

CHAPTER 11

God, Prayer, and Fasting in Evangelism

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God and Man in Evangelism

Introduction (an expansion of Hudson Taylor’s watchword):

We have a living God (Psa 42:2), who has given us a living Word (Heb 4:12) and who is at work in the world today (2 Pet 3:9). When we are involved in evangelism, God works through His word, through His Spirit, through the blood of Christ, and through his servants in the present world!

Examples of God’s divine *preparatio*

Sidonian widow prepared by God to assist Elijah, 1 Kg 17:9

Those appointed to eternal life, Acts 13:48

The Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul, Acts 16:14

However, due to the sometimes heated debate between God’s and man’s part in evangelism, I have included this discussion as food for thought.

Perhaps this was what Jesus was getting at when He asked the following question:

“And they came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests, and scribes, and elders came to Him, and *began* saying to Him, ‘By what authority are You doing these things, or who gave You this authority to do these things?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘I will ask you one question, and you answer Me, and *then* I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Was the baptism of John from heaven, or from men? Answer Me.’” (Mark 11:27-30)

Notice that Jesus was asking them a question to the divinely ordained interaction of God and man in a religious rite, baptism! A question which the chief priests, scribes and elders, did not want to answer...

“And they *began* reasoning among themselves, saying, ‘If we say, “From heaven,” He will say, “Then why did you not believe him?” But shall we say, “From men?”—they were afraid of the multitude, for all considered John to have been a prophet indeed. And answering Jesus, they said, ‘We do not know.’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things’” (Mark 11:31-33)

Yes, just as in the case of the baptism of John the Baptist, there seems to be a “hypostatic union” when it comes to the ministry of evangelism!

Building from this question—Who Evangelizes?

Acts 17:

Paul evangelizes:

v. 18, “because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection”

v. 22, “And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said...”

God evangelizes:

v. 30, “God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent”

Eph 2-3:

Jesus evangelizes:

2:17, “And He came and preached [εὐαγγελίζω] peace [Isa 52:7] to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near”

Paul evangelizes:

3:7, “To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach [εὐαγγελίζω] to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ”

Many other passages delineate aspects of this hypostatic union in the Christian life and in the ministry of the Gospel...¹⁰⁶³

¹⁰⁶³“Yet that infallible Word, which always rightly balances truth, while it magnifies the Holy Spirit, does not speak lightly of the men by whom He works” (Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner* [New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1995], 20-21).

A. Several Passages Exemplifying the Relationship of God and Man:

Deut 11:29 (ESV)

GOD'S PART	MAN'S PART
And when the LORD your God brings you into the land	that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

Psalms 119:25-32

GOD'S PART	MAN'S PART
	25 My soul cleaves to the dust;
Revive me according to Your word.	26 I have told of my ways,
And You have answered me; Teach me Your statutes.	
27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts,	So I will meditate on Your wonders.
	28 My soul weeps because of grief;
Strengthen me according to Your word.	
29 Remove the false way from me, And graciously grant me Your law.	30 I have chosen the faithful way; I have placed Your ordinances <i>before me</i> .
	31 I cling to Your testimonies;
O LORD, do not put me to shame! For You will enlarge my heart.	32 I shall run the way of Your commandments,

John 6:35-40

GOD'S PART	MAN'S PART
35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life;	he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.
	36 "But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.
37 "All that the Father gives Me [] I will certainly not cast out.	[will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me]
38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.	
39 "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.	
40 "For this is the will of My Father, [] will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."	[that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him]

Acts 14:21-28

GOD	EVANGELIST
	21 After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and <i>saying</i> , "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."
[they commended them to the Lord]	23 When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, [] in whom they had believed.
	24 They passed through Pisidia and came into Pamphylia. 25 When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.
[from which they had been commended to the grace of God]	26 From there they sailed to Antioch, [] for the work that they had accomplished (<i>εἰς τὸ ἔργον ὃ ἐπλήρωσαν</i>).
[all things that God had done with* them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.]	27 When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they <i>began</i> to report []
	28 And they spent a long time with the disciples.

* (note the word "with" in v 27 [not NIV's "through"] implies collaborating, cf. 2 Cor 6:1, συνεργέω)

Acts 13:2-12

GOD	EVANGELIST	CONTACT	ANTAGONIST
	2 While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting,		
the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."			
	3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away (ἀπολύω).		
4 So, being sent out (ἐκπέμπω) by the Holy Spirit,			
	They went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus. 5 When they reached Salamis, they <i>began</i> to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John as their helper. 6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a magician,		
			a Jewish false prophet whose name was Bar-Jesus, 7 who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence.
		This man summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.	
			8 But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.
[filled with the Holy Spirit,]	9 But Saul, who was also <i>known</i> as Paul, [] fixed his gaze on him, 10 and said, ...		
[the teaching of the Lord.]		12 Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened, being amazed at []	

Acts 15:7-11, Peter's testimony before the Jerusalem Council

GOD	EVANGELIST/JEWS	GENTILES
7 ... Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you,	That by my mouth	the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe.
8 And God, who knows the heart, []	Just as He also did to us;	[testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit,]
9 and He made no distinction	Between us and them,	cleansing their hearts by faith.
	10 Now therefore why do you put God to the test [] a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?	[by placing upon the neck of the disciples]
[through the grace of the Lord Jesus]	11 But we believe that we are saved []	in the same way as they also are

New Testament Uses of "Open" (διδασκάλω)

GOD OPENING THE HEART [through things spoken]	PAUL OPENING THE GOSPEL
Acts 16:14 A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart (ὁ κύριος διήνοιξεν τὴν καρδίαν) to respond to the things spoken by Paul	Acts 17:2-3 And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining (διδασκάλω) and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."

A closer look at Acts 16:13-14

GOD	EVANGELIST	CONTACT
	13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and began speaking	To the women who had assembled.
		14 A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics,
a worshiper of God,	[Paul's speaking implied from listening and from verse 13]	was listening;
and the Lord opened []	to the things spoken by Paul	[her heart to respond]

Acts 28:17-29

GOD	EVANGELIST	CONTACT	ANTAGONIST
	17 After three days Paul called together those who were the leading men of the Jews, and when they came together, he <i>began</i> saying to them...		
		21 They said to him, "We have neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren come here and reported or spoken anything bad about you	
		22 "But we desire to hear from you what your views are; for concerning this sect, it is known to us that it is spoken against everywhere."	[discuss antagonism]
		23 When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers	
[Holy Spirit at work through the Word!]	And he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening		
[Holy Spirit at work through the Word!]	[by the things spoken (by Paul or by the Holy Spirit?)]	24 Some were being persuaded by the things spoken, but others would not believe	
		25 And when they did not agree with one another, they <i>began</i> leaving	
	after Paul had spoken one <i>parting</i> word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers...		
		29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves	

A closer look at Acts 28:25-27 (quoting Isa 6:9-10)

GOD	EVANGELIST	CONTACT	RESULT
25 And when they did not agree with one another, they <i>began</i> leaving after Paul had spoken one <i>parting</i> word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers,			
26 saying,	'Go to this people and say,	"You will keep on hearing, And you will keep on seeing,	but will not understand; but will not perceive;
		27 For the heart of this people has become dull, And with their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes;	Lest they should see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I should heal them."

Rom 15:18-21

CHRIST	OT PROPHECY	EVANGELIST	GENTILES
[except what Christ has accomplished through me]		¹⁸ For I will not presume to speak of anything [], {}	{resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed,}
¹⁹ in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit;		so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully <i>preached</i> the gospel of Christ.	
		²⁰ And thus I aspired to evangelize, [] that I might not build upon another man's foundation;	[not where Christ was <i>already</i> named,]
	²¹ but as it is written, "They who had no news of Him shall see, And they who have not heard shall understand."		[<i>regarding Gentiles</i>]

1 Cor 15:10, Paul speaking of God's grace and his own labor

GOD	EVANGELIST
But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; [] yet not I, but the grace of God with me	[but I labored even more than all of them,]

Eph 2:8-10

GOD'S PART	MAN'S PART
⁸ For by grace you have been saved <i>it is the gift of God,</i>	through faith, and that not of yourselves;
	⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.
¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus which God prepared beforehand	for good works, that we should walk in them.

Phil 2:12-13, God's work and man's work

GOD	CHRISTIAN
	So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;
13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for <i>His</i> good pleasure	

Col 1:28-29

GOD	EVANGELIST
[Him] {Christ}	We proclaim [], admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in {}.
[according to His power, which mightily works]	For this purpose also I labor, striving [] within me

2 Thess 2:9-14

GOD TOWARD SAVED	GOD TOWARD LOST	SATAN TOWARD LOST	EVANGELIST	SAVED MAN	LOST MAN
		⁹ The coming of the <i>lawless one</i> is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish,			because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved
	¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned				who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.
because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit			¹³ But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you,	brethren beloved by the Lord, ... and belief in the truth,	
¹⁴ to which He called you			by our gospel,	for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.	

In conclusion, there seems to be a “hypostatic union” when it comes to the ministry of evangelism!

Ours is to tell the Gospel message

God's is to do the supernatural work of opening the heart

“Yet never depend upon your personal power, but rest alone upon the sacred, mysterious, divine energy that works in us, by us, and with us on the hearts and minds of men” (Spurgeon)¹⁰⁶⁴

God has a part and man has a part (cf. a type of hypostatic union, i.e. 100%-100%).

Evangelism, conversion, and spiritual growth are *not* a matter of sovereignty *versus* freewill. They are a matter of obedience to God's commands. To frame the question as sovereignty *versus* freewill is to depart from how the Bible frames the question. It is rather fully sovereignty *and* even seemingly fully freewill!

¹⁰⁶⁴Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1995), 145.

It may be that the best example to explain this cooperative working is the church as the bride of Christ, Eph 5:32:

Eph 5:32, “This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.”

1. If Christ is a typology of God’s part in salvation, and if the church is a typology for man’s part in salvation;
2. Then the complexity of the inner workings of God and man are best understood in this life in the complexity of the leadership of the husband over his wife:
 - a. As man is the head of the wife, so Christ is the head of the church;
 - b. As the wife ought to respect (Eph 5:33) and even obey her husband (1 Pet 3:6), so Christ loves the church, and gave Himself for it
3. So it is all about God in Christ—*gloriam Christi soleus*, and it is also all about man:
 - a. Is not this issue (so called Calvinism vs. Arminianism) one of the greatest mysteries in the Christian life?
 - b. And is not the husband-wife relationship an awesome metaphor for God to use in His Word to describe this interrelationship?
 - c. Yes, indeed, “the mystery is great!”¹⁰⁶⁵

Consider then several of the levels of reception involved in gospel proclamation:

1. Receiving the Messenger;
2. Receiving the Message;
3. Receiving the Master;
4. Receiving His Mission.

On the other hand, consider that Augustine added the “signs and symbols” of the sacraments to salvation, thus removing man’s part in this cooperative working toward the salvation of men:

It appears that this omission is the reason why so much of this biblical material on evangelism and conversion is not taught in courses on theology, since it was framed out of the question in classical categories of theological discourse!

BIG IDEA #1: GOD IS INTIMATELY INVOLVED IN EVERY ASPECT OF EVANGELISM!

B. God’s Desire Is the Salvation of Every Person:

1. God’s perfect will, 1 Tim 2:4, 2 Pet 3:8-9 (cf. Ezek 18:23, 32, 33:11; Matt 18:14):
1 Tim 4:10, “For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our eyes on the living God, who is the Savior of all men [cf. 1 John 2:1-2], especially the believers.”
2. God’s permissive will, 1 Cor 7:16 (cf. 1 Cor 9:22, “all” -> “some”):
 - a. Man is to individually respond to God, Isa 55:6-7, Ezek 18:31, Rom 10:13
 - b. Those who are saved:
 - 1) Few will find salvation, Matt 7:13-14; 22:14, Luke 13:23-30
 - 2) Jesus Christ is the first among **many** brethren, Rom 8:29, Heb 2:10
 - 3) God will save people from all nations, Psa 86:9, Rev 5:9
 - c. Those who are lost:
 - 1) Many are those who are lost, Matt 7:13, Rev 20:8
 - 2) God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, Ezek 18:23, 32, 33:11
 - 3) All men will be forced to bow the knee to Christ, Phil 2:10-11 (see parallel with Joseph, Gen 37:5-11)

C. God Made Provision for Salvation:

1. Because of His Great Love, John 3:16; Rom 5:8; Eph 2:4 (cf. Eph 3:18-19)
2. God took the initiative to save man in sending Jesus Christ to die on the cross for sin, John 3:15-16; Rom 5:8; 1 Pet 3:18; 1 John 2:1-2

¹⁰⁶⁵And, by the way, the mystery here is not the infusion of the Holy Spirit within the sacraments in a Christological sense, as the Orthodox and Catholic Churches would have us think.

3. Therefore, God is often called the Savior, Psa 68:19; Isa 43:3, 14; Hos 13:4; Luke 1:47; 1 Tim 1:1; 4:10; Titus 1:3; Jude 24
4. God also has declared His salvation, Isa 43:12; 51:4.

D. The Trinity's Involvement in Particular Evangelism Situations:

1. Jesus commanded all of His disciples to evangelize, Mark 16:15 (e.g. Mark 1:16-18; cf. Matt 28:19-20; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8)
2. God has given His Word as the message for the evangelist, 2 Tim 4:2 (cf. 1 John 2:21)
3. God stirs in His servants the urge to evangelize, Acts 17:16, 1 Cor 9:16
4. God trains His people, Psa 144:1
5. God leads His people:
 - a. God opens doors for the preaching of the Gospel, Acts 14:27, 2 Cor 2:12 (cf. 1 Cor 16:9, Col 4:3, e.g. Acts 16:6-10).
 - b. Sometimes doors for the Gospel are closed, 1 Thess 2:17-18.
 - c. God can even lead through illness, Gal 4:13.
6. By God's Word the Holy Spirit gives specific leading to the evangelist in his conscience, e.g. Acts 8:29 (cf. Job 33:14-18; Prov 6:22; Acts 16:9, 18:9-10; Rom 2:15)
7. God opens the mouth of the evangelist (cf. Acts 4:29; Eph 6:19-20):
Psa 51:15, "O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise"
Ezek 3:27, "But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth and you will say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' He who hears, let him hear; and he who refuses, let him refuse; for they are a rebellious house"
8. It is therefore God...
 - a. Who is declaring the Gospel through the evangelist, Acts 17:30
 - b. As well as His Holy Spirit, 1 Pet 1:12; Luke 12:12
 - c. Yes, even "the Spirit of Your Father who speaks in you," Matt 10:20

Consider also Heb 12:25 in this regard:

Heb 12:25, "See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks* from heaven"

If it is truly the Holy Spirit, or God Himself, speaking through His servant, the evangelist, and that particularly in times of persecution, then is it not God warning from heaven through His servants? In which case, it is clear why Jesus said:

Luke 10:16, "He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me"; Matt 10:40; John 15:20

9. The evangelist should pray for God to grant boldness in evangelism:
Acts 4:29, "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence..."
10. It is therefore God who...
 - a. Through His Holy Spirit fills the evangelist to give him boldness in evangelism, Acts 4:31
 - b. And likewise the hand of the Lord that accompanies the evangelist, Acts 11:21
11. Meanwhile, the Holy Spirit...
 - a. Gives specific words to the evangelist, Matt 10:19-20, Mark 13:11, Luke 12:11-12, 21:14-15 (cf. Eph 6:19).
 - b. Works in, with, and by His Word, Eph 6:17
 - c. Speaks to man's spirit through His Word, Rom 8:16
 - d. Preaches the Gospel, 1 Pet 1:12
 - e. Prepares the heart of those who will be saved, John 3:8 (e.g. Acts 16:25-30)
12. God simultaneously prepares the heart of the person to hear the Gospel, Acts 8:30-31:
 - a. For openness, Acts 8:30-31 (e.g. Acts 10:1-8)
 - b. And even for hardness of heart, Isa 6:9-10, Ezek 2-3

- 13. The Holy Spirit often allows the spiritual condition of the heart to be evident, Acts 13:9-11, 14:9 (cf. Matt 6:22-23)¹⁰⁶⁶
- 14. God gives strength to meet the challenges of difficult people, Ezek 3:7-9

Comparing Translations of Ezek 3:8¹⁰⁶⁷

LXX	Wycliffe 2 nd ed (1388)	King James Version (1611/1769)	New American Standard (1977)	New International Version (1984)	New Jerusalem Bible [®] (1985)	French <i>Le Semeur</i> (1992, 1999; my trans)	God's Word for the Nations (1995)
καὶ ἰδοὺ δέδωκα τὸ πρόσωπόν σου δυνατὸν κατέναντι τῶν προσώπων αὐτῶν καὶ τὸ νεῖκος σου κατισχύσω κατέναντι τοῦ νείκου αὐτῶν	Lo! Y yaf thi face strongere than the faces of hem, and thi forheed hardere than the forheedis of hem	Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads	Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads	But now, I am making you as defiant as they are, and as obstinate as they are	But now, I am making you as defiant as they are, and as obstinate as they are	Oh well, I will give you a face as obstinant as theirs and a forehead as resolute as theirs	Yet, I will make you as stubborn and as hardheaded as they are

Notice that the more literal translations seem to have greater power.

Also note that the more dynamic translation of the New Jerusalem Bible is identical to that of the New International Version in this verse.

- 14. God gave Stephen the supernatural wisdom to deal with difficult people, Acts 6:10 (Luke 12:11-12)
- 15. God opens the heart of the person who He has made ready to listen and respond to the Gospel message, Acts 16:14 (see more on God bringing salvation below):
 - a. Is this not when the grace of God “shines forth” [ἐπιφαίνω] for the individual (cf. Tit 2:11; 3:4)?
 - b. Was this not the experience of the Apostle Paul (cf. Acts 9:3)?
- 16. The Holy Spirit shines in the heart (and sometimes on the face) of the evangelist, Acts 6:15, 2 Cor 3:18, 4:3-6 (cf. Exod 34:30-35)
- 17. God assures that His Word accomplishes His will, Isa 55:10-11
- 18. God performs the purpose of His messengers, Isa 44:26



¹⁰⁶⁶“Fixing their/his gaze” (ἀτενίζω, Acts 6:15, 13:9) seems to imply some type of spiritual assessment. Jesus was noted to have the ability for this assessment throughout his ministry (e.g. Matt 9:4, 12:25). One clear example of this is the presence of the Holy Spirit was present in the face of Stephen as recorded in Acts 6:15 (F.F. Bruce). Whether it was a miracle of transformation evident to all or a miracle of vision for a particular person or group of people is uncertain, although the former is more likely. However, the fact is that the spiritual life of Stephen was made evident to onlookers, as it seems to be the case in the Peter’s assessment of the lame man in Acts 3:4, or Paul’s assessment of Elymas the magician in Acts 13:9 and of the lame man in Acts 14:9.

¹⁰⁶⁷Likewise, consider the accusations against the Huguenot martyrs as being “opinionated,” “stubborn,” “obstinant,” and “impertinent,” before the Catholic clergy turned them over to be burned alive, because they would not recant: Of Thomas de Saint-Paul, that he had “pertinacite et opiniastrete” (Jean Crespin, *Histoire des vrais tesmoins de la verite de l’evangile, qui de leur sang l’ont signée, depuis Jean Hus iusques autemps present* [Geneva, 1570; Liège, 1964], 185); of Jean Bertrand, that he was a “pernicieux Lutherien” (ibid., 433) and “opiniastrete” (ibid., 434); of Pierre Chevet, “heretique et schismatique” (ibid., 517); of Philbert Hamelin, “pertinax et obstine” (ibid., 540v).

E. God through the Holy Spirit Convicts Man:¹⁰⁶⁸

1. He convicts man as and when He wills it, John 3:8
2. He convicts man of sin, righteousness and judgment, John 16:8-11; e.g. Acts 24:25
3. Therefore, it is actually the Holy Spirit proclaiming through us, 1 Pet 1:12
4. God even allows difficulties to come into the lives of unbelievers in order to prepare them to seek Him for salvation, Job 33:17-28, 36:15

F. God Brings Salvation to the Open Heart:

Introduction: Note the main actor in salvation in Jer 31:31-34

1. God prepares the heart for the Gospel (*gracia preparatur*), Isa 25:9, 42:4, 45:24, 51:5, 60:9
 Luke 2:38 (NKJ), “And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem”

Note on this verse (see charts below): The Latin Vulgate and most contemporary translations follow the Critical Edition Greek Text which drops the preposition “in,” changing its translation to “of.” This change softens the stark evangelistic ministry of Anna unto prepared people “in Jerusalem” to communication to a theological worldview class of people who awaited the “redemption of Jerusalem.” It is interesting to note that the Clementine Vulgate of 1598 has for this portion “redemption of Israel,” showing that this has been an argued passage for quite some time—as has been the case for most evangelistically-oriented passages!

Original Language and Early Translations of the last phrase in Luke 2:38

Greek Orthodox NT	Stephanus (1550)	Scrivener's <i>Textus Receptus</i> [from Beza, 1598]	Vulgatam Clementinam (1598; Migne ed, 1880)	Tischendorf (1869-1872)	Wescott-Hort (1881)	Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam (1969, 1975, 1983)	Nova Vulgata (1979)	Nestle-Aland, 27 th ed. (1993)	Byzantine (2005)
καὶ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ	καὶ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ	καὶ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσι τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ	et loquebatur de illo omnibus, qui exspectabant redemptionem Israël.	καὶ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν Ἱερουσαλήμ	καὶ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν Ἱερουσαλήμ	et loquebatur de illo omnibus qui expectabant redemptionem Hierusalem	et loquebatur de illo omnibus, qui exspectabant redemptionem Ierusalem.	καὶ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν Ἱερουσαλήμ	καὶ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ

Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the New Testament Greek* (UBS, 1993), offered the following comment as to why it was determined that an unknown scribe inserted “ἐν” before the word “Jerusalem”: “the insertion of ἐν relieves the grammatical ambiguity.”¹⁰⁶⁹

Comparative English Translations of the Last Phrase in Luke 2:38

English Geneva (1560)	KJV (1611/1769)	English Revised (1885)	Douai-Rheims* (1899)	RSV (1952)	NAS (1977)	NKJ (1982)	ESV (2004)
& spake of him to all that loked for redemption in Ierusalem	and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem	and spake of him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem	and spoke of him to all that looked for the redemption of Israel	and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem	and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem	and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem	and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem

¹⁰⁶⁸Philipp Jacob Spener (1635-1705), sometimes called the Father of Pietism, summarizes the work of the Holy Spirit with regard to God’s Word in his work *Theologische Bedencken*. Spener wrote, “The Holy Spirit works with, by, and in the Word (Der Heil. Geist ist allezeit mit/beh und in dem wort) of God to bring men to illumination, conversion, and the new birth.” Philipp Jakob Spener, *Theologische Bedencken* (Halle, Germany: Erster Theil. Mit Chur-Furstl., 1700), 159; translation and citation by Arthur P. Johnston, *World Evangelism and the Word of God* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1974), 30.

¹⁰⁶⁹BibleWorks 8.0.

Others who “looked for” or “awaited” redemption [a word study of προσδεχόμενος]:

Luke 2:25 NKJ, “And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him”

Luke 23:51 (NKJ), “He had not consented to their decision and deed. *He was* from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God.”

Acts 24:15 (NKJ), “I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept [or “expect”; προσδέχομαι], that there will be a resurrection of *the* dead, both of *the* just and *the* unjust”

2 God opens the heart of the person so that he may come to Him, Acts 16:14 (cf. I Sam 10:9, John 6:65):

- a. God reveals the identity of Jesus, Matt 16:16-17
- b. God removes the veil over the heart in Jesus Christ, Isa 25:7; 2 Cor 3:16; cf. 2 Cor 4:3-4
- c. Therefore salvation is all God’s doing, 1 Cor 1:30 (notice the importance and varieties of the translations of the prepositions ἐξ αὐτοῦ and ἀπὸ θεοῦ)

Translations of 1 Cor 1:30

Byzantine Textform	French Geneva (1669)	French Geneva (my trans)	English Geneva (1560)	English Standard Version	Revised Standard Version	King James Version	New American Standard	Le Semeur (1999)*	ABS’s CEV ²⁶ (2005)**
Ἐξ αὐτοῦ δὲ ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς ἐγενήθη ἡμῖν σοφία ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμός, καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις·	Or c’est de lui que vous estes en Jesus Christ, qui vous a esté fait de par Dieu sapience, et justice, et sanctification, et redemption	Thus it is from him that you are in Jesus Christ, you who were made by God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption	But ye are of him in Christ Iesus, who of God is made vnto vs wisdome and righteousnesse, and sanctification, and redempcion	He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption	He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption	But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption	But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption	By him, you are united to the Christ, who has become for us this wisdom that comes from God: in Christ, in fact, is found for us, acquital, purification, and liberation from sin	You are God’s children. He sent Christ Jesus to save us and to make us wise, acceptable, and holy.

*Note the subtle changes added to the text to allow for priests giving absolution, while removing the fully divine element of salvation. French text (translation mine): “Par lui, vous êtes unis au Christ, qui est devenu pour nous cette sagesse qui vient de Dieu: en Christ, en effet, se trouvent pour nous l’acquitte-ment, la purification et la libération du péché.”

**Note the removal of both “by/of Him” and “from God” from the text, as well as the “in Christ Jesus”!

- d. Therefore all our boasting should be in the Lord, 1 Cor 1:31
- 3. God grants repentance, 2 Tim 2:25
- 4. He brings belief to the heart, John 6:29
- 5. The person who receives the salvation available through Christ becomes born-again, born of the Spirit, and born from above, John 3:3-8, Eph 4:24, 1 Pet 1:3, 22-23 (cf. Psa 104:30)
- 6. God’s Spirit confirms to the spirit of the believer that he is a child of God, Rom 8:16.
- 7. In Jesus Christ, God the Holy Spirit immediately seals the new believer, 2 Cor 1:22, Eph 1:13, 4:30 (cf. Acts 2:38-39; Gal 4:6)

G. God Bestows the Blessings of Salvation:

Introduction: A warning from the Lord, Jer 18:7-11 (cf. Jer 1:9-10)

- 1. Salvation and Eternal Life:
 - a. Pardon for sin, Psa 32:1-2, Isa 55:6-7, John 1:29, 17:2, 1 John 1:9
 - b. Deliverance from Hell, John 5:24
 - c. Reconciliation with God, 2 Cor 5:18-19

- d. Eternal life, John 1:12, 3:16, 6:40, 47, 14:6, Rom 6:23, Titus 3:7, 1 John 5:13
 - e. A crown of righteousness in glory, 2 Tim 4:8
 - f. Heaven awaits those who are being saved, Matt 25:46; John 14:1-3; Rev 21-22
2. Transformation:
 - a. "In Him you have been made complete," Col 2:10.
 - b. God transforms the Christian "from glory to glory," 2 Cor 3:18
 - c. God (through Christ) grants a spiritual gift(s) to his children, 1 Cor 12:7, Eph 4:7
 - d. The Holy Spirit instructs in God's ways, Neh 9:30, John 14:26, 16:13
 - e. God sustains the Christian, Psalms 18:35, 55:22, 63:8, 119:116, Isaiah 50:4, Hebrews 1:3
 - f. God makes the fruit of the Spirit available to the Christian (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) Gal 5:22-23
 - g. God fills with all goodness, knowledge, and ability to admonish, Rom 15:14
 - h. Reason for living, Matt 6:33, 22:37, Rom 12:1-2, Eph 1:5, 2:10, Heb 12:28
 - i. God gives the Christian hope through His word, Psalm 119:49
 3. Entrance into His family:
 - a. Adoption as His child, John 1:12, Gal 3:2, 4:7, Eph 1:5
 - b. Inheritance with Christ, Rom 8:17, Eph 3:6
 4. Blessing and Grace:
 - a. An advocate before the Father, 1 John 2:1
 - b. Every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus, Rom 8:32, Eph 1:3, Phil 4:19, 2 Pet 1:3 (cf. Psalm 34:9-10)
 - c. "For of His fulness we have all received, and grace upon grace," John 1:16
 5. Free access to His throne, Eph 2:18, Heb 4:16

BIG IDEA #2: MAN'S PLACE IN EVANGELISM IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY, BUT REALLY MINIMAL

A. Some verses put man in his place:

1. Luke 17:10, note the various translations of this verse...

Some Translations of ἀχρεῖος in Luke 17:10

Nestle-Aland	English Geneva [and KJV]	New American Standard	Revised Standard [and NIV]	French Francais Courant	French Le Semeur	ABS's CEV ²
δοῦλοι ἀχρεῖοί ἐσμεν	We are vnprofitable seruants	We are unworthy slaves	We are unworthy servants	We are simple servants	We are only servants without particular merit	We are merely servants
οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ὅταν ποιήσητε πάντα τὰ διαταχθέντα ὑμῖν, λέγετε ὅτι δοῦλοι ἀχρεῖοί ἐσμεν, ὃ ὠφείλομεν ποιῆσαι πεποικῆκαμεν	So likewise yee, when yee haue done all those things, which are commanded you, say, We are vnprofitable seruants: wee haue done that which was our duetie to doe	"So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done <i>only</i> that which we ought to have done.'"	So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty	«Il en va de même pour vous: quand vous aurez fait tout ce qui vous est ordonné, dites: «Nous sommes de simples serviteurs; nous n'avons fait que notre devoir.»	Il en est de même pour vous. Quand vous aurez fait tout ce qui vous est commandé, dites: «Nous ne sommes que des serviteurs sans mérite particulier; nous n'avons fait que notre devoir.»	And that's how it should be with you. When you've done all you should, then say, "We are merely servants, and we have simply done our duty."

Note these NT parallels:

Matt 25:30, "And cast out the worthless slave [τὸν ἀχρεῖον δοῦλον] into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth

Philemon 1:10-11, "I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, who formerly was useless [ἄχρηστος] to you, but now is useful both to you and to me."

ἄχρηστος in the same Louw-Nida word group as ἀχρεῖος (65.30-65.39)

- 1 Cor 3:7, note some diverse translations of this powerful text:

Some Translations of 1 Corinthians 3:7

Neste-Aland 27 th ed.	Latin Vulgate	French Jacques Lefevre (1530)	French Geneva	King James Version (1611/1769)	New American Standard	French Segond (1910)	New Living Translation	New Jerusalem Bible [Ⓢ]	French Le Semeur	Cont English Version [Ⓢ]
ἐστίν τι οὔτε	neque ... est aliquid neque	not ... is anything	not ... is anything	neither is ... any thing	neither ...is anything	ce n'est pas ... qui est quelque chose	aren't important	neither ... count for anything	Little matters who ... What counts is	What matters isn't those who ..., but
ὥστε οὔτε ὁ φυτεῦων ἐστίν τι οὔτε ὁ ποτίζων ἀλλ' ὁ αὐξάνων θεός.	itaque neque qui plantat est aliquid neque qui rigat sed qui incrementum dat Deus	Parquoy ne celui qui plante n'est rien / ne celui qu'y arouse: mais Dieu qui donne accroissement	C'est pourquoi, ni celui qui plante n'est rien, ni celui qui arrose: mais Dieu qui donne l'accroissement	So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase	So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth	en sorte que ce n'est pas celui qui plante qui est quelque chose, ni celui qui arrose, mais Dieu qui fait croître.	The ones who do the planting or watering aren't important, but God is important because he is the one who makes the seed grow	In this, neither the planter nor the waterer counts for anything; only God, who gives growth	Peu importe, en fait, qui plante et qui arrose. Ce qui compte, c'est Dieu qui fait croître.	What matters isn't those who planted or watered, but God who made the plants grow.

B. Yet God Chooses to Use Man to “Save” Others:

- “That I might save some”:
1 Cor 9:22, “To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that by all means [or: effort] **I may save some**”
- “Save others”:
Jude 22-23, “And have mercy on some, who are doubting; **save** others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.”
- “Whether you will save your husband? ... whether you will save your wife?”
1 Cor 7:16, “For how do you know, O wife, whether **you will save** your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether **you will save** your wife?”
- “Deliver”
Prov 24:11-12, “**Deliver** those who are being taken away to death, And those who are staggering to slaughter, O hold *them* back. If you say, ‘See, we did not know this,’ Does He not consider *it* who weighs the hearts? And does He not know *it* who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?”

C. Similarly God Chooses to Use Man that Others Might “Believe”:

- “Servants through whom you believed”:
1 Cor 3:5, “What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants **through whom you believed**, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one.”
- “Because of what you said that we believe”:
John 4:42, “And they were saying to the woman, ‘It is no longer because of what you said that **we believe**, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.’”
- For example, the jailer “believed” and was “saved”!
Acts 16:28-34, “But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!’ And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and after he brought them out, he said, ‘Sirs, what must I do **to be saved**?’ They said, ‘**Believe** in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.’ And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. And he took them that *very* hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his *household*. And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, **having believed** in God with his whole household.”

4. Peter's invitation in Acts 2 included for listeners to "save themselves" from a crooked generation: Acts 2:40. "And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, '**Be saved** [imperative aorist passive 2nd person pl] from this perverse generation!'"
5. In fact, God used Paul to literally "save some" (as it were from this discussion): 1 Cor 9:22b, "I have become all things to all men, that **I may** by all means **save some**"

A FURTHER THOUGHT ON THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EVANGELISM:

1. The Holy Spirit provides the aid to bring souls to Christ and grow His Church: Acts 9:31 (Darby), "The assemblies then throughout the whole of Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified and walking in the fear of the Lord, and were increased through the comfort [or: help] of the Holy Spirit [καὶ τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐπληθύνοντο]."

Prayer in Evangelism

Introduction:

- a. Permeating Evangelism with Prayer:
 - Prayer before we evangelize
 - Prayer while we evangelize
 - Prayer early in the evangelism conversation
 - Prayer as the climax of the evangelism conversation
 - Prayer ending the evangelism conversation.
- b. Who Is to Pray?
 - Before evangelizing: Those planning to evangelize should pray
 - While we evangelize:
 - Those watching the evangelizing conversation should pray
 - Those doing the evangelizing should pray
 - Encouraging the contact to pray: The recipient of the gospel should pray
 - After evangelizing: The evangelist should pray for those with whom he has shared
 - The church family:
 - The church family of the evangelist should pray for those who heard the gospel
 - The church family should pray for those who need to hear the gospel
 - The church family should pray for the evangelist while he evangelizes and at other times also
 - It is easy for the ministry of the evangelist to be overlooked and even forgotten, since his most effective ministry of personal evangelism is not seen by the greater congregation

I am grateful for a God who answers prayer, Heb 7:23-25.

1. Understanding the Need for Prayer:

- a. The quandary of prayer: when is prayer truly effective in the throne room of God?
 - When the idea of a prayer need comes to our minds?
 - Who gives us the idea to pray? God or man or the Bible?
 - When the idea of the prayer is formulated into words in our minds?
 - When our mind speaks those words as a prayer to God, as in silent prayer?
 - When our minds send the impulses to our vocal chords, these latter beginning to shape the sounds as they are sent by the brain?
 - When the air begins to rush through our vocal chords, developing the words in prayer, as our mind sent it, those being in our own individual language, dialect, and idiomatic forms?
 - When the sound of our prayer is available to be heard externally by another person who may be praying with us or who is within earshot?

How, then, does the laying on of hands seem to accentuate the power of a prayer?

It can be seen from these questions, to which many others may be added, that prayer is a mystery
 And yet it is requested of us by God
 And it is part of His plan for our salvation and spiritual growth!
- b. Paul on prayer for evangelism:
 - Eph 6:18-20 (NKJ), “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”
 - Col 4:2-4, “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.”
 - 2 Thess 3:1-2, “Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run *swiftly* and be glorified, just as *it is* with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.”
 - Rom 10:1, “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.”
- c. The help of the Holy Spirit in prayer, Rom 8:26-27
- d. A knowledge of the spiritual battle being waged, 2 Cor 10:3-5.

e. Food for Thought:

- 1) We live in a renewed time of emphasis on prayer, when some even speak of “prayer evangelism”—as if praying for someone is equivalent to or more spiritually effective than sharing the gospel with them.¹⁰⁷⁰ A position hard to justify theologically or practically in the accounts of the Book of Acts
- 2) While praying “on site with insight” seems to be a good lead into evangelism...
- 3) We must be reminded of Samuel Zwemer’s emphatic words that “prayer is not evangelism” (*No Salvation without Substitution* [1944]), as this must have been a problem in his day (as can be exemplified by Chafer’s antecedent book [1911])
- 4) Gregory Frizzell’s book, *Iceberg Dead Ahead*, explained and exemplified the tension involved: When it comes to prayer, repentance, and evangelism, it should never be *either/or*—it must always be *both/and!* There should never be any tension between “evangelism” and “prayer” people. In Scripture and in revival history, true evangelism and prayer are inseparately united. Make no mistake, to pray without doing evangelism is false piety. Yet to evangelize without fervent prayer and repentance ignores an absolutely essential principle of spiritual power. It may also reflect a subtle (but dangerous) attitude of self-reliance.¹⁰⁷¹
- 5) While prayer is important and essential, the Great Commission never stated, “Go into all the world and pray for all people.” In fact, the ministry of Paul in the book of Acts has very little on prayer, especially when discussing Paul’s custom of evangelism (Acts 17:2-3). Frizzell exemplifies one thing, prayer, among quite a number, that can keep soul winners from focusing on proclamation of the Gospel to win souls:
 - a) Have they prayed enough? (Chafer)
 - b) Have they built enough of a relationship to show the love of God? (Pippert, Aldrich)
 - c) Have they met any of the person’s so-called needs? (Bosch, Sjogren)
 - d) Are they doing it for their glory or the glory of God?
 - e) Have they built a worldview bridge? (Mittelberg)
 - f) Have they taken enough time? (Mittelberg)

Any and all of these elements can co-opt biblical evangelism and leave the soul winner frozen with trying to accomplish a multitude of preparations for or additions to the Gospel, prior to attempting to share the Gospel. And as these notes will show, I believe in prayer, but I equally believe in the need for obedience in NT evangelism.

2. Effective Prayer Starts with the Righteousness that God Gives:

- a. When God does not hear prayer:
 Psa 66:18-19, “If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear; But certainly God has heard; He has given heed to the voice of my prayer”
 Prov 28:9, “He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, Even his prayer is an abomination”
 Isa 1:15, “So when you spread out your hands *in prayer*, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood”
- b. When God hears prayer:
 Prov 15:8, “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But the prayer of the upright is His delight”
 Prov 15:29, “The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous”
 James 5:16, “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much”

¹⁰⁷⁰“Fundamentally, then, the personal element in true soul-winning work is more a service of pleading *for* souls than a service of pleading *with* souls. It is talking with God about men from a clean heart and in the power of the Spirit, rather than talking to men about God. But let no one conclude that such intercessory prayer is not a service demanding time and vitality. If faithfully entered into this ministry, as has been pointed out, will result in an opportunity to direct Spirit-moved men to the faithful provisions and promises of God” (Lewis Sperry Chafer, *True Evangelism or Winning Souls by Prayer* [1st ed. Philadelphia: Sunday School Times, 1911; 2nd ed., Philadelphia: Sunday School Times, 1919; Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1993], 69).

¹⁰⁷¹Gregory Frizzell, *Iceberg Dead Ahead! An Urgent Call to “God-Seeking Repentance”* (Oklahoma City: Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, 2007), 60.

3. Teaching Concerning Prayer in Evangelism:

- a. Prayer for evangelism in general:
 - 1) Prayer can allow the political freedom to proclaim the Gospel, 1 Tim 2:1-4 (cf. Prov 21:1; Jer 29:7; Acts 9:31).
 - 2) Prayer for doors to be opened for the Gospel, Col 4:3 (cf. 1 Cor 16:9)
 - 3) Prayer that the Word of God may spread rapidly, 2 Thess 3:1 (cf. Psa 147:15)
 - 4) Prayer as long as there are some who are unsaved, 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Thess 3:2
- b. Prayer and workers:
 - 1) Prayer is the impetus for workers in evangelism, Matt 9:36-38; Luke 10:2 (e.g. Acts 13:2)
 - 2) Prayer is important for those involved in evangelism, Eph 6:19-20; 2 Thess 3:1-2
 - 3) Your prayer life will make you become available, Matt 9:36-38; Luke 10:2
- c. Prayer for and in specific evangelistic situations (cf. Prov 3:5-6, Isa 30:21):
 - 1) Prayer as preceding bold evangelism, Acts 1:14ff, 4:23-31; 13:2
 - 2) Prayer as the catalyst for boldness in evangelism:

Acts 4:31, "And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and *began* to speak the word of God with boldness."

Eph 6:18-20, "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and *pray* on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in *proclaiming* it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

Col 4:2-4, "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of* thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; in order that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak."
 - 3) Prayer for the Word of God to be effective, Rom 1:16, Heb 4:12
- d. Prayer can allow God to open a heart to salvation:
 - 1) God desires the salvation of all men, 1 Tim 2:1-4, 2 Pet 3:9
 - 2) The Holy Spirit must convict the heart of the individual to see his need for salvation, John 16:8-11.
 - 3) God will answer the prayer in His will, John 14:13-14, 1 John 5:13-15 (not forgetting 1 Cor 7:16)

4. Persevering prayer for someone's salvation (cf. Luke 18:1-8):

- a. God desires the salvation of all men, 1 Tim 2:4, 2 Pet 3:8-9
- b. Jesus must reveal God to the person, Matt 11:27, Luke 10:22
- c. The Spirit of God is needed to convict men of their need for Jesus, John 16:8 (cf. Zech 4:6; e.g. 1 Cor 2:1-5)
- d. God will answer prayer in His will, John 4:13-14, 1 John 5:14-15
- e. The individual needs to decide for themselves, 1 Cor 7:16
- f. There is a time when God will no longer hear prayer for a person or group, Jer 7:16, 14:11

5. Biblical Examples of Prayer in Evangelism:

- a. A prayer life while evangelizing, Luke 5:15-16
- b. Prayer for the lost, Rom 9:1-5 (cf. Matt 9:35-37)

6. Practical Insights:

- a. Pray daily for opportunities to share the Gospel.
- b. Pray for the unsaved when the Lord places them on your heart.
- c. Keep a list of names of people with whom you have shared the gospel or who God lays on your heart, and pray through this list daily, weekly, or periodically (depending upon how long it is)
- d. Cover the sharing situation with prayer: before, during and after:
 - 1) Pray as specifically as possible;
 - 2) It is a spiritual battle and prayer is needed to have spiritual effectiveness;
 - 3) Fervent prayer before, during, and after evangelism gives us an urgency that adorns the gospel presentation with its importance.

- e. If sharing is done two-by-two, one person can intercede while the other is talking.
- f. Pray for the continued work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those with whom you have shared the Gospel.

Conclusion:

Here is the prayer of the soul winner:

Acts 4:29-30 (NKJ), “Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.”

Will you pray that God will grant you to speak His word with all boldness today?

Fasting in Evangelism

Introduction: Although somewhat mysterious, much like prayer, and often indirectly cause and effect (hence not “name and claim”), fasting may in fact have a role in the spiritual battle being wages for the souls of men...

1. Reasons for Fasting and Prayer:

- a. To realign the priority of the spiritual, Matt 4:2-4
- b. To humble oneself before God and seek Him, 2 Kg 21:27-29, Ezra 8:21, Esther 4:16, Jonah 3:5-10
- c. Because the Bridegroom has been taken away, Matt 9:15 (pointing to the longing for His return, Rev 21:17)
- d. For spiritual power, Mark 9:29 (cf. Matt 17:21)
- e. For spiritual insight and understanding into some dimension of the Word of God, Dan 9:1-3
- f. For wisdom and direction:
 - 1) In decision making, Acts 14:23 (see also Acts 13:1-3)
 - 2) In one’s actions, Neh 1:4
- g. In order to accomplish God’s will: John 4:32-34, “And Jesus said to them, ‘My will is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.’”

2. Teaching about fasting:

- a. There are biblical exhortations to fast, Esther 9:31, Joel 2:12
- b. Jesus taught that His followers **would** fast, Matt 9:14-15, Mark 2:18-19, Luke 5:33-35
- c. Fasting while not dealing with known wickedness is sinful, Isa 58:1-12
- d. Fasting weakens the body, Psa 109:24 (cf. 1 Sam 28:20)
- e. Interpersonal dimensions of fasting:
 - 1) One should not fast to be seen by men, Matt 6:16, i.e. proper motivation
 - 2) Effort should be made to keep a cheerful countenance while fasting, Matt 6:16 (cf. Neh 2:1)
 - 3) Care should be taken to avoid appearing unkempt while fasting, Matt 6:17-18 (e.g. not wearing ashes on one’s forehead; cf. Neh 9:1, Dan 10:3)
- f. There is a place for abstinence in the marriage relationship for the purpose of prayer,¹⁰⁷² 1 Cor 7:5
- g. There are times when one should not fast, 1 Sam 14:24-30, Matt 9:15

3. Practical considerations in fasting:

Introduction: Satan will try to sabotage a fast,¹⁰⁷³ Matt 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13

- a. Reasons for **beginning a fast**:
 - 1) Following an obvious act of God in life, Acts 9:8-9
 - 2) For a specific enquiry from the Lord:
 - a) For protection, 2 Sam 12:16-17, Ezra 8:21, Esth 4:11
 - b) For insight into God’s Word, Dan 9:3
 - 3) When asking for the Lord’s help, 2 Chron 20:3, Esth 4:3
 - 4) After a pronouncement of judgment from God, 1 Sam 28:20
 - 5) As a sign of repentance in confession, Neh 9:1-2
 - 6) When hearing of a great calamity, Neh 1:4
 - 7) When mourning the loss of a loved one, 1 Sam 31:13, 2 Sam 1:12
 - 8) As a practice of seeking the Lord, Dan 10:2-3, Acts 13:2
- b. Reasons for **ending a fast**:
 - 1) A concrete answer to prayer or enquiry, 2 Sam 12:19-20, Acts 9:19 (cf. Ezra 8:23), Dan 9:20-21, 10:2-4, 13.7
 - 2) When the event for which one has fasted has taken place, 2 Sam 12:19-23, Esth. 4:16, 5:1
 - 3) The ending of a specified period of time, Acts 12:3, 14:23 (cf. Dan 10:2-4, 13¹⁰⁷⁴)

¹⁰⁷²Dr. Robert E. Coleman included this consideration as one of seven spiritual disciplines for his Discipleship Evangelism class.

¹⁰⁷³From a sermon by Stephen Goold at Crystal Evangelical Free Church, New Hope, MN, delivered on January 19, 1992.

4) Ending a fast too soon (Saul), 1 Sam 28:23

c. Practical considerations:

- 1) How should young children eat when the mother and/or father are fasting?
- 2) When hosting guests for a meal, how should one fast? Matt 9:15.

4. Types of fasting:

- a. The absolute fast:
 - 1) No bread or water, Ezra 10:6, Acts 9:9
 - 2) No food, just water (by deduction), Matt 4:1-4, Luke 4:1-4
- b. No tasty food, nor meat, nor wine, Dan 1:10, 10:3
- c. An abnormal diet, Matt 3:4
- d. Abstinence in marriage, 1 Cor 7:5

5. Some examples of fasting:

- a. In the Old Testament: 1 Sam 28:20, 31:13, 2 Sam 1:12, 2 Chron 20:3, Ezra 8:21, Neh 1:4, 9:1, Esther 4:3, 16, Dan 9:3, 10:3
- b. In the New Testament, Matt 3:4, 4:2, Acts 13:2-3, 14:23

6. Fasting and Prayer for Evangelism:

- a. To see the spiritual need of others, and the primacy of this need, Matt 4:2-4
- b. For deepened spiritual insight in the proclamation of God's Word, Dan 9:1-3
- c. For spiritual power to evangelize with boldness, Matt 17:21, Eph 6:19-20
- d. For humility and proper respect of the message in evangelism, 2 Kg 21:27-29, Ezra 8:21
- e. For wisdom in the use of time and funds to evangelize, Neh 1:4, Acts 14:23

¹⁰⁷⁴C. F. Keil & Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 408: "So that the question as to the beginning and the end of the fast is not answered from the text, and, as being irrelevant to the matter, it can remain undecided."

Chapter 11 Appendixes

God the Evangelist: An Analysis of Gen 4:6-7

Gen 4:6-7	Analysis
<p>So the LORD said to Cain,</p>	<p>Speech:</p> <p>The Eternal One is speaking to Cain</p> <p>Notice also that the Eternal One comes at the proper time, between the temptation and the sin being committed</p> <p>Is this not quite similar to God’s promised help in temptation?</p> <p>1 Cor 10:13, “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God <i>is</i> faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear <i>it</i>”</p> <p>Notice that this speech appears to be analogous to God speaking to the conscience of Cain, Rom 2:14-15</p> <p>Although it is likely that this is an example of God addressing Cain directly</p> <p>According to the analysis of Keil and Delitzsch, God did not completely discontinue direct speech to men after the Garden of Eden</p> <p>Notice also the link between this kind of speech and Paul’s evangelism, Rom 2:16</p> <p>Likewise, evangelizing is a matter of direct speech:</p> <p>In fact, it is in actuality God speaking to others through us:</p> <p>Matt 10:20, “It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you”</p> <p>Such that:</p> <p>Matt 10:40, “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me”</p> <p>Luke 10:16, “He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me”</p> <p>John 13:20, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me”</p> <p>We do not know God’s perfect timing, but God does:</p> <p>Notice how He sent Philip to the Ethiopian Eunuch just at the time when he was questioning what Isa 53 meant (Acts 8)</p> <p>When we enter the ministry of evangelizing, we join God where He is, and He leads us supernaturally; and His timing is always perfect</p> <p>Could it be that we sometimes become God’s “way out” of temptation for people as we approach them with the Gospel (1 Cor 10:13)?</p> <p>This is for sure the case as we seek to pull people away from their “pride of life” to humble themselves before the mighty hand of God!</p> <p>Could not the same be true of discipleship or true Christian fellowship? A word of godly counsel at the proper time to keep a brother or sister from sin?</p>
<p>“Why are you angry? And why has your countenance</p>	<p>God speaks directly to the problem, or the impending problem</p> <p>Notice:</p> <p>(1) The impact of temptation on the facial characteristics of Cain—the war being waged in the soul prior to his sin, and ultimately leading him into his sin (cf. Deut 15:9)</p>

fallen?"

- (2) God initiates the conversation; He does not wait for Cain to come to Him, but He seeks out Cain; is that not very gracious of God?
 (3) God asks a question, thereby not judging Cain, but allowing Cain to evaluate the situation himself

God initiates the redemptive conversation with Cain, as we ought to be willing to initiate redemptive conversations with people around us:

We will see that ultimately, the conversation was to discuss the sin issue (from the chapter before, that is Gen 3)

So here we have God's first conversation with man after sending Adam and Eve out of the Garden, and it is a redemptive conversation, whose warning is ultimately rejected by man
 By the way, the issue is sin—it is not facial expressions or even restoration of a relationship

Notice that God was speaking with "unsaved" Cain:

Likewise, we have the impression that God truly does speak to unsaved people, even those that remain unsaved, e.g. Acts 24:24-26

Isn't that another gracious act?

God is actually speaking to unsaved people all around us, and we do not realize it, unless we speak to them about spiritual things

Although, we will find that some have a seared conscience, 1 Tim 4:3

Others are blind, 2 Cor 4:3-4; etc.

God speaks to all men through sickness, pain, and even dreams, Job 33

He makes Himself clear in His speech to man (Rom 1), although that does not:

Duplicate, replace, or conflict with our needing to fulfill the Great Commission

Take the place of our needing to evangelize so that lost people can hear and be saved; thus excusing us from needing to evangelize

Notice that God used the same method as Satan, asking a question (Gen 3:1)

Questions seem to be an effective rhetorical device to get individual man to consider his individual spiritual lot

It is interesting that in both Gen 3 and Gen 4, Satan won out:

In Gen 3, Eve falls for the temptation

In Gen 4, Cain ignores the warning of God and continues on to kill his brother Abel

In fact, numerous questions are found throughout the pages of the NT in relation to evangelism conversations, some of which are used to begin conversations:

Jesus in John 5:6

Philip in Acts 8:30

Notice that God first addressed the symptom on His way to addressing the core issue:

Therefore, God uses a stair-step approach to the problem, coming at it indirectly, by dealing with the uncomfortable symptom

Jesus uses a stair-step approach with His disciples when He asks them "Who do men say that I am?" and then "But who do you say that I am?" (Matt 16:13, 15)

Jesus went from the general to the particular in speaking with Nicodemus, John 3:3, 7

Similarly with asking for a drink of water, John 4:7, 11

Notice that this lesson could also be called, "God the Psychologist":

God was psychoanalyzing Cain's symptoms:

Angry heart

Downcast face

Notice how the sin that was taking root in Cain's heart was in the process of destroying his

	<p>relationship with his brother, as well as his relationship with God, to whom he never responds—apparently ignoring God and His admonition!</p> <p>However, he is not leaving accountability to Himself, nor sin, nor Cain’s individual responsibility for “doing well” out of the equation</p> <p>Notice that sometimes the spiritual state of another person is discernible to the evangelist, both in a positive sense and in a negative sense:</p> <p>Positively, Paul noted that the lame man from Lystra had faith in Jesus to be made well on his first hearing of the Gospel (Acts 14:8-9)</p> <p>Negatively, Paul noted that Elymas the sorcerer was filled with a spirit of deceit and fraud (Acts 13:9-10)</p> <p>If God reveals to us that spiritual state, following His leading, we ought to speak to it and/or use it in our witness</p>
<p>7 “If you do well, will you not be accepted?”</p>	<p>God gave Cain a way out, an ultimatum as it were in verse 7</p> <p>Yet, He began with the good side of the equation</p> <p>Is this not the prime example of “speech seasoned with salt to give grace to those who hear”? (Col 4)</p> <p>I am made to wonder, if Jesus coming to this earth to deal with mankind, did not ponder how His father dealt with mankind in his sin, as in this example (Gen 4)</p> <p>Remember the words of Jesus “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me” (Mat 17:17; and parallels)?</p> <p>“If you do well”</p> <p>God was preaching good news to Cain</p> <p>It was good for him if he would only receive it or accept it (have a hearing of faith)</p> <p>It was clear that the psychological state in which Cain was living as he was contemplating and meditating on killing his brother, as jealousy and bitterness was consuming his soul, was not healthy nor helpful to him</p> <p>“Will you not be accepted”</p> <p>Here is a hint of accountability to God</p> <p>Our lifestyle being acceptable to God</p> <p>“Well done, thou good and faithful servant”</p> <p>Remember the unheeded words of warning of righteous Lot to the people of Sodom?</p> <p>Gen 19:7, “Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly!”</p> <p>Which godly preaching they rejected:</p> <p>Gen 19:9, “This one came to stay <i>here</i>, and he keeps acting as a judge”</p> <p>Bringing destruction upon themselves:</p> <p>Gen 19:24, “Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens”</p> <p>Yet also remember that the people of Nineveh did receive the words of Jonah:</p> <p>Jonah 3:4, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”</p> <p>Which advice they did receive:</p> <p>Jonah 3:5, “So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them”</p> <p>And God relented and accepted their repentance:</p> <p>Jonah 3:10, “Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it”</p>

“And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door.”

“If you do not do well”

God gives the negative side of the ultimatum

The result of falling prey to sin, actually resulting in death, Rom 6:23; James 1:15

This is the warning, and this is the most difficult part of evangelism, warning

Notice Paul speaks of “warning every man” as part of preaching Jesus, “Christ in you the hope of glory,” Col 1:27-28

So, the Gospel message of one of warning of impending doom:

Mark 1:15, “The time is fulfilled, and the rulership of God is at hand, repent and believe the Good News”

Remember that God was giving Cain a chance before He fell into sin

Was this not gracious of God?

And does this not make Cain’s sin even more heinous and worthy of judgment?

Is this not the role of every man’s conscience prior to their falling into sin? (Rom 2:14-15)

And does not the fact that man has a conscience condemn him before a holy God?

And show him his need for a Savior?

Oh the riches of the grace of God poured out upon rebellious and sinful mankind!

“Sin lies at the door”

Out of these words, we see sin personified as a roaring lion

This ravenous animal is crouching and waiting for an opportune time

It is waiting at the door, looking for an unguarded moment

There is a terrible urgency to see this animal called “sin”

And not to open that door to him

The way to not open the door to him is given to Cain as “If you do well”

Not following through with the ruminations of his mind, with his deceitful scheming

Yet he went on and lied to Cain in the next verse

It appears then that Cain could have obeyed the admonition of God

But here we have the weakness of the Law, although it offers regulations by which we should “do well,” it only ends up condemning us, because we cannot “do well”

What then could Cain have done?

The same thing that Eve did not do!

Cry out to God for help and mercy

Whenever our conscience condemns us, which, by the way, happens repeatedly every day, we ought to cry out to God for His strength and mercy toward us

Yes, Cain needed Jesus

He needed Jesus before the murder

He needed Jesus after the murder

Yet his only concern was for himself, his reputation, his skin

Notice, however, that God gives us a list of forgiven murderers in the Bible, notably:

Moses (Egyptian)

David (Uriah)

Saul of Tarsus, Paul (Stephen)

The perceptive reader will notice that these are among the most important persons in the Bible

Yes, there is hope, even for the murderer!

“And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it.”

“And its desire *is* for you”

God, the Evangelist, taught Cain about sin
He gave him a lesson in harmatology

He did not speak about His transcendence, nor His glory, nor His worthiness to be praised:
He did not come as the Shekinah glory to amaze Cain with His brilliance
He did not come explaining his sovereignty and preeminence

God came as a teacher, teaching about what sin was seeking to do in Cain’s heart:

What sin wants to do
And how he could overcome sin

Notice, however, the weakness of the Old Covenant
It is true that Cain needed to rule over sin
But it is also true that he could not rule over it

Again, this shows us our need for Jesus
And we can say thank you to the Lord for placing us on this side of the cross of Christ
We can conquer sin, not in our own strength, but by the Holy Spirit residing in our hearts!

If God had left us with this “Rule” that He gave to Cain, “If you do well... if you do not do well” then we would all be doomed to eternal damnation
By the way, there are many works salvation religions today
Perhaps the Church of Rome being the chief among those that call themselves Christian

But where the Old Covenant was weak, in the New Covenant herein is our strength

Notice also that God made a world where Cain could ignore His teaching, to his own peril
Is this not what God saw when He looked down on the earth in Gen 6:5?
Man doing “only evil continually”?

“but you should rule over it”

Thus, the words of God end with an ultimatum , “if, then; if not, then”
And the response to this ultimatum is noted by the works of Cain in the next verse
He spoke to his brother
Likely some kind of lie
John 8:44 ties together the murderer and the lie
He killed his brother
Hatred leading to violence, Matt 5:21-22

This evangelistic conversation ends with God the Evangelist leaving Cain with a warning!

Sometimes or even oftentimes in our evangelism, especially when dealing with someone whom we can sense is hardened, should we not leave the contact with a some kind of warning?

Heb 3;15; 4:7, “Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts”
2 Cor 6:2, “Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation”

Consider also the example of John the Baptist, Jesus, and the disciples:

Matt 3:2, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”
Matt 4:17, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
Matt 10:7, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Mark 1:15, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

Mark 6:12, “So they went out and preached that *people* should repent”

Mark 16:15-16, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned”

Luke 24:46-47, “Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem”

Acts 2:38, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"

So the ball is in man's court to respond to the message that God has given:
The evangelist delivers God's message, and it is up to man to respond
And notice that even God was rejected when He warned Cain

Expectant Evangelism's Theological Foundations

God's Election
("which we know not but by the event,"
John Owen)

+

The Verbal Proclamation of the Gospel
(which is taught and exemplified in Scripture,
and unto which we are commanded)

+

The Dynamic Power of God's Word

+

The Work of the Holy Spirit

=

A Hearing of Faith
(at the designated time in their lives,
for those unto whom it is foreordained)

+

An Invitation to Salvation
(which is taught and exemplified in Scripture,
and unto which we are commanded)

=

An Opportunity for Instantaneous Conversion

(At This Point the Four Soils of the Parable of the Sower
Differentiate the Responses of Persons)

