

16. Helping Potential Team Leaders Become Effective in Evangelism

In Mark 1:17, we read, “Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’” In our last topic, we saw that Christ gave this invitation to men who had known Christ for about a year. They had spent time with Him and traveled with Him to a variety of places. However, at this point, Christ said that He was going to train them how to do evangelism. He told them that He was going to show them how to become fishers of men. Evangelism is not primarily taught in a classroom. Instead, people are shown how to do evangelism where people live, work, and spend their free time.

The next event recorded in Mark happened immediately after Christ told these men that He would make them fishers of men. Mark 1:21-22 says, “Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” Matthew 4:23 says, “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.” By comparing these passages, we see that, as Christ went to the synagogues beginning with the synagogue at Capernaum, He was preaching the gospel of the kingdom. The first thing the disciples had to learn was how to explain the gospel.

As the disciples traveled with Christ throughout Galilee, they heard Him share the gospel of the kingdom over and over. They heard the passages He shared from the Old Testament. They heard the questions people asked. They heard how Christ answered those questions. They saw how Christ built relationships with people. They saw how Christ showed acceptance to people. By the time they had traveled with Christ throughout Galilee, they knew what to share and how to share it in order to make the Gospel clear to others.

If we are going to train potential team leaders to share the Gospel effectively, we need to take them with us many times as we share the Gospel. We need to give them opportunities to see how we make contacts. They need to see how we build relationships with people. They need to hear us share the Gospel with many different people, so they can learn to share the Gospel in a variety of ways. They also need to learn how to answer the questions, people are asking, from Scripture. A potential leader will learn these things best by being shown how to share the Gospel many times.

Then, Mark 1:29 and 33 say, “Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ...³³And the whole city was gathered together at the door.” Here, we see that the second thing the disciples had to learn about evangelism was to share the Gospel both in the synagogues and also in the homes. The synagogues were the center of community life at that time. As a result, the disciples saw the importance of going to the place where the people of the community gathered. They also saw the importance of taking the Gospel to people in their homes.

Paul realized the importance of showing potential leaders how to share the Gospel both publicly and from house to house. Acts 20:20-21 says, “How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but

proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” As he talked with the leaders in Ephesus, he reminded them that he had trained them both publicly and from house to house. He reminded them of the fact that he had focused on both repentance and faith. Since Paul knew this would probably be his last visit with these leaders, he was reminding them of the things that were most important for them to do as they trained others.

What is important to us will become important to the potential team leaders we are training. If we never take them with us to the homes of families that are not Christians as we share the Gospel, they will not feel it important to share the Gospel with people in their homes. In contrast, if we take them with us many times as we share the Gospel in homes, that will also become an important part of their ministry. People do what we do. What is important to us will become important to them. One of the last recorded events in the life of Christ, before He went to Jerusalem to be crucified, was to go to the home of Zacchaeus. Luke 19:9 says, “And Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham.’” Right up to the time of His death, Christ showed the disciples the importance of going to homes to share the message of salvation.

A third thing the disciples had to learn about evangelism is found in Mark 1:35-37. “Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed. And Simon and those *who were* with Him searched for Him. When they found Him, they said to Him, ‘Everyone is looking for You.’” Christ showed the importance of prayer in evangelism, by His example. He did not tell the disciples that they needed to pray to become fishers of men. Instead, Christ showed, by His own example, the importance of prayer in evangelism. He showed it is important to spend time with the Father before we try to share the Gospel with people.

The most important thing potential team leaders need to learn is the importance of prayer. Again, what is important to us will become important to them. If they see that we pray and ask the Lord for guidance each time before sharing the Gospel with others, they will also learn, by example, the importance of submitting to the Lord and letting Him lead them as they share the Gospel. As they hear us praying for those who are not yet Christians, and asking that the Lord will open their hearts, they will be reminded that it is the Father who draws people to Christ – John 6:44.

Mark 1:38-39 give us a fourth thing the disciples had to learn about evangelism. Those verses say, “But He said to them, ‘Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.’ And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.” Here, we see that they had to have their vision expanded in order to see the need to reach out to other areas. Instead of preaching a sermon on vision, Christ took the disciples with him as He went to the next towns. In fact, He took them with Him as He traveled throughout the entire region of Galilee.

In the same way, we need to help potential team leaders expand their vision so they see the bigger picture that people everywhere need salvation. Many people have a hard time seeing the big

picture. They do not even see the needs in other towns, cities, or countries. A potential team leader must be able to see the big picture if he is going to be able to help his team reach out to people. The potential team leader will only develop that vision as we take him with us to other areas in order to see the people and their need for salvation.

Christ told the disciples, in John 4:35, when they were in Samaria, “Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” We need to take potential leaders with us and then help them really see the people around them. In John 4, the disciples had gone into the city and all they found was food. In contrast, the Samaritan woman went into the same city a short time later and brought many people to meet Christ. John 4:41-42 summarizes the results, “And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, ‘Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.’” The disciples had to develop a vision for the people of Samaria.

To help potential team leaders become effective in evangelism, Mark 1 shows us four key principles we need to keep in minds so that we will be effective. We need to do these same four things to help every potential team leader become effective in evangelism. We need to:

- ◆ show them what to say by taking them with us as we share the Gospel in many different situations
- ◆ show them the importance of sharing the Gospel, both publicly and with people in their homes
- ◆ show them the importance of depending on the Lord to guide them by showing them, by our prayer life and example, that we are depending on the Lord to lead and guide us
- ◆ expand their vision by helping them see the need of people in other areas by taking them with us as we go to share the Gospel in other areas

Only as potential team leaders are shown how to become effective in evangelism will they become effective in helping the team they lead become effective in evangelism. Effective ministry is learned from example. May the Lord richly bless you as you help potential team leaders become effective in evangelism by your example.