holy Spirit and bound in the Spirit. Now he/she feels the movement of the Spirit inside, as it's said about Samson, "And the **Spirit of the Lord began to move upon him**" (Judges 13: 25).

The Holy Spirit then start to lead the person in a way that makes every evangelistic activity a journey by the Holy Spirit, where the person feels as if he is carried on the wings of the Spirit; the words is not his words any more, and neither the acts is his acts anymore. He becomes aware that he is in the Spirit. This is accompanied by unspeakable enlightened mind and heart with immeasurable joy.

- 1- "And they were not able to resist the wisdom and **the Spirit by which he (St. Stephan) spoke** (Acts 6:10).
- 2- "And the disciples were **filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit**" (Acts 13:52).

- 3- "Paul **was compelled by the Spirit**, and testified to **the** Jews *that* Jesus *is* **the** Christ" (Acts 18:5).
- 4- "And see, now I **go bound in the spirit** to Jerusalem" (Acts 20:22).

### ***To Talk or Not to Talk:***

Here're the steps to follow to reach effectiveness in evangelism:

- 1- Choose a few people to pray for their salvation and continue praying until you see some signs in their lives or you feel compelled to talk to them
- 2- Always start talking with a casual conversation regarding any topic: weather, health, work, school ... etc.
- 3- Raise prayer in your heart while you are talking. Look for signs from God in the conversation. A sign might be to see the person talking about spiritual matters or Christian topics.
- 4- You can ask about the person's family, whether the family was religious, whether they believed in God or not.
- 5- If you do not feel the Spirit working, then God has not prepared the heart yet. Therefore, you can go back to casual talk. Continue with your prayer, never ceasing.
- 6- Make it a habit to tell God that you are in His hands and if it is His will, to please use you. Ask God to direct you to the people who are eager for His salvation, and to give you right words to say.
- 7- Wherever you go, ask Christ to go with you to give joy of salvation to the people in that place. For example, while you walking by buildings, offices, or facilities, ask the Lord to fill your heart and the hearts of people in those places with joy of salvation.
- 8- When you feel that the Spirit is moving you, you can talk freely.

### **Sometimes we meet people briefly. Shouldn't we talk to them about God?**

If always ask God to direct you to people who need salvation, then you only need to pray briefly before approaching those people.

## **Real Encounters from the Field of Evangelism:**

**1-** In an open house in a college, one evangelist setup a table full of gospels and brochures. He spent two days talking to students, and distributing gospels and brochures. Hours before leaving, a young woman came to the table and started to read the brochures on the table. Before she left, the he asked her, "Do you believe in God's existence?" She answered. "No."

"Any reason for that?" he asked.

"People in the church do not accept others. They did not accept me." She answered.

"This action is done by people, but God is different. God loves you and accepts you. You're his daughter. He died for you," said the evangelist.

A few minutes later, her face was full of tears. She asked if she could join the spiritual meeting in the college.

**2-** She was not a Christian. The evangelist prayed heartily for her salvation. Politely she changed the topic whenever talking about God or Christianity. Therefore, the evangelist decided not to talk to her but to God about her salvation.

One day she called the evangelist to tell about a dream she had. She dreamt that she heard the name "Jesus" in the sky. Then she saw drops of His blood coming down from the sky. A few drops of blood touched her. She immediately felt clean and happy.

**3-** It was a habit, before the employees at a university lab opened the doors for students; they gathered and prayed for those students. One day a young woman entered the lab happily and showed signs of joy. An evangelist approached her saying, "I see that you're very happy today. Any specific reason?"

"Why shouldn't I be happy? I'm young, healthy, and beautiful," she answered.

"I heard that people who live with God are happy," he said.

A few minutes later, her face was full of tears. She said, "Yes, I need God in my life. I need to go back to the church."

**4-** He was about to take a certain bus, but a voice inside him asked him to take another bus. He obeyed. Then at a certain stop-station,

he heard the voice asking him to get off the bus. He also obeyed. Leaving the bus, he met a young man who approached him, introducing himself, telling him how he left the church and followed the devil. While talking and walking they reached a church. The servant told him, here is a church. Let us go inside. Go, meet God, and tell Him all that you told me and ask for His forgiveness. Before the sanctuary, the young man wept. Both left the church. The servant never met the young man again.

**Finally,** before you talk to others, please examine yourself:

Do you act as a Christian?

Are you a person of prayer?

Do you pray heartily for your salvation and for others' salvation?

Do you feel the Holy Spirit is moving you to talk?

Have you surrendered your will and ego to God?