

**Lesson 16 – The Mission of the Church (OUTLINE)**

- I. To bring eternal glory to God. Read Ephesians 3:20-21
  - A. The most important mission of a church is to bring glory to the Name of God.
  - B. This mission is accomplished by being obedient and carrying out God's purpose in the church.
  
- II. To evangelize. Read Matthew 28:18-20
  - A. Each church is to be a soul-winning station, seeking the lost and bringing them to Jesus.
  - B. Evangelism is always central in the Scriptures.
    - 1. Christ gave the divine example. Luke 19:10
    - 2. Christ commissioned His disciples to evangelize. John 20:21; Luke 19:10
    - 3. The early Christians were soul-winners. (more below)
    - 4. The early churches were all evangelistic. (more below in Section III)
    - 5. God's preachers were commanded to do the work of evangelist. 2 Timothy 4:5
    - 6. Through the ages, New Testament churches have always been evangelistic.
  - C. There has always been an urgent need for evangelism. Read John 4:35
    - 1. The awfulness of sin has always made evangelism a must.
    - 2. There is no village, town, city, or community anywhere in which souls are not to be found.
    - 3. Today, one-half (1/2) to three-fifths (3/5) of the world's population are without a preacher or teacher of God's Word.
    - 4. The pagan population of the world is increasing annually about 6 million faster than Christians are winning pagan people to Christ.
    - 5. Statisticians say there are 10,000 villages in the U.S. without a church; 30,000 villages or towns without a residence pastor; and at least 13,500,000 children who are receiving no religious training at all. [More than this in contemporary times.]

- D. The responsibility for winning souls rest upon each Christian and every church. Read: Proverbs 11:30; Ezekiel 33:7-8; Daniel 12:3; Matthew 4:19, 9:37-38, 22:9; Mark 16:15; John 4:35, 20:21; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 9:22-23

### III. The New Testament church was evangelistic.

- A. That Christ established His church with evangelism in mind as its primary motive is shown by its history.
1. Christ took John's baptized followers as a nucleus and lead them in a soul-winning campaign in which Peter, Phillip, and Nathanel were the first fruits. Read John 1:35-51
  2. Christ called the first preachers to be "fishers of men" thus laying the foundation for an evangelistic leadership for His churches of all time. Matthew 4:19
  3. The Great Commission, to churches, preachers, and individual Christians is purely and simply a command to win men to everywhere to Christ and eternal life. Matthew 28:18-20
  4. At Pentecost (Acts 2:1–31), Christ put His church to work in prayer and soul-winning.
  5. The deacons of the New Testament churches were all soul-winners. Acts 6
- B. A soul-winning Sunday School. All the workers in a Sunday School should constantly put forward a soul-winning effort.

### **Questions:**

1. What is the church's most important mission?
2. Give examples from scripture that evangelism is always central.
3. Why is there always a need for evangelism?
4. Give scriptural examples proving the New Testament churches were evangelistic.
5. What should be the main purpose of Sunday School?

### **Discussions:** How can each church member be evangelistic?

**Assignment:** Memory work study: Matthew 28:18-19. Tell about the work of at least one foreign missionary our church supports.

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## Lesson 16 – The Mission of the Church

### I. To bring eternal glory to God. Read Ephesians 3:20-21 (from verse 14)

*<sup>14</sup>For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup>of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, <sup>16</sup>that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; <sup>17</sup>that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup>may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; <sup>19</sup>and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. <sup>20</sup>**Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, <sup>21</sup>unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.***

- A. The most important mission of a church is to **bring glory to the Name of God.** (verse 21)
- B. This mission is accomplished by **being obedient and carrying out God's purpose in the church.** [verse 20 i.e., <sup>20</sup>Glory to God, who can do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us;]

### II. To evangelize. Read Matthew 28:18-20 (from verse 16)

*<sup>16</sup>Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. <sup>17</sup>And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.** <sup>19</sup>Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

- A. Each church is to be a soul-winning station, seeking the lost and bringing them to Jesus.
- B. Evangelism is always central in the Scriptures.
1. Christ gave the divine example. Luke 19:10 (visiting Zacchæus)  
*<sup>9</sup>And Jesus said unto him, **This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.** <sup>10</sup>For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*
  2. Christ commissioned His disciples to evangelize. John 20:21 *<sup>21</sup>Then said Jesus to them again, **Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.***
  3. The early Christians were soul-winners. (more below)
  4. The early churches were all evangelistic. (more below in Section III)
  5. God's preachers were commanded to do the work of evangelist. 2 Timothy 4:5  
*<sup>5</sup>But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, **do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.***
  6. Through the ages, New Testament churches have always been evangelistic.
- C. There has always been an urgent need for evangelism. Read John 4:35 *<sup>34</sup>Jesus saith unto them, **My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.** <sup>35</sup>Say not ye, **There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.** <sup>36</sup>And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.*

1. The awfulness of sin has always made evangelism a must.
2. There is no village, town, city, or community anywhere in which souls are not to be found.
3. Today, one-half (1/2) to three-fifths (3/5) of the world's population are without a preacher or teacher of God's Word.
4. The pagan population of the world is increasing annually about 6 million faster than Christians are winning pagan people to Christ.
5. Statisticians say there are 10,000 villages in the U.S. without a church; 30,000 villages or towns without a residence pastor; and at least 13,500,000 children who are receiving no religious training at all. **[More than this in contemporary times.]**

D. The responsibility for winning souls rest upon each Christian and every church.

Read:

- Proverbs 11:30 <sup>30</sup>*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; And he that winneth souls is wise.*
- Ezekiel 33:7-8 <sup>7</sup>*So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, **and warn them from me.*** <sup>8</sup>*When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; **if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.***
- Daniel 12:3 <sup>3</sup>*And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and **they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.***
- Matthew 4:19 <sup>9</sup>*And he saith unto them, **Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.***

Matthew 9:37-38 37Then saith he unto his disciples, *The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; 38Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

Matthew 22:9 *<sup>9</sup>Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.*

- Mark 16:15 *<sup>15</sup>And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. <sup>16</sup>He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*
- John 4:35 (cited previously) *<sup>35</sup>Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*  
John 20:21 *<sup>21</sup>Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*
- Acts 1:8 *<sup>8</sup>But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*
- 1 Corinthians 9:22-23 *<sup>22</sup>To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. <sup>23</sup>And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.*

### III. The New Testament church was evangelistic.

A. That Christ established His church with evangelism in mind as its primary motive is shown by its history.

1. Christ took John's baptized followers as a nucleus and lead them in a soul-winning campaign in which Peter, Phillip, and Nathanel were the first fruits. Read John 1:35-51 <sup>35</sup>Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; <sup>36</sup>and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! <sup>37</sup>And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup>Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, **What seek ye?** They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? <sup>39</sup>He saith unto them, **Come and see.** They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. <sup>40</sup>One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup>He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. <sup>42</sup>And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, **Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas,** which is by interpretation, A stone. <sup>43</sup>The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, **Follow me.** <sup>44</sup>Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. <sup>45</sup>Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. <sup>46</sup>And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. <sup>47</sup>Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, **Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!** [guile = insidious, cunning, or deceptive, or duplicitous] <sup>48</sup>Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, **Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.** <sup>49</sup>Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. <sup>50</sup>Jesus answered and said unto him, **Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.** <sup>51</sup>And he saith unto him, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.**

2. Christ called the first preachers to be “fishers of men” thus laying the foundation for an evangelistic leadership for His churches of all time. Matthew 4:19 *<sup>9</sup>And he saith unto them, **Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.***
  
3. The Great Commission, to churches, preachers, and individual Christians is purely and simply a command to win men to everywhere to Christ and eternal life. Matthew 28:18-20 *<sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. <sup>19</sup>Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.***
  
4. At Pentecost (Acts 2:1–31), Christ put His church to work in prayer and soul-winning. *<sup>1</sup>And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup>And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. <sup>5</sup>And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup>Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. <sup>7</sup>And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilæans? <sup>8</sup>And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? <sup>9</sup>Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, <sup>10</sup>Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup>Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. <sup>12</sup>And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? <sup>13</sup>Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.*



**[Peter's Explanation]**

<sup>14</sup>But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: <sup>15</sup>For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. <sup>16</sup>But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; <sup>17</sup>And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams: <sup>18</sup>And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: <sup>19</sup>And I will shew wonders in heaven above, And signs in the earth beneath; Blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: <sup>20</sup>The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before that great and notable Day of the Lord come: <sup>21</sup>And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. <sup>22</sup>Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: <sup>23</sup>him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: <sup>24</sup>whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. <sup>25</sup>For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: <sup>26</sup>Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; Moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: <sup>27</sup>Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. <sup>28</sup>Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. <sup>29</sup>Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. <sup>30</sup>Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; <sup>31</sup>he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

5. The deacons of the New Testament churches were all soul-winners. Acts 6

### **[The Appointment of Stephen]**

*<sup>1</sup>And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. <sup>2</sup>Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. <sup>3</sup>Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. <sup>4</sup>But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. <sup>5</sup>**And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: <sup>6</sup>whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. <sup>7</sup>And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. <sup>8</sup>And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.***

*<sup>9</sup>Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. <sup>10</sup>And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. <sup>11</sup>Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. <sup>12</sup>And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, <sup>13</sup>and set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: <sup>14</sup>for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. <sup>15</sup>And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of **an angel.***

- B. **A soul-winning Sunday School. All the workers in a Sunday School should constantly put forward a soul-winning effort.**

**Questions:**

1. What is the church's most important mission?
2. Give examples from scripture that evangelism is always central.
3. Why is there always a need for evangelism?
4. Give scriptural examples proving the New Testament churches were evangelistic.
5. What should be the main purpose of Sunday School?

**Discussions:** How can each church member be evangelistic?

**Assignment:** Memory work study: Matthew 28:18-20. Tell about the work of at least one foreign missionary our church supports. *<sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. <sup>19</sup>Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*