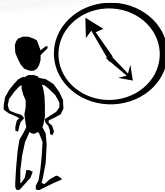


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Time of Assembly



Sunday:

Bible Study 9:00 a.m.
Worship 10:00 a.m.
(Or every other week)

Bible Study 4:00 p.m.
Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

Pulpit or Personal

By Jefferson David Tant

So, what do I mean by the title “Pulpit of Personal?” It has to do with the preacher’s challenge to preach the gospel. Obviously, there are different ways by which we can shine the light of the gospel into a world full of darkness. We can publicly preach from the pulpit, we can write articles on Bible subjects, we can let others see Christ living in us through our examples, and we can practice what we call “personal evangelism.”

In this article, I want to focus on the matter of personal evangelism, as I believe it is a very effective means of leading others to Christ, and one that may be overlooked or neglected today, even by preachers. I have known of preachers who seem to think their only responsibility is to stand in the pulpit to proclaim the gospel, and thus who are not interested in doing personal evangelism, one-on-one teaching.

Are there any examples of personal evangelism in the New Testament? Yes, there are. Take for example our Lord’s conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. “*There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.” For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water” (John 4:7-10).*

Thus began a personal conversation with this woman which was a bit out of the ordinary because she was (1) a Samaritan and (2) a woman and (3) an adulteress. You know what they say in baseball—“three strikes and you’re out.” But that didn’t hinder Christ from talking with her about spiritual

things. We know that Christ often addressed large crowds of people, but his interest in the salvation of souls was not limited to large crowds.

This passage gives another example of personal evangelism. *“So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and said to the men, “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?” They went out of the city, and were coming to Him”* ([John 4:28-30](#)) She didn’t keep this good news to herself. She immediately went to share it.

Now consider Philip. Do you remember a job description connected to him? He is referred to as “Philip the evangelist” in [Acts 21:8](#). When we think of the work of an evangelist, we naturally associate that with standing before an audience and preaching to them. But it seems that Philip was also doing some personal evangelism, as we find him riding in a chariot teaching the Ethiopian government official *“The eunuch answered Philip and said, “Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?” Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him”* ([Acts 8:34-35](#)).

Then we have Andrew, who was called by Christ, and what was the first thing he did after being called? “One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, *“We have found the Messiah’ (which translated means Christ)”* ([John 40:41](#)).

And so it goes. Here we have Christ, a sinful woman, an evangelist, and Andrew, all engaged in personal evangelism. We really need to be doing this today. Times have changed since the days of my grandfather, J. D. Tant, and other pioneer preachers. A two-week gospel meeting in a tent may have seen 50 or more baptized. People were not distracted by the internet, TV, movies, etc., and may have accepted an invitation to come to a service possibly as an opportunity to see some neighbors whose farm was five miles away, and in doing so heard the gospel.

In the days of my father, Yater Tant, the Jules Miller filmstrips were popular. You would go into someone’s home for five nights and view the five lessons. Many were converted as a result. Today? Five nights? Probably not. People are too busy, too preoccupied. But if you can engage in a brief discussion, that can open doors. I have had conversations with bank tellers, store clerks, next-door neighbors, homeless people, waitresses, and prisoners. I have been honored to baptize those who have come forward at the singing of the invitation song following the sermon but have also been honored to baptize many as the result of personal evangelism.

There’s a song in many of our hymnals that we are familiar with, titled “You Never Mentioned Him to Me,” authored by James Rowe (words) and James Gaines (music).

“When in the better land before the bar we stand, how deeply grieved our souls will be, if any lost one there should cry in deep despair, “You never mentioned Him to

me.”

“O let us spread the word where'er it may be heard, help groping souls the light to see, that yonder none may say, “You showed me not the way. You never mentioned Him to me.”

“A few sweet words may guide a lost one to His side, or turn sad eyes to Calvary, so work as days go by, that yonder none may cry, “You never mentioned Him to me.”

“You never mentioned Him to me, you helped me not the light to see; you met me day by day and knew I was astray, yet never mentioned Him to me.”

Dear Reader, if, by chance, someone says these words to you on Judgment Day, what will you say in return? Think about it. Have you even talked to your next-door neighbor?

And finally, even if you are not a preacher, the need for personal evangelism is just as much for you as it is for preachers. From time to time I cite the Great Commission, which is a commission to every Christian, no matter what your job or occupation may be.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 29:19-20).

Christ’s commission is for every Christian. Let us be about our Father’s business.

Adding to the Word of God?

By Wayne S. Walker

Most faithful Christians are aware that through the years many unauthorized additions have been made to what God’s word teaches. Denominations have added their own creeds to the doctrine of Christ. Additions to scriptural baptism, either in the action (sprinkling and pouring) or in the subjects (infants, babies, and small children) have arisen. A lot of churches have added instrumental music to the worship. All such additions to what God has revealed are condemned (Deuteronomy 4:2, Proverbs 30:5-6, Revelation 22:18). However, in a recent discussion on adding to the word of God, I found the following post:

“One example of an addition is congregational singing in church. That is completely foreign to the New Testament, but it is commonly preached as if it was a command. Taking the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week and only on the first day of the week. The argument for this requires a person to add to the Scriptures. Having a continuous church general fund treasury. That is foreign to the New Testament. They

had specific treasuries for dealing with specific causes, but not general fund treasuries that are used for all sorts of things.”

Is congregational singing in church foreign to the New Testament and thus an addition? In I Corinthians chapter 14, Paul was regulating the activities being engaged in when “*the whole church comes together in one place*” (I Corinthians 14:23), and in that context says “...*I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding*” (I Corinthians 14:15). He also talks about someone having “a psalm” when the church comes together (I Corinthians 14:26). So singing was definitely a part of the assemblies in the early church. I recognize that Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 do not specifically refer to the worship assembly but govern the Christian’s singing praise to God at any time; yet the fact that we are to be “*speaking to one another*” and “*teaching and admonishing one another*” in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs necessitates being in a situation where we are with one another, and that certainly includes our worship services. So, congregational singing in church is **not** foreign to the New Testament and thus **not** an addition.

Does taking the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week and only on the first day of the week require a person to add to the Scriptures? When instituting the Lord's supper, Jesus mentioned regarding the cup “that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God” (Mark 14:25). He just did not specify the day in this passage, but we know precisely the day on which disciples came together to “break bread,” referring to observing the Lord's supper (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:16). It was the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). Thus, when we take the Lord's supper on the first day of the week and only on the first day of the week, we can be assured that we are doing exactly what the Lord has authorized. We cannot have the same assurance in taking the supper on any other day as that would be going beyond the doctrine of Christ (cf. 2 John vs. 9-11). So those who would argue for having the supper on any day other than the first day of the week actually are the ones who are adding to the Scriptures and not those who limit themselves to doing only what God has revealed.

And does having continuous church general fund treasuries that are used for all sorts of things add to God's word? The only passage that specifically refers to a “church treasury” of any kind is I Corinthians 16:1-2. “*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.*” The old King James reads “lay by in store.” The word translated “store” or “storing up” is actually a verb form meaning “to gather, lay up, heap up...to keep in store, store up, reserve.” It comes from a noun meaning “the place in which goods and precious things are collected and laid up...a casket, coffer, or other receptacles, in which valuables are kept...storehouse, repository, magazine.” Thus the phrase “lay by in store” literally means “put into the storehouse or

treasury.” The Corinthian church did not have “specific treasuries for dealing with specific causes.” There had to be a standing storehouse or treasury to which they added every first day of the week so that what was going to be sent for the needy saints in Jerusalem would be available when Paul came. Nope, no addition to the Scriptures here.

Never Alone

By Barbara Foster

In 1993 I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Over the course of a year, I became increasingly disabled. Through it all, I was never alone.

- When I was temporarily blind, Christ led me through the darkness.
- When I was unable to walk, God took away the fear.
- When my world was turned upside down, God's word provided an anchor.
- When I lost my ability to speak, God heard my silent prayers.
- When I was too weak to cook, He sent wonderful people bringing food and encouragement, and support.
- When I felt useless, the Lord sent a tiny, premature granddaughter who needed special love and care.
- When I felt disconnected and my faith was tested, He gave me the strength to get to church to be with other Christians and be renewed by the worship and the lessons.
- When my heart was broken as friends turned away because they couldn't cope with my new reality, God sent new friends who are there for me no matter what.

The list could go on and on even as the blessings go on and on. For those who would feel sorry for me, I ask rather that they join me in praising God for His constant love and protection. No matter what the need or difficulty, I have been provided for and I have never been alone because He promised: *"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. For I am the Lord your God"* ([Isaiah 43:2](#)).

