

# What Motivates Us to Evangelize?

Mark 5:18-20

This text is unusual. Here Jesus had just cast out a legion of demons from this man. The multitudes wanted Jesus to go away and so he did. But Jesus instructed the man he healed of demons to stay behind and tell others of what had been done. He was free of the demons – so what motivated him to tell others about Jesus. BTW - these motives apply to us also.

For many years we in the Lord's church were highly active in what was called "personal evangelism". I guess that term is acceptable since there is no other type of NT Evangelism that I'm aware of. So what motivates you and I to put relationships at risk to share Jesus with others??

## Love

### 1. Love for Jesus

After the demons were driven out of this man, he wanted to be with Jesus. Can you imagine what went through his mind as he realized what Jesus had done for him?? He immediately loved Jesus for what He had done for him. But Jesus instructed him not to come with him, but to go teach those in his country. I think I would have been disappointed by this.

The healed man obeyed because he loved Jesus – 1 John 5:2,3 ***“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”***

### 2. Love for Relatives and Friends

I suspect that this man out of whom these demons were expelled, had someone to love. Parents? Children? Spouse? Friends? He went back to his own country and told them about Jesus. Do we show this kind of love for those we love? Have you made it a point to share Jesus with all those that you love? I suspect this man could not wait to present himself whole to those he loved and then tell them how Jesus had done this for him.

### 3. Love for self.

Matthew 22:39 – *Love your neighbor as yourself.* Most of us understand how to love ourselves; we need to apply that same love to our fellow man. The golden rule is just an extension of this – Matthew 7:12 *“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”*

Would you want someone to share the gospel with you if you were in their situation knowing what you know?

## Thankfulness/Gratitude

Do you think this man was thankful for what Jesus did for him? I am quite sure he was. No more being tormented by a force that he could not control but rather a force that controlled him. Imagine being trapped with wicked spirits controlling your body. Making you do dreadful things such as run around with no clothes, cut yourself, and sleep in the cemetery. If that great burden were lifted from you, would you not be thankful? I have no doubt this man went and told others about his situation out of thankfulness.

But, what about me? I was once in sin, separated from God. I had no power of to provide for my own salvation. So, God sent Jesus to die in my place for my sins. We can be resentful of that or we can be thankful. Paul was thankful as seen in 2 Corinthians 9:15 *“Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.”* How can we be anything but thankful?

So, what will we do with our thankfulness? When we're thankful for something, don't we usually tell others about it? Look what thankfulness did for one man that Jesus healed – Luke 17:11-19. Ten lepers are healed by Jesus but only one returns to thank Jesus. All of them were thankful but this one was beyond thankful – he also understood he was obligated. It is just common courtesy to thank someone that has helped us. Jesus saved our soul and that should motivate us to do the Lord's will in our life. One part of His will is to share the good news of salvation bought with the blood of Jesus. We should feel this obligation strongly.

# Happiness/Joy

I believe this man was overjoyed by his new situation. If you had a terminal disease how full of joy would you be if someone cured you of that disease?? I'd tell everyone I met!!

What we have been cured of is the curse of eternal damnation. The One who cured us tells us if we love Him, we will keep His commandments. One of those commandments is to tell others. Am I happy with the cure Jesus has provided me? **YES!!** Am I willing to show my love for Him by sharing Him with others who will suffer eternal death if they do not receive the cure?

I recently learned that there is research showing that raw honey has great potential to work with our immune system. There is a lot of anecdotal information, but there is also science backing up this claim according to the National Institute of Health. So, if this is true, do I keep it to myself and enjoy the benefits of an improved immune system and tell no one? Or if I know others that have immune issues, do I share this with them? What to do.....

Are we happy with our salvation? I sure hope so. When you're happy about something, you want to tell someone else about it so we should be wanting to tell others of our salvation.

What happens if we let our happiness motivate us to tell others of Jesus?

John 1:40-42 – one person. ***“One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).”***

John 4:28-42 – great crowds. Because one woman met Jesus and had to tell others many came to believe and became disciples of the Lord. What just one person could do – bring salvation to the Samaritans.

Regardless whether it is one person or great crowds, it will make a difference. In about 1973 we had a horrible storm in Norfolk, VA. Consequently, tens of thousands of starfish were washed ashore because of extremely turbulent water. Late that day we were ordered to walk the beach and throw them back into the sea (this beach was adjacent to Admirals Row and they did not want the smell). It seemed like a lesson in futility to me because there were so many and from the smell it seemed many of them had to already be dead. I don't know how many I chucked back into the water and I don't know how many lived but to every one that did live – it made a difference.

But what about the happiness that results from bringing a lost soul to Christ? The first person I helped convert was a young man in the Air Force. He and I studied each day at lunch time and over time he agreed to come to worship. During a Gospel Meeting John came forward and obeyed the gospel. I remember for the rest of the time he and I worked together he grew stronger in the Lord. His wife was from Newfoundland and she too became a Christian. I've lost touch with them long ago and I don't know if they are still faithful, but I hope they are. What a joy it was to witness this process and to know that the Lord gave me an opportunity and He brought forth fruit – and I had a small part in that eternal process.

It was so in the 1<sup>st</sup> century as well. Acts 15:3 *“So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren.”*

We Christian's are happy – Acts 8:39 *“went on his way rejoicing.”* Knowing that heaven will be our home for all eternity is enough to cause Christians to rejoice on a continual basis. And this should lead Christian's to share that wonderful feeling with everyone they meet so they can have it too.

But most importantly, God is happy – Luke 15:10 *“Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”*

# CONCLUSION

1. Why ought we to be motivated to do personal evangelism?

1) Love

2) Thankfulness

3) Joy

Surely there is a motivation here that each of us can take and use to help us in conducting personal evangelism.

If not, then I truly feel sorry for the soul that has no love, thankfulness, or joy in their life.

Invitation