**DISCIPLESHIP LESSON #7**

**Evangelism**

After six lessons, you might want to know the answer to this question, “How do I share my faith?” This is a good question and needs to be answered. Before we begin, you need to understand several things. First, sharing your faith, witnessing, or evangelism, is a vital part of being a Christian. You will never become a mature Christian if you do not share your faith with others. Second, everyone will not be saved no matter what you do to bring them to the point of conversion. We are human and God is in control of conversion or salvation just like He is in control of everything else. Third, when someone rejects what you say, try to remember they are not rejecting you but the message you bring. Fourth, evangelism is God using you to bring someone to Him. You cannot bring someone to Him; He has to use you to do so. You have no special power to bring people to God. It is all of God and none of man. We are just instruments in His hands. Let us begin with some verses that show what a person has to do in order to be saved or converted.

1. [(Joh. 6:37 ESV) All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.]

Notice what Jesus says in this verse. The word “shall” is a translation of the future tense. The tense gives no indication of the one mentioned not coming, only that the ones the Father gives to the Son *will* come to the Son. We can see both the Father and Son are involved in those coming to salvation. What does the word “all” indicate? It tells us that none of those coming will change their mind and not come.

2. [(Joh 6:40 ESV) For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."]

What two things have to be done in order for someone to have eternal life?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus says it is God’s will that everyone who sees Jesus and believes in Him will have eternal life. You might have a problem with this verse. How can someone today see Jesus? Strong’s Dictionary defines the word “see” as a translation meaning “an earnest and continued inspection.” This is not simply looking at something. This is the idea of looking as if to evaluate. But, does that answer the question? No one today can say with any truthfulness they have seen Jesus. So what is being said? Jesus knew that some would not be able to see Him physically. He is not talking about physically but spiritually. Anyone who sees Jesus, as He reveals Himself to them, will believe in Jesus as Savior. How does He reveal Himself to them? By His Word. Paul wrote these words to the church at Rome: [(Rom 10:17 ESV) So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.] The faith to believe comes from hearing the Word of Christ. According to this verse can anyone be saved apart from Scripture? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

3. [(Joh 6:44 ESV) No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.]

Jesus is saying that only those whom the Father draws to the Son can truly come to the Son. It is here that modern evangelism has departed from the truth. Write out two things you have “heard” a person has to do to be saved.

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Asking Jesus into the heart, praying a prayer of acceptance, walking down an aisle in church, or praying the “sinner’s prayer” is not how a person comes to Christ. They can only come when they are drawn. So, who is it that can come to Jesus?

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You can see that it is only God who must bring people to Christ. We cannot simply tell someone if they do certain things they will be saved. That is not what Scripture says. If they do not understand the Gospel message, do not push them into praying a prayer of “acceptance.” We have looked at what not to do in evangelism; now let us look at what to do.

4. [(Joh 3:16 ESV) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.]

This is one of the most famous verses in the entire Bible for telling us what to do in order to have eternal life. However, as we have said before, no single verse says all that needs to be said about any given subject. We must look at all verses that have to do with conversion in order to know what a person must do. In this verse we are told to believe. What does believe mean to you?

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What is the Biblical meaning of belief? Let us examine what the Bible says about belief. We see in [(Jas 2:19 ESV) You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder!]

Is belief enough? The word “believe” in both passages is a translation of the Greek word “pisteuo.” It means to believe in or put trust in. Both words are verbs and come from the same stem. So, how do we believe to salvation when the demons believe in God but they cannot be saved? What is the difference between our faith and their faith? Another verse that might shed some light on this is in [(Heb 4:2 ESV) For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.]

The people being talked about in this passage are the Hebrews in the Old Testament on their way to the Promised Land. Time after time God protected them and showed them His power and they still rebelled against Him. Why? What they heard from God’s mighty works was not united with faith. Did they have faith to believe? Obviously not. Faith has to be given to us in order for us to believe unto salvation. Notice this passage: [(Eph 2:8-9 ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, (9) not a result of works, so that no one may boast.]

Some have argued that this passage is not talking about faith as much as it is salvation. This may be true, but the point is that neither faith nor salvation is of any kind of work. We cannot add anything to the work of salvation. Our “decision” does not save us anymore than deciding to be an airplane will make us fly. This is called “*Decisional Regeneration*.” Our decision is in compliance with what God has already done. We simply come to Him, through Christ, and we want to do so. Why do we want to do so? Our disabled will has been enabled by God. Without His enabling us to believe, we could not believe and would not. From this obvious point, we can see that God must give us what it takes to believe. We do not have the ability to believe unless it is given to us from God.

5. [(Act 2:37 ESV) Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" (38) And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”]

In this passage we see something else a person has to do in order to be saved. What did Peter tell the men to do?

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What does repent mean? It means to turn from one thing to something else. In the Bible, repent means to turn from sin and sinning to God. One must stop trusting themselves for any goodness in God’s eyes and trust God for His goodness. Only goodness in God’s eyes is adequate to please God. We cannot do any good apart from God and this includes coming to Christ for salvation. In this passage the Jews were to repent or turn from trying to get to God by keeping the Law, and be baptized. Does this mean we must be baptized to be saved? Think about the word “for.” If Jesse James is wanted for robbery, does that mean he is wanted so he can commit a robbery or because he already has? We are baptized because we are already saved, not so we can become so. We follow Jesus’ command to be baptized because we want to be obedient to His words.

6. [(Joh 1:11 ESV) He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. (12) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, (13) who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.]

In this passage we see another word that has not been discussed. What is this new word? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. We are told in no uncertain terms what is expected of one coming to Christ. When Jesus reveals Himself to a person, that same person receives Him. It is like a surgeon performing heart surgery on a patient. He takes one heart out and places another one in. The patient is passive in the transaction. He received the new heart but did not reach out and take it. He received it passively and because of this, he now has a new future. In the same way, Jesus came to His own people and they did not welcome Him as their Lord and Savior. To all who did welcome Him as Lord and Savior, He gave them the privilege of becoming a born-again child of God. We do have an obligation to receive Him but as verse 13 brings out, we are not born again as a result of anyone other than God. We cannot receive Christ unless He first comes and reveals Himself to us. When that happens, we see the value of trusting in and believing in the Son of God. Until He reveals Himself to us, we see the preaching of the cross as foolishness.

7. [(Act 16:31 ESV) And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."]

This is a simple verse that says believing in Jesus brings salvation. That is true. But what happened to bring the Philippian jailer to see his need of a Savior? Was he sitting in his home, discouraged, fed up with life, and wanting to end it all? No, but when he saw the power of God in the jail, he immediately saw his need for a Savior. Man, at his best, is unable to see his need and come to Christ.

8. [(Act 16:14 ESV) One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.]

When Paul first arrived in Philippi, he went down to the river because they had no synagogue (Jewish place of worship). It was there that God began to work in people’s lives. As Paul and Silas taught the Gospel, God opened the heart of Lydia to receive the message of the cross. Lydia was a “God-fearer.” This means she, a Gentile worshiped the God of the Jews. But as you can see, she worshiped in ignorance. She responded to Paul’s message of the cross. She was converted and became a follower of Jesus. God had to open her heart before she could see her need for Jesus. This is the case with all who are converted. We are told today by many preachers and evangelists that we must ask Jesus into our heart. Considering this verse, is asking Jesus into the heart needful or necessary? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

9. [(Isa 45:22 ESV) "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.]

In this verse is shown a most simple idea of what a person has to do. The original text of this passage could be translated “Look to Me…” The idea is that one must turn from the world, society, family, and self. This turning must be toward God. Unless this is done, there will be no conversion. Since the verse states one must turn to God, what is it saying about the direction all men are facing?

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Without His aid, no one will seek after God. When one turns to God for his salvation, he will be saved. However, if this same one will not turn to God he cannot be saved. God is the only One who can save and beside Him there is no other who can save.

10. [(Rev 3:20 ESV) Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.]

This verse is often taken out of context. It is often used to show how a person opens their heart to let Christ in. As we have already seen, we do not open our heart, God does. This verse has absolutely nothing to do with salvation. If you read the context it will become clear what is being said and to whom it is being said. Therefore, this verse should not be used in a witnessing encounter.

11.[ (Rom 10:13 ESV) For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."]

This verse has a context that will help with understanding what it means. The idea is that only those who are drawn to Christ by the Holy Spirit will call upon the Name of the Lord. That is evident from the next verse: [(Rom 10:14 ESV) How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?]

How can one call upon Jesus if they do not believe in Him? Which comes first, calling or believing? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Calling upon the Lord is in response to already believing in Him. So, in contrast to popular methods of evangelism, calling upon Jesus without being enabled to believe in Him by the Holy Spirit does no good at all. Hopefully, you have been able to see that salvation is a work of God and we have nothing to do with it. Of course, we must repent and turn from our sins, but that is also from God. He grants repentance as can be seen in: [(Act 11:18 ESV) When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."] God gives the ability to do all that Scripture commands us to do. If God did not give the willingness and ability to believe, no one would ever be saved. We can be grateful that He has saved in the past and is still at work bringing men and women to Himself. But the question remains, “How do we share our faith with others?” We will examine that in the next section.

There are many different ideas on how to share one’s faith. The different Gospel tracts that show these different ideas would fill up a two-car garage. But what is the bottom line in witnessing about Jesus? Are there certain facts we need to know in order to be faithful to Scripture? These questions will be answered in the next few pages. So settle in, prepare to study and think, and let us see what Scripture says.

1. [(Gen 15:6 ISV) Abram believed the LORD, and it was credited to him as righteousness.]

Abraham or Abram as he was called here believed God and was credited with righteousness. What did he believe? He believed God would give him a son in his old age, he believed God was the only God, and he believed God would take care of him. But how did Abram arrive at this belief? Was it a work in his part? No, not if grace is to be considered. Grace is God’s undeserved kindness being poured out on those who do not deserve anything from Him. Abram was no different. God’s kindness was poured out upon Abram and the result was righteousness. We cannot call upon Jesus unto salvation without believing in Him. Abram believed first as God enabled him and then was credited with God’s righteousness. There is no other way to understand the passage. Earlier in the book of Genesis Noah received the grace of God in the same way. We see this in [(Gen 6:8 KJV) But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.] Did Noah find grace in God or did God find grace in Noah? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It is easy to see that grace or favor always begins with God. Why else would Paul say, as he quotes from the Old Testament, these words: [(Rom 3:10 ESV) as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; (11) no one understands; no one seeks for God. (12) All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."]

2. The first thing an unsaved person needs to know is that they are completely helpless without God. Their sin has removed them from any possible relationship with God. They cannot do any good, no matter how hard they try. They are under the wrath of God. [(Joh 3:18 ESV) Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.] We do not have to do anything to be condemned. Men are condemned because they will not do the right thing and that is believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior. This is the way we come into this world. All men are under the condemnation of God until God changes that by placing them under the blood of Christ. This under-standing has to be made clear to the sinner. But what is the next thing they need to know?

3. Jesus, God’s only Son, is the only way for this condemnation to be lifted. God placed His entire wrath upon Jesus on the cross and we can be set free from our sins if we will trust in Him to save us and make us new. Remember, belief in Scripture is not just believing with the head but with the center of the person’s being, the heart.

4. Is God drawing the person to Himself? How can one know if God is drawing them? Here are some principles that will help us see if the person is truly repentant. Is the person truly sorrowful over their sin? Are they willing to acknowledge their hatred of sin and what it did to Jesus Christ in their place? This means they must turn from all sin and turn to God. They must feel, as if never before, the clinging vine of sin. Has God brought them to their knees crying out to God for mercy? Fear of hell is not enough to save a person even though fear of hell often accompanies salvation. Rather than fear of hell it is fear of God’s punishment. Jesus did not come to save His people from hell only, but to save them from their sins. A fear of hell is not enough; there must be a loathing and hatred of sin. Are they willing to acknowledge their unworthiness and wretchedness before God? Do they mourn over the fact that they waited so long to come to Christ? Do they wish they could have died instead of the perfect Son of God? It is these attitudes that show a person truly is being drawn to Christ. Is there a desire to lead a holy life and follow God’s laws all the days of their life? If someone says they are converted and will not love God’s Word, they lie and the truth is not in them. Once a person is converted they will love God’s law because it directs them to live a life of holiness. [(Heb 12:14 MKJV) Follow peace with all, and holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord;] Without a desire to be holy, we will never stand in the presence of Jesus. Examine the person’s motive for wanting to be a Christian. The last principle is this: The person desiring Christ will continue in the faith until death. Jesus said in [(Mat 24:13 ESV) But the one who endures to the end will be saved.] Perseverance or endurance is the true mark of faith in Jesus. If one cannot or will not continue in the faith, it is evident that his faith is a dead faith and not able to save. Only God can save, and if He saves, He will keep those whom He saves until the end.

5. The person with whom you are dealing must believe all the facts about Jesus Christ and be willing to spend some time alone with God. This time alone will be to pray and seek God. As they pray, they should ask God to show them how to believe and give them faith to believe. If they are not willing to do that, give them some verses to read and think about and let them go. Do not try to force anyone to become a Christian because you cannot. Only God can bring them to Himself. Let Him do His work.

6. If at any time you sense the person is not being convicted of their sins and God’s holiness, simply give them some verses to read and think about and let them go. God will save anyone He wants. We must let Him be God.

It is not easy to share your faith with someone who does not want to hear about it. Allow God to lead you to persons who will listen and hopefully respond. Remember, in every witnessing encounter, pray for, and look for the Holy Spirit to convict of sin, reveal Christ through the Word, and bring the person to true conversion. Never think you must get them to say a prayer of “acceptance.” It is God who does the accepting. We simply respond when He accepts us. Your pastor may have more to say about this important aspect of the Christian life. Feel free to talk to him about any questions you may have concerning witnessing.

This is the last lesson in this study on “the first things you need to know after your conversion.” If this study has made you hungry for more, talk to your pastor about some additional studies. This study has barely scratched the surface of what a Christian is and does. There will be more to follow. May God bless you as you continue to serve Him!

Memory verse: Isa 45:22: "Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. NKJV