

How Does a Preacher Win Souls?

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1. He Must *Pray*.

For a man to win souls, he must first be a praying man. A prayerful man is a powerful man. A man who prays brings terror to Satan's kingdom. When a man of God prays to Almighty God and uses the Word of God in presenting the clear and biblical gospel to the lost, a mighty work is done. A man who preaches the Word of God must earnestly desire to win souls. A preacher must passionately be zealous to woo and win the lost to the blessed Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. To accomplish this, he must rely on the power of prayer and the priority of prayer. This man wanting to win the wayward to Christ must pray much for the unregenerate in his flock. He must pray for those given to sin in his Church. He must beg God to expose sin in the flock so as to keep the body of Christ pure and undefiled. He must pray for the lost because he wants to see them escape the wrath of God which looms over their necks as an ax lies at the root of a tree.

2. He Must *Prepare*.

A preacher desires to save sinners. If not, he has lost focus of a great responsibility with which God has entrusted him. A man who wants to win souls for Christ knows he must spend much time in his study knowing the Word of God for His own heart and preparing the Word to preach to God's people. Preparation is agonizing. Preparation is work. Preparation takes diligence. Preparation is antagonistic to laziness. The man of God who desires to see souls saved heartily believes that he must prepare to preach the plain truth of Scripture so as to see the Spirit use the preaching to convert and change the unregenerate. Even in the preparation process, he considers the lost who need Christ. He contemplates the arguments the unregenerate and skeptics may formulate in their minds while he preaches. He prepares thoroughly so he can preach passionately trusting in the Spirit's sovereignty to save eternally.

3. He Must *Preach*.

Sadly, this point needs to be clearly stated. Every man of God who desires to win souls entrusted with the ministry of pastor/shepherd must be a fearless and faithful preacher of the Word of God. He must echo the words of the Apostle Paul: "Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel." He lives to preach. He dies from exhaustion. He contemplates how to preach better. He considers better outlines, better illustrations, better application points, and better presentations so he can be the very best that he can be to be used by God in the preaching of the Word. He must preach. To preach is not to teach. To teach is not to preach. To preach is to throw the gasoline of passion, fervor, zeal, application, and persuasion on the fire of teaching. To preach is to be unashamed, unflinching, uncompromising, and unbending in fidelity to read the Word, explain the Word, and apply the Word. To preach is to take a particular text of Scripture and proclaim the authorial intent of Scripture with urgent pleading, specific application, and appropriate warning to the hearers. A man who wants to win souls cannot stand to give merely

a commentary. He cannot present a thought. He cannot share a sermon. He cannot provide some options and some dutiful and theological tidbits. No! The man of God desirous to win souls wishes he could climb down from the wooden pulpit, grab his audience, pry through their skin, grab their heart, and flip the switch of regeneration so as to see them genuinely converted. Though he knows he cannot do this, he preaches with as much fire and urgency as if he could. Preaching is sanctified madness.

4. He Must *Persuade*.

Paul, one of the greatest preachers and missionaries, zealously endeavored to persuade both Jews and Greeks while preaching. While in Corinth, he spent each Sabbath attempting to persuade both Jews and Greeks that Jesus was the Risen Lord! Paul tried to persuade King Agrippa to become a Christian. Paul often testified about the kingdom of God and tried to persuade his hearers concerning Jesus from Moses and the Prophets. He did not just do this on the Sabbath only in the synagogue. No! Paul wanted to persuade people to believe in Christ Jesus as he taught from morning till evening — even while in Roman prison! Because we know the fear of the Lord, we persuade men. The man of God who preaches knows that God's wrath angrily resides on the wretched rebel who, if he dies in an unrepentant state, will experience the just fury of the fiery torment from God's own hand for endless eternities. For this reason, he makes it his goal to persuade sinners to repent, believe, cling, and follow Christ as Lord. If sinners go to hell, then this preacher would wish that they would jump into hell with his hands clasping at their ankles while begging them to repent. If sinners be damned, let them be damned while jumping over our bodies as we endeavor to stand in the way, preach Christ to them, plead with them to repent, persuade them of their terrible plight, and present to them the sufficient atonement of Christ, the propitiatory sacrifice. Persuade! Persuade! Persuade! And all the while, this preacher knows that it is ultimately God the Spirit — and only God — who can regenerate a sinful soul.

5. He Must *Go Public*.

A preacher who wants to win souls will go public. That is to say, he will go beyond the wooden pulpit in the sanctuary to the fields so as to find the lost masses and preach Christ and Him crucified to them! He knows there are unbelievers that come each week and sit under his preaching in Church. He also understands that there are innumerable masses of hell-bound souls indulging the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, living on cruise control heading for eternal destruction, storing up wrath for themselves, oblivious to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the preacher who zealously wants to win souls will go outside to the masses who would not otherwise come to his church so that they can hear the truth. He lifts his voice loudly. He receives mockings unflinchingly. He preaches unashamedly. He lifts his Bible, thunders his voice, and tells sinners the biblical gospel of Jesus Christ. He refuses to lighten the punch of radical depravity and total inability. He believingly preaches Christ crucified and the need to repent, turn, and follow Christ as a way of life knowing that the Spirit will use His Word to draw His elect to Himself. This preacher will find the plaza, the park, the city-square, the mass-gatherings, the nightclubs, busy streets, and entertainment events to meet the masses where they gather so as to interrupt them with the only saving message that can give reconciliation with a holy God. And in so doing, he preaches Christ, he glorifies God, he depends on the Spirit & souls are won.