

an essay:

WHY CHRISTIANS ARE TO EVANGELIZE THE LOST

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I. INTRODUCTION

CHRIST JESUS our Savior tells, not just The Church, but also every individual Christian in The Great Commission to evangelize all men. MATTHEWE 28:19 commands us to, “19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”¹ This is required by The One Who gave His Life for us on The Cross. The question arises then, as to what motivates us as Christians to keep this command to evangelize. For the deeper our motivation to the lost, the greater our passion for our Lord will match His Passion for us!

In this we may discern at least 8 levels of motivation, from the least noble to the greatest: 1) Our fear of GOD; 2) Our duty to GOD; 3) The lostness of the unsaved; 4) The privilege of evangelizing for GOD; 5) Having compassion for the unsaved; 6) Out of gratitude to GOD; 7) Out of our love for GOD; 8) For the glory of GOD Himself.

II. EVANGELIZING FOR THE FEAR OF GOD IS GOOD!

O LORD, You are eternal and everlasting outside of time and space itself. You create all things and bestow the breath of life into our mortal bodies of dust. We live for a time as the passing of the dust in the air on this earth, and then our bodies perish away. Before You, O LORD, we are as nothing: PSALM 8:3-4 declares, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"²

And yet our souls shall stand before Your holy throne, O Lord JESUS CHRIST. There we shall make an account for all our deeds in our mortal lives. Every sin of omission and commission will have to be accounted and paid for. Is not the soul of man to fear Thee, O GOD? For it is written in EZEKIEL 18:4, “Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die?”³

A man is given the choice, within Your sovereign will O LORD, to accept Your grace of salvation at The Cross or to reject He Who is That Precious Saving Gift. Should not the soul of man stand in dread of Your judgment, O GOD, that if his sins are not paid for by the blood of The Lamb, it must then perish? For have You not ordained in PHILIPPIANS 2:10-11, “That at The Name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should

¹ 1, KJV, MATTHEW 28:19.

² 1, KJV, PSALM 8:3-4.

³ 1, KJV, EZEKIEL 18:4.

confess that JESUS CHRIST is Lord, to the glory of GOD the Father?”⁴

Should not the Christian man be moved by at least the fear of The Almighty to evangelize the lost? If not for his own soul, then for the souls of others? Can a man dare to contemplate standing before the awful throne of The Creator Himself on his day of judgment and be found guilty of withholding The blessed Gospel from those who are perishing in their sins? Can The Church remain silent of the dangers of everlasting death and damnation of the soul that is not covered by the righteous garments of The Messiah? O My Rock, My Strength, My High Tower, may we not be found to be so wanting. If the fear of The Lord is all that drives us to evangelize men with The holy Gospel in this life, may it be found by You to have been enough, O CHRIST!

III. EVANGELIZING OUT OF DUTY TO GOD IS BETTER!

You, O CHRIST, have given us Your Church a command to preach The Gospel to all men to the very ends of the earth in this life. How then can we call ourselves by Your precious Name, O Son of GOD, and not obey The Great Commission? For You have ordered us as in MATTHEW 28:19-20, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you!”⁵

Are we as Christians not soldiers of The Cross? What soldier then should think to constantly shirk his duty and disobey the direct order of his superior officer? Should such a soldier still be honored by his commanders? Is such a soldier a blessing to his comrades and to the army in which he is called to serve? Should a soldier on the eve of battle elect to lie down on the ground and close his eyes, imagining that he is not on the eve of warfare? Should a man of war close his eyes and walk away from the fray when his superiors and fellow troopers are called to charge forward against the enemy? For Saint Paul declares in II TIMOTHY 2:3-4, “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of JESUS CHRIST. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier!”⁶

A good soldier of The Cross will fulfill his duty to The One Who shed his blood and gave His life for the saints! The duty of the faithful Christian is to place his light of salvation in CHRIST JESUS upon the lamp stand of his life that it may drive away the darkness of spiritual death of unsaved men! For do You, O CHRIST, not teach us in MATTHEW 5:15-16, “Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a

⁴ 1, KJV, PHILIPPIANS 2:10-11.

⁵ 1, KJV, MATTHEW 28:19-20a.

⁶ 1, KJV, II TIMOTHY 2:3-4.

bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven?”⁷

O My Savior, let me not be found to have hidden the light of my faith under a basket, denying its light to lost men around me in this life! Let not The Church in this troubled time and place be as ancient Israel, seeking to keep Your saving Truth to herself and dishonoring Your Name! May all who call themselves by Your glorious Name, O CHRIST, fulfill their duty to carry out The Great Commission to all men, even to the very ends of the earth! If a sense of duty to preach The Cross is all that drives us to evangelize lost men with The holy Gospel in this life, may it be found by You to have been enough, O CHRIST!

IV. EVANGELIZING FOR CONCERN OF THE LOST IS BETTER YET!

O Divine Father, how Your heart longs that all men should come to the salvation of their souls in Your Son! How The Sacred Heart of JESUS weeps for the soul of every man that is lost forever into eternal separation from You! For it is written in EZEKIEL 33:11 "...As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"⁸

And as You commanded Your servant Ezekiel to declare this to lost men in his day, so you command all who profess CHRIST JESUS as The Savior to do the same today! For You called Ezekiel Your servant to be as a watchman upon the walls of the souls of the lost in his day. For it is written in EZEKIEL 3:17, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me."⁹ So also is every Christian called to have such a heart for the lost men around him in this life!

But to our shame, O Master, we as Christians often look at the lives of the lost around us, and cry out to YOU, "Dear Savior, this one is so lost in the privations of this earthly life that he could not possibly be reached by The Gospel unto salvation! O Messiah, that lost one has wandered so far from You in the snares of this passing life that he could not possibly be convicted to repent at Your Cross! O Lamb of GOD, these other ones have consciously chosen in the hardness of their hearts to turn their backs on You, and they are beyond the reach of Your holy grace!"

But You O CHRIST, when You walked this earth as one of us, sought all lost men! You preached

⁷ 1, KJV, MATTHEW 5:15-16.

⁸ 1, KJV, EZEKIEL 33:11.

⁹ 1, KJV, EZEKIEL 3:17.

to those who were poor in body, mind and spirit in The Sermon on The Mount! You called men to be Your Apostles who were ensnared in the pursuit of worldly necessities and wealth when You chose the fishermen and the tax collector! You sat to eat with hardened sinners – prostitutes, drunkards and oppressors of the brethren – ministering to them out Your endless love! How then can we as Your servants not have a heart for the lostness of our fellow man?

O Holy One of Israel, let us recall that you rebuked the Pharisees and scribes when they murmured against Your passion to save the lost as in LUKE 15:4-5, “What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing?”¹⁰ Should we not rejoice with You, O Lord, when a lost sinner repents at Your Cross? Should we not join the angelic hosts of Heaven in gladness over the salvation of every soul that is found again under Your loving sacrifice at Calvary? O CHRIST, if a concern for the lostness of the unsaved is all that brings us Your saints to evangelize in this passing earthly life, may it be found by You to have been enough!

V. EVANGELIZING FOR THE SAKE OF THE PRIVILEGE IS BETTER YET!

O GOD, to think that You should love men so much, that You Yourself would come to be the atoning sacrifice for the sins of unholy men! That by Your Passion on our behalf even unto death, You resurrect our souls with You unto righteousness and eternal life! Is it then not a privilege to serve You Who so loves us by being faithful stewards of The Gospel? Is it not a joy for The Church on earth to be true to Your decrees of The Great Commission?

Saint Paul reminds us who are called by Your Name, O CHRIST, to be found as faithful keepers of salvation in You. For he says in I CORINTHIANS 4:1-2, “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of CHRIST, and stewards of the mysteries of GOD. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful!”¹¹ A faithful steward keeps his master’s goods with care and employs them according to his master’s dictates. And woe unto the unfaithful steward who abuses his charge, for his master will come suddenly and judge him in wrath and indignation!

If then The Church keeps The Gospel only for herself, and turns her back on her Master’s command to shine the Gospel light into the lives of all men unto the four corners of the earth, how shall she be judged by her Master? When The Church looses the sense of privilege that she has been given as

¹⁰ 1, KJV, LUKE 15:4-5.

¹¹ 1, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 4:1-2.

steward of The precious Gospel, it becoming instead a sense of entitled right to possess as if it were her own, then comes in the devil into her midst to cause her faith to become lukewarm! And woe then unto The unfaithful Church of a lukewarm faith, for does not Saint John give CHRIST's warning to all such Churches in REVELATION 3:16, "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth!"¹²

How joyful we as Christians should be for the privilege of being called as stewards of The Gospel, Which has bought our souls from death and damnation at such a fearful price! Let us judge ourselves, that we not be judged unworthy servants by The One Who bought our salvation with His precious blood! For Saint Paul reminds us that we His saints answer not to the judgment of the world, but to The Judgment of Our Lord! For he writes in I CORINTHIANS 4:3-4, "But with me it is a very small thing that should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord!"¹³ O Judge of All, if we for the honor preach The Gospel to lost men as a privilege, may it be found by You on our day of judgment to have been enough!

VI. EVANGELIZING FOR THE SAKE OF COMPASSION IS BETTER YET!

If we The Body of CHRIST on earth are to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world and a glory to our Lord, we must have Biblical compassion for the unsaved & the suffering who have not CHRIST! It is not enough to be holy unto GOD and to be in the world as a testimony for the saving and transforming power of Calvary. It is not enough to give mere intellectual ascent to the Great Commission. It is not enough to give of our time and money to support missions abroad and at home to spread The Word of The Almighty. We must have compassion for the lost in the same way that CHRIST Himself has compassion for the lost!

You Our Maker, O CHRIST, have such compassion for this fallen world and for the souls of lost men that You sacrificed Yourself on the terrible Cross. Why? Because of Your compassion! For Saint John writes in JOHN 3:16, For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life!"¹⁴ Even before each man was even conceived in his mother's womb – past, present and future – You O LORD had decreed that Your grace would be offered to each of us. Even if I and I alone was the only man ever to come unto salvation

¹² 1, KJV, REVELATION 3:16.

¹³ 1, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 4:3-4.

¹⁴ 1, KJV, JOHN 3:16

at Your feet, O CHRIST, Your compassion for the world and for men is such that You would still have come and done Your work on The Cross!

It is this compassion, as it were The Sacred Heart of JESUS, that The Church is in need of when preaching The Gospel. O LORD, mold us as Christians more daily into the Image of Your Son, that we might truly have gut-felt concern, care and conscience to reach lost men as did You when You walked this earth! For Saint Paul wrote to The Church at Philippi in PHILIPPIANS 1:7-8, “Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of The Gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. For GOD is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of JESUS CHRIST.” ¹⁵

O JEHOVAH Our Maker, help us to labor over the lost from the depths of our hearts. May we defend and confirm Your holy Gospel to the unsaved with a genuine burden of concern for their souls. Guide us with Your HOLY SPIRIT, that we might long after the unredeemed with the same compassion as You did on The Cross. Show us, O Master, if there be any unclean thing in our desire to teach all men all that You have commanded. And if we evangelize the lost only out of compassion for their unsaved souls, may it be found by You O Lord to have been enough!

VII. EVANGELIZING FOR THE SAKE OF GRATITUDE IS BETTER YET!

O Supreme Judge of The World, that which is good in me is only by Your grace in CHRIST JESUS. Apart from You, there is nothing good that was in me. For though I may at times have sought to do good, I never was able to be good. And though I at times may have desired to flee from sin, I myself remained a sinner. And though my soul at times longed to be holy as You are holy, I myself remained unclean in my sin, trespass, iniquity and guile.

For it is only by Your grace in CHRIST JESUS that I am saved. Thus does Saint Paul convict our prideful hearts in EPHESIANS 2:8-9, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast!” ¹⁶ Saint Paul, once the bloody and unclean Saul, was filled with gratitude for his conversion and salvation in You, O CHRIST! He saw that it was nothing in himself that merited his salvation which You worked in him. For he was a persecutor even unto death of Your Saints. He walked in haughty pride in his human knowledge of Your Law. He wore his understanding of man’s hedges about Your Word as it were a red badge of courage,

¹⁵ 1, KJV, PHILIPPIANS 1:7-8

¹⁶ 1, KJV, EPHESIANS 2:8-9

when in fact it was a stinking stain of sin. And so for his salvation in You, O CHRIST JESUS, was his heart filled with gratitude!

O LORD, shall we the saved in CHRIST not out of gratitude then seek to reach the lost with Your saving Gospel? For if you had dealt with us according to our sin, should we not have perished in our miss your standards of unrighteousness? If You had dealt with our trespass against Your Law, should not we have been condemned to hell for all eternity? If You had dealt with had dealt with our iniquity which has polluted all that is good, should not we have been condemned to everlasting separation from You? If you had dealt with our guile, which shed the false light of darkness before You and men, should not Your righteousness have struck us down and returned our being to the dust from which You raised us?

But You, O CHRIST JESUS, have instead given us the good things that we do not deserve and withheld from us the punishments which we do deserve! In your endless love for us, when we repent of our sins and confess Your holy Son as The Savior, You instead make us sons and daughters unto holiness and everlasting life! Thus have You, Our loving Deliverer, given unto us Your Saints as it is written in EPHESIANS 4:7-8, “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of CHRIST. Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men!”¹⁷

And of all the gifts You O CHRIST have bestowed upon us Your saints, is not our salvation under Your body and blood the most precious of all? Yes, some speak as with the tongues of angels, and others with the wisdom from on High. Some men are given the gift of prophecy, while others are equipped by YOU O CHRIST to teach The Word. Some men You send into battle to care for the sick, the injured, the infirmed, the weak, the oppressed. Others You send to war against error of doctrine and errors within Your Body on earth. But to all You bestow faith, hope and love, for You have saved us all by Your grace! O Holy One of Israel, if we are motivated only by gratitude to evangelize the lost with Your holy Gospel, may it be found when we stand before You to have been enough!

VIII. EVANGELIZING FOR THE SAKE OF LOVE IS BETTER YET!

When You, O Lord JESUS, were tempted by the Pharisees and the scribes with the hard-hearted question, “What is the greatest Commandment?” – You showed us that the heart of all of Your Laws is love. For Saint Matthew records Your answer in MATTHEW 22:37-40, “...Thou shalt love The Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great

¹⁷ 1, KJV, EPHESIANS 4:7-8.

commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”¹⁸

Why should The Church on earth evangelize out of love to the lost? All men are made in Your Image, O GOD. It is thus that each human life is precious in Your sight. If we thus truly love YOU, O LORD, we must also love our neighbour. It is out of love for You, our Maker and for Your works of our fellow man that we The Church are to evangelize the lost. Thus was Saint Paul constrained by the love of CHRIST to preach The Gospel. Thus does our Lord teach us in JOHN 13:34, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”¹⁹

If The Church does not evangelize the lost with The Gospel, is the love of CHRIST really in her? Does she really have gratitude in her heart for all the works which CHRIST has done in her? Does she believe that she in fact deserves the grace of GOD because of her own good works? Does she see herself as so righteous that she is immune from GOD’s judgment and correction? Has she forgotten GOD’s great mercy and grace? Has she forgotten the confession of Saint Peter that CHRIST has called her into existence? For is it not written in MATTHEW 16:16, “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art The CHRIST, the Son of the living GOD?”²⁰ For it was out of love that GOD saved us, called His Church into being and commands us His saints to evangelize the lost!

Do we as Christians seek to evangelize the lost without the love of CHRIST? How then can we call ourselves Christians? All spiritual gifts, Biblical understanding and earthly good works are of no avail if we do not preach The precious Gospel out of love – the same love that CHRIST has for us! For Saint Paul wrote of the excellency of love in I CORINTHIANS 13:4-7, “Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.”^{21 22}

O LORD, teach us to love You enough to keep Your Commandments to us: to love You with our entire being; to love our neighbors as ourselves; to evangelize the lost according to Your Great Commission which You have placed upon us Your Church as a mantle to carry forth in this dark world! May we love the unsaved enough to suffer long with them in their afflictions. May we be free of envy

¹⁸ 1, KJV, MATTHEW 22:37-40.

¹⁹ 1, KJV, JOHN 13:34.

²⁰ 1, KJV, MATTHEW 16:16.

²¹ 1, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 13:4-7. The KJV uses the word “charity.”

²² 2, NKJV, I CORINTHIANS 13:4-7. The NKJV uses instead the word “love,” which I have inserted into the KJV text for purposes of clarity of meaning.

and seek not to build ourselves up, but to build up others in Your Image within The Church. May we not be easily provoked to wrath or disillusionment in our evangelism. May we rejoice only in Your Truth. May we bear, believe and hope all good things in You for Your power to anoint our evangelism of the lost in Your love. And when we stand before Your holy throne in Heaven, if our evangelism is found to have been motivated by the same love that You have for us, may it be found to have been enough!

IX. EVANGELIZING FOR THE SAKE OF GOD'S GLORY SUPERIOR TO ALL!

When The Apostles and early Believers received the anointing of The HOLY SPIRIT, did they go out to evangelize the entire world for their own glory? GOD forbid! They rather went forth to Jerusalem, to Judea and Israel, to the Samaritans and to all the nations for the glory of GOD! And so today we The Church on earth must keep close to our hearts that the greatest motivation – above and yet also containing all other good motivations to preach The Gospel – is for the glory of GOD alone!

The Psalmist declares in PSALM 8:1, “O LORD our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name in all the earth! Who hast set Thy glory above the heavens.”²³ And again in PSALM 29:2, “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”²⁴ And again in PSALM 96:3, “Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.”²⁵ And again in PSALM 104:31-35, “The glory of The LORD shall endure for ever... He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: He toucheth the hills, and they smoke. I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being... Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD!”²⁶

O CHRIST JESUS Our Rock, may we seek only to glorify You when we evangelize the lost with Your Gospel and not ourselves! For Your Name is set above all the earth and the heavens! May we give due reverence to Your glorious Name at all times in this life as a testimony to Your wondrous works that have saved us unto Yourself! May when we preach The Gospel in word and deed never loose sight of the terrible wrath that would otherwise befall upon our own heads for our sins, had it not been for Your loving grace towards us.

May we The Church on earth be faithful stewards of Your saving Word by glorifying You among all the nations of the earth. May we as faithful servants of The Cross in this life bless and praise You in all things we do and say, that we might be fit instruments of Your will to reach lost men. And

²³ 1, KJV, PSALM 8:1.

²⁴ 1, KJV, PSALM 29:2.

²⁵ 1, KJV, PSALM 96:3.

²⁶ 1, KJV, PSALM 104:31-35.

when we come to stand before You on our day of judgment, if it is found that we evangelized the lost with The precious Gospel for the sake of Your glory, it will be found to have been enough! In The Name of GOD The Father, and The Son and The Holy Ghost. AMEN!

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