

Beautiful Feet and Other Joys of Personal Evangelism

Franklin Church of Christ
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PM Worship

Introduction:

How many sermons on personal work have we heard within our Christian lives? We have heard sermons on how to perform personal work. We have heard sermons commanding personal work. We have heard sermons making us feel guilty because we have not done enough personal work. Boy, have we heard sermons on personal work. But have you ever thought or heard about the great rewards and joy involved in personal evangelism? Too often all we think about are the costs: time, rejection, study, etc. Were you aware that personal work has a lot to offer you?

Discussion:

- I. The honor of being God's worker.
 - A. There is a certain amount of joy that comes from simply knowing that you are getting to be a part of the plan. But not just any plan. You are getting to be a part of God's plan. Considering the power of God, it is amazing that God would ask us to help Him. No doubt, He doesn't need our help. But He has asked for it all the same. And He has even asked you to be involved.
 - B. If your favorite President had handpicked you to be one of his special representatives, how would you feel? Honored? Elated? That is exactly the way you ought to feel about personal work. God has handpicked you to be His representative and ambassador. **Romans 10:15** says that those who preach the gospel have beautiful feet. He was quoting from **Isaiah 52:7-10**. This passage demonstrates that there is joy in simply getting to be the one that gets to announce the joy and peace of the Lord. It is an honor to be God's watchman and proclaimer.
- II. Significance
 - A. One of my favorite poems of all-time is *Ozymandias* by Percy Bysshe Shelley. It tells of a traveler in Egypt who in the middle of the desert found the ruin of a great statue. On the base he read the words, "My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings: Look upon my works, ye Mighty and despair!" The traveler looked but could see nothing more than the statue. Where the mighty works once stood desert sand had taken over. This poem is about Ramses II, a great Pharaoh of Egypt. He was ruler of the known world, revered as a god by his people and a builder of many great cities and works. For all his power and seeming significance, in time his work has been rendered meaningless. Most of us do not even recognize his name or have any idea what he did. How is that for insignificant?
 - B. You can be involved in a lot of things that seem important and significant, but in time they will come to naught. If you want real significance, personal evangelism is where it's at. When you are involved in the spread of the Gospel you are involved in something that can not only provided a personal sense of worth and fulfillment, but you will be involved in something that will impact our world forever. In **John 17:20**, Jesus prayed, "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those who believe in Me through their word." That is, not only was He praying for the apostles surrounding Him, He was also praying for the people they taught and the people they taught and the people they taught on down to us. Here were 11 men who started teaching and writing down what they received and it has come down to us 2000 years later and is still impacting the world. We can be involved in that significance. We must simply follow the example of Paul and His teaching in **II Timothy 2:2**. There is nothing more significant.
- III. "Joys of parenting"
 - A. I do not know how to describe this in any other way than "joys of parenting." I think of the passages like **I Timothy 1:2**; **Titus 1:4** and **Philemon 10**. Paul saw these men as his children because of his work with them in the Gospel. John also described this when he said in **3 John 4**, "I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth."
 - B. If you have had children, you know the joy of seeing them brought into the world. You know the joy of seeing them take their first step, say their first word, get their first tooth, lose their first tooth, ride their first bike and on the list goes. You gain joy from their accomplishments because, in a way, you are involved in them as their parent. This is the same kind of joy you can

experience when you get involved in personal evangelism. You get to see people born into Christ. You get to help them as they grow in Christ. You get to see them as they learn how to teach others, overcome temptation and grow.

- C. No doubt, just as with physical children, there are heartaches, sleepless nights and in some cases crushing pain from those who fall away. But, how many of us, who have had children, would say after we look back at the pain that we had preferred not to have been parents at all?

IV. Personal Growth and Maturity

- A. No doubt there is a period of time as a Christian in which you will need to simply be a student. But there comes a time when your spiritual growth should take the next step and you ought to become a teacher. **Hebrews 5:12** demonstrates this. But just as the milk of the word caused you to grow while you were simply learning, so does the meat of the word cause you to grow when you become a teacher.
- B. Anyone who has ever taught is well aware that we learn far more when we are the ones doing the teaching than when we are simply the student. When you become the teacher, you have to apply yourself more, you have to read more, study more, learn more and even memorize more.
- C. There are numerous people who never start doing personal evangelism because they say they can never remember where all the right passages are. Would you like to know when you start remembering where all the right passages are? When you have to use them while teaching. Certainly, your first few attempts will be filled with stumbles and halts and with "I'll have to get back to you on that one," but as you continue to use what you learn then you begin to remember what you have learned. As you remember more of what you have learned, that is called growth. That growth is a natural by-product of personal evangelism.

V. Investments in Eternity

- A. In **Matthew 6:19-20**, Jesus said not to lay up earthly treasures but heavenly ones. We can work our entire lives, build up a huge bank account, live in the nicest, biggest houses, drive the latest, coolest cars and own the latest in technology, but when we die we cannot take it with us (**Luke 12:16-21**). Beyond that, when judgment comes all of these things will be destroyed (**II Peter 3:10-12**). These investments will not last.
- B. But the investment in the souls of others is an eternal investment. Paul demonstrates this in **I Corinthians 3:10-15**. When we have worked and brought souls to Christ that grow up to maturity, becoming vessels of honor, we have invested in eternity and our work will endure through the fires of judgment. We will receive an eternal reward.

VI. Involved in work that gives heaven joy.

- A. Don't you like to do things that make others happy? We all like to know that we are impacting others positively. That is why we buy birthday gifts, Christmas cards and postcards while we are on vacation. As great as that is, can you imagine how great it is to cause happiness in heaven?
- B. That is exactly what we are doing when we are involved in helping others come to repentance. **Luke 15:7, 10** both demonstrate that heaven rejoices when sinners repent. God and the angels in heaven rejoice more over the one who is baptized than over the 99 who are faithfully attending worship services again this Sunday. You can be a part of that joy.

Conclusion:

There is truly nothing more rewarding than being involved in personal evangelism and working with others to help them grow. May this lesson be an encouragement to get you to simply start doing what you can do. How many invitations to worship services are you giving? Are you handing out Dial-A-Devotion cards? Are you striking up spiritual conversations with others? Do you conduct any Bible studies or are you willing to go with someone who is conducting a study and be their moral support? I am not asking you to be the apostle Paul by next week. I am simply asking you to be more and do more than you are right now. If you do that, you can have all these rewards.