**The Spiritual Life of an Evangelist**

 By Victor Beshir

Without a deep spiritual life, an evangelist will never succeed in evangelism. Evangelistic processes in its entirely and its individual steps are mainly the work of the Holy Spirit. So unless an evangelist is living in the spirit (Acts 20:22), walking with Christ in his/her heart (Ephesians 3:17), engulfing by the grace (Acts 4:33), directed by His hands, there would be no evangelism even if the evangelist is very active in evangelism.

As evangelists we need to remember that people are captured by the power of the devil for years and he will not set them free to think or to see or to accept easily. He captured people using his thousands of years experience in deceiving human beings; he also has his entire army working diligently day and night without ceasing; he is the ruler of this world (John 14:30). People are in the lion’s cage and there is no way out except by the power of God. Only God can prepare the minds, hearts, and the souls of individuals to accept the word of God. Without God, individuals will never see their chains or their eternal judgment.

How then an evangelist could win souls to Christ. The only way is to humbly follow God’s directions Who will identify the souls that are in needs and are ready to accept. Let Him also take care of the spiritual war accompanied the opening of the lion’s cage to set individuals free. How could an evangelist reach those individuals? Only through a heart full of fervent love to God and to salvations of others, and a life hidden in Christ, “For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3). These two could only be reached through a deep spiritual life.

Does this mean I should quit evangelism until I reach this level of spirituality? Of course Not! To the contrary, you should be encouraged to know the secrets of the evangelistic work, the unseen spiritual war, then commit yourself to His love, surrender your life to Him, and engulf yourself in the river of spirituality for your own fulfillment first and for salvation of others second.

**The Principles of Spiritual life:** Understanding the importance of having a deep spiritual life would require shedding the light on its principles and its practicality. Hundreds of volumes were written by the Fathers of the Church and others on the spiritual life. Here in this lesson, I cannot even get into a summary of the spiritual life because it will take a whole book to do so, but I’m going to highlight a few important points, asking you to make spiritual reading a target and a source of daily watering in your spiritual life.

1. **Continuous feeling of a need** for the Savior along with continuous thirst and hunger for Him, the lover of my soul.
2. **Clear Objective**: Without a clear objective of the spiritual life, it could be replaced by routines of prayers, worship, services, and even evangelism. **My objective is to “Find Jesus, touch Him, and love Him”** in every prayer-either simultaneous or Agpyea- every reading in the Bible or a spiritual book, every time I go to church, and in every service in the church or outside the church.
3. **Gradual Commitment**: Start spiritual practice small until a habit is formed, and then increase it slowly until the increase becomes a habit too, and so on. Based on psychology, to form a habit, it takes months. So, what to do? Start by committing yourself to a small prayer along with a small reading in the Bible every night. Then strive to comply regardless of your schedule or your physical status. In fact, you need to force yourself to do it until it becomes a second nature to you.

Once it becomes a habit, add to this prayer another prayer and another reading from the Bible and spiritual books. Strive for a few months to make them your new habit. After that continue to add. Eventually, the Holy Spirit will lead your prayers and contemplations in a way that is so fulfilling, allowing you to taste the sweetness and love of God.

1. **Spiritual Guidance:**  Sure, we all need a father of confession to confess our sins. You might have a spiritual guide in addition to the father of confession. Moreover, surround yourself with spiritual friendship. This could be extended later on to friendship with departed saints. It’s a good idea to conclude your private prayers with talking to the saints.
2. **Psalms:** Psalms are a great source of spirituality. Yet, please do not recite them as a habit or because you have to finish them, but rather train yourself to pray psalms slowly. Try to live every word you uttered. Let the words come out from your heart, expressing your feelings and needs. It helps to understand the spiritual meaning of the psalms, so read psalms interpretations. St. Augustine wrote one, among others. Then mix psalms with simple tunes. Music gives you an awareness and depth. While praying Agyia, mix prayers with prostration. For example, though it’s not required, prostrate at the end of a few psalms. When you recite: “Glory to the Fathers, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” bow down in awe, giving glory from your heart.
3. **Approach:** Always approach prayers with joy. It’s time to meet your beloved God whom you missed dearly and you come eager to spend quality time with Him in order to be filled with His grace, peace and joy. Please remember that God is so generous. Every time you stand before Him, you will not leave Him empty handed, but He will give you a spiritual grace, even unnoticed by you but it’s precious and important for your salvation.
4. **Church Prayers:** Church is where we travel to heaven and live there the best of our time and return feeling that we have been deeply touched and enlightened. How to experience this heavenly journey? I invite you to read my booklet, “[The Orthodox Divine Liturgy, An Invitation To A Heavenly Journey](http://evangelismcopticorthodox.org/images/The_entire_Divine_Liturgy_book_Internet_copy_for_evangelismcoptic.zip),” it’s available on the evangelism web page:

http://evangelismcopticorthodox.org/booksbookletsbrochures.html

Briefly, prepare yourself spiritually the night before attending the Divine Liturgy. In the church, do not allow anything to take you away from having a continuous heartily prayer. Let your heart talk more than your tongue. As much as you could, get away from distractions. Some people get busy with singing, involving in rituals, or arrangements without having a heartily prayer. As a result, they do not meet the Lord in the Church. Meeting the Lord in the church and spending quality time with Him is the major reason for going to the church.

**Reality of Spiritual life:**

Will the adversary let you enjoy your spiritual life without hindrance? Of course not.

Will he rage a spiritual war against you to stop your spiritual commitment? Yes, he will. He will try to find the weakest point in your spiritual life and attack you with it. He will try to hit hard.

Will the joy of spiritual life continue always? It will with some interruptions, but it will be sustained by the grace of God.

**What to Do to Keep My Spiritual Life?**

1. **Continue on your daily commitment** regardless of your weak spiritual life, or your physical status, or even when you’re injured by sin. He is the only way and salvation even when we are spiritually injured.
2. **Launch out into the deep** (Luke 5:4) : Don’t get satisfied with standing in the shallow of spiritual life. Always go deeper and strive with God to get blessings.
3. **Give God generously**: Give God your heart, your love, your life, your time, and everything without reservation. In return, He will shower you with abundant spirituality
4. **Bed Time**: Before going to bed, have a quality time with your Bible, psalms, and deep prayers
5. **Cut Corners**: Don’t waste your time and energy with useless engagements, such as spending hours in surfing the net or chatting, or texting, or similar time consuming activities. Instead, keep it to the minimum and use the rest of the time for your spiritual life. Your salvation is more important than all those activities.
6. **Flee from sin and any path or friendship could lead to it**: Never think that you’re stronger than sin or temptation. Never let yourself in a situation could lead to sin. Close your eyes and ears to any seen or talk or songs that could affect you.
7. **Spiritual Friendship**: This is the kind of friendship you need around you.
8. **If you fall**, rise immediately, and talk to your father of confession. Get back to God with all your heart. He will heal you and restore you.
9. Consider your **personal salvation** as the most important continuous task in your life. It’s more important than life itself.

**Questions:**

1. Please add biblical verses and or sayings of the Fathers to the above lessons**.**
2. Based on your experience, what could you add to the above?
3. Examine your spiritual life on the above and find out what you are missing. Make a list and start to apply one item at a time. Share your needs with your Father of Confession (You don’t send me this).