

The Heart and Urgency of Evangelism

BY PS MATTHEW TAN

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

— Matthew 28:18-20 —

We are largely familiar with the above passage as the Great Commission. This is our 'green light' to do the work of evangelism and missions. The impetus is our God being a saving God — His intention is to save. John 3:16 says, "for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Evangelism is basically telling people about the good thing which you have experienced. It is very much like sales — honest salesmanship. In the Christian sense, evangelism is telling people about the hope you have in Jesus. The idea is that you love someone enough to tell them about Jesus, that they too can experience the saving grace, and power of the Lord.

Telling is much more than just speaking - it is about showing and demonstrating a life which people could have in Jesus. People need to 'taste and see that the Lord is good'. There is actually an urgency to this. In John 9:4, Jesus says, "As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work."

Many of us are wishing for Church and the world to go back to normal (i.e. pre-COVID days). May I humbly suggest that we take this as a wake-up call? We are blessed with Internet access and freedom of worship. Many places in the world are not as blessed as we are in Singapore. There will come a time where even such privileges will be taken away from us. This is what the Bible calls 'night time'.

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"One of my favourite passages of Scripture is Luke 14:23, where Jesus was telling a parable and through it he instructs his disciples to go out to the roads and country lanes and compel people to come in. "So that my house will be full." On the other hand, for the non-believer, the exhortation is for them to "make every effort to enter through the narrow door" because once the owner gets up and closes the door, it will be too late (Luke 13:24-25).

I suppose it is time to address a certain lethargy of the Church when it comes to evangelism and missions. Are we content to be just waiting comfortably in the church for Jesus to come back? Or do we want to go out there and bring as many people as possible to heaven with us? If we are to be more like Jesus, we ought to love people more, like Jesus did.

We are members of the churches not just to make up the numbers. We are here because we are called by God to be a Christian, one that walks in faith and power. Let us seize the day and do the work of the Evangelist. The house of the Lord shall be full!

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