

# LET OTHERS LISTEN

God's Word  
Beautiful  
As Ever

Why should we evangelize? The best reason to evangelize is because Our Lord commanded us to do so. Additionally, evangelization was the secret behind the First Church's success in spreading the Gospel. By spreading God's Word today, we help people fight the evil in this world.

Furthermore, other religions continue to spread throughout the West (e.g. Far East religions, Islam, Atheism, and cults). Concurrently, modern Christian churches have lost their connection to the historical church, which has resulted in a "spiritual void" within these churches. In this article, we will consider our role as evangelists in view of Our Lord's commandment and the first church's response.

Why evangelize? First and foremost, it is Our Lord's commandment. Our Lord Jesus Christ's last words on earth were, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you."* (Matthew 28:19-20) The spirit and essence of the New Testament is summed up in this verse, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16) Thus, God's heart is tied to the salvation of each of His children. He offered the highest price anyone could pay, His life. He is looking for us to spread the great news of His salvation. Notice the words, "whoever believes." His love and interest is in the salvation of everyone.

The intense desire of the Lord to save every individual is apparent in *Luke 15*, where He spoke three parables to the people: "The Lost Sheep," "The Lost Coin," and "The Lost Son." In each parable, we see that God's heart is focused on reaching out to the lost. Therefore, it is the Lord's desire to find someone like us to carry forth the Gospel's joyful message, the Word of Life and the Light of Salvation, to those lost ones. Take a look at this striking verse, *"there would be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance."* (Luke 15:7) Think about how much joy would result in Heaven over the course of your life if you work as an evangelizer!

Over 25 years ago, an old wise servant named Ayaad used to lecture in the Sunday school servants meeting that I attended. Ayaad was a truly spiritual person. His words always inflamed our hearts with the

love of our Lord and His children. His tears were a great witness to the burning flames of love for the lost sheep in his heart. One day Ayaad told us this story:

"A Sunday school servant saw a person entering the church one day, whom he had not seen in the church before. He ran to him and welcomed him warmly. The person looked at the servant in amazement and asked him if he knew him. The servant answered, "Yes, my beloved I have been praying for this moment for twenty years."

These were Ayaad's last words before his eyes filled with tears and he sat down. His words touched our hearts deeply that day because he was speaking from the bottom of his heart.

Dear friend, we need to care about the salvation of others as we care about our own salvation. Imagine on the last day, if you find out that your name is not written in the Book of Life. Think about it. Would you like this to happen you? If not, then we should help others, through evangelism, to have their names written in the Book of Life. We need to have the love of the Lord for the lost sheep in our hearts as we evangelize to the best of our abilities.

*"And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved."* (Acts 2:47) Evangelism is the secret behind the first church's success. Historians estimate that the early church was growing at an annual rate of 40%. This is why Christianity reached most of the civilized known world over a very short period of time. The Holy Spirit was working strongly because people just like us were ready to follow the Lord, no matter what the price - including death. They truly believed that their lives were no longer theirs but rather the life of Christ in them. They no longer lived for themselves but for the Lord, *"to live is Christ, and to die is gain."* (Philippians 1:21) Now, I would like to ask you, how much joy did they have? Was it an earthly joy that goes away after a while, or a heavenly joy that grew into more inner peace, more boldness to evangelize, and more joy? I think the latter answer is the correct one. I will not hesitate to say that

the source of our sadness is the lack of our life commitment to God, and also the lack of our love to the lost sheep. Can we compare our faith and love to theirs? I would be the first to confess my weak faith. But let us courageously confess these sins and ask God to help us not live for ourselves anymore. Let our work in evangelism and our love for our brothers and sisters erase these years of ignorance! God needs people who put Him first in their life because He is their life. Away from God, we have no life, something all of us experience repeatedly. Isn't it time to surrender our will and our life to God and choose life instead of the spiritual death we live in now?

Are you eager to start to evangelize? Although we are weak and we do not know that much about evangelism, God promised that He would be with us *"always, even to the end of the age."* (Matthew 28:20) My friend, no matter how old you are or how much you know or how strong or weak you are, put your life in God's hands and let His Spirit strengthen you, complete every weakness you have, and lead you. But make evangelism a serious commitment in your life. Make it as one of your everyday necessities. Make it a one-

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time surrender to God. Decide in your heart that this is the beginning of a life that you have longed to live. Decide that there is no turning back, by the grace of God, the One Who loves you dearly and needs your salvation first. I urge you to make this decision.

When it comes to evangelism, there is no more joyful news than what you read in "An Introduction Into Theology of Mission," by H.G. Bishop Antonious Markos and published by the Coptic Bishopric of African Affairs, Johannesburg, South Africa, ISBN 977-19-41372, 2001. I refer to Bishop Markos as "The Father of Evangelism in the Coptic Church in the Twentieth Century." I highly encourage you to read Bishop Markos' book in which he discusses the source and effect of evangelism in the early church, the church of the Apostles.