



EVANGELISM

Treading the Roman Road

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Evangelism: Treading the Roman Road

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F O R E W O R D

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee (Titus 2:11–15, KJV).

What does it mean to be a “peculiar people?” Today we often associate this word with such terms as *strange*, *weird* or *odd*. This incorrect connotation makes it hard to understand just what type of people Christians are supposed to be.

The meaning of the word *peculiar* has changed significantly since the days of King James. Originally it meant to be set apart—to be reserved for something special. This passage teaches that, as “peculiar” people, we are being called apart by Christ to live a different life.

In this booklet I have sought to explore some of the peculiar characteristics of the Christian life—characteristics which mark believers with an indelible stamp identifying them as God’s possession. It is my prayer that this study will guide you into a deeper understanding of your position as His special treasure.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

It is of utmost importance that every believer be able to clearly and concisely present the Gospel to an unbeliever. I think we often take it for granted that people who have been believers for a while can present the facts of salvation. Sadly, that is not always the case.

I am impressed that when Paul—in prison for his preaching of the Gospel—asked other believers to pray for him, he asked that he might proclaim the Gospel with clarity and boldness (see Ephesians 6:19). This reminds me that it is never easy to present the Gospel. We can be deluded into thinking that since the basic facts of the Gospel are simple, it is easy to communicate them to the lost. That is not so. Otherwise, the Apostle Paul, who suffered so much for the Gospel, would not have had to ask for boldness and the ability to preach the Gospel clearly.

Probably the single greatest help to me in my own personal witnessing has been to learn a particular pattern of presenting the Gospel. Once I learned the basic presentation, I could vary it from time to time and still know where I wanted to pick up a conversation, where I wanted to take it, and how I was going to get there.

The Gospel is simple. A little child can learn and present the facts of the Gospel. If you have been a believer for any length of time, you are undoubtedly aware that presenting the Gospel with clarity and simplicity is a great struggle. We pray for open doors and for boldness to present the truth, but we have to be ready to take advantage of the opportunities when they arise.

C H A P T E R O N E

Four Basic Facts of the Gospel

There are many different types of Gospel presentations, but in any presentation there are four things that must be included. To be saved, a person must know and believe these four basic facts.

The presentation in this booklet is called “The Roman Road” because all the verses used in the presentation are from the Book of Romans. These are not the only verses you can use, of course, but it can be helpful to keep them all in one section of the Bible. Remember, the goal in presenting the Gospel is not to impress people with what a great Bible scholar you are or to “Wow” them with all the verses you have memorized. It is to help them understand clearly what God says about their condition and His salvation.

Sinfulness

The first point is that man is a sinner. Romans 3:10 reads, “There is none righteous, not even one.” Romans 3:23 says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” These verses are inclusive. God says there are *no* righteous people—*everyone* has sinned.

What is sin? “Sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). It is rebellion against the standard that God has established.

There is an active and passive dimension to this rebellion. James 4:17 says, “Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.” Sin can be either an active rebellion

against the standard that God has made or a passive failure to meet the standard that God requires.

This is important to remember because people do not enjoy being called sinners. Many people believe that since they have not committed a terrible act, they are really not that bad. However, the real question is have you been perfect every day of your life? Because God's standard is perfection.

You are a sinner because sin is a failure to do good, and you have not done good in every situation.

Sin is the failure to be all that God requires us to be. In today's environment, it is difficult to get people to come to grips with the issue of sin. There seems to be no standard of morality, and many people are unwilling to admit they have done wrong. Deep down, however, there is an inner awareness of guilt and sin.

In whatever way you start the conversation—wherever you “pick up” on a person—you have to come to the issue of sin. It is not necessary to go through a litany of personal sins, but the issue of personal sinfulness must be recognized. After all, if a person does not see himself as a sinner, he will not see himself in need of a Savior.

The Penalty for Sin

The second point is more difficult. It is often easier to get a person to admit he is a sinner, after all “nobody is perfect,” than it is to talk about the penalty for sin. There is a penalty for sin, and this is hard for people to accept. God is just and must punish sin. “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, so death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12). Here we are told very simply that death is the result of sin. One man, Adam, sinned. That act brought sin into the world, and with sin came death: “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

It is important to bring a person to understand the seriousness of the situation. Each person is a sinner—all under the same condemnation and the same penalty. The penalty for sin is death.

Three Kinds of Death. The Bible speaks of three types of death. It talks about *physical* death—the separation of a person from his body. James 2:26 says, “The body without the spirit is dead.” When your spirit leaves your body, you are physically dead. You do not cease

to exist as a person, but you have been separated as a person from your body. So the key idea in death is *separation*.

The Bible also talks about *spiritual* death. Spiritual death is the separation of a person from God. Ephesians 2:1–5 speaks to the fact that as unbelievers we were dead in our trespasses and sins. We were not physically dead, but we were dead, nonetheless. We were separated from God by sin. That is spiritual death. That is part of the penalty for sin.

Finally, there is what the Bible calls the *second* death or *eternal* death. This is the separation of a person from God for all eternity. Revelation 20:10 says, “The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” This second death involves eternal torment. Revelation 20:14 goes on to say, “Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.” In other words, all the residents of Hades present at this particular judgment will be cast into hell. Hell is a place where torment goes on day and night, every moment of every day, every moment of every night, through all eternity. It is a state of separation from God in the agony of suffering.

All three of these types of death—physical, spiritual and eternal—are included when the Bible says the penalty for sin is death. In sharing the Gospel with a person, it can be difficult to impress upon him that the paying of this penalty involves being separated from God for all eternity.

Most people think that if they try their best, their good deeds will tilt the scale in their favor, and they will gain entrance into heaven. However, the penalty for sin is not doing good. The penalty for sin is death. Failure to understand this point is what is lacking in most people’s religious beliefs and consciousness.

Many people will say, “Well, God is a loving God. I do not believe He would sentence people to hell. I do not believe there could be eternal torment.” You can agree with them from the standpoint that you do not like to believe it either. But the unbeliever must be brought to realize that God is not only a God of love, He is a God of justice. If God does not always do the right thing, then God is not the kind of God that people really need.

The Payment for Sin

If this were the end, it would be a hopeless situation. We are all sinners. The penalty for sin is physical, spiritual and eternal death. How, then, does one deal with this problem and still not sacrifice the justice of God? The solution is *Christ*.

Jesus Christ came and paid the penalty for our sin. Romans 5:8 says, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

This is God’s solution: He provided Someone who could pay the penalty for sin. We can’t die to pay someone *else’s* penalty—we have our own penalty to pay. God sent His Son to earth, to be born as a human being and die on a cross, so that He could take our place and pay the penalty for sin.

On the cross, Jesus Christ died physically—that is obvious. He also died spiritually: “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” (Matt. 27:46). Because He was not only man but God, He could suffer to an infinite degree during that time of death on the cross. As He paid the penalty for our sin, He suffered the agony of hell.

This is God’s solution, to have His Son pay the penalty for sin. This is where the love of God comes in. Romans 5:8 says, “*God demonstrates His own love toward us*, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (emphasis added). That is the amazing thing, that Christ should die for each one of us personally, when we were sinners in rebellion against God, rejecting Him and His love. People who talk about a loving God who would not sentence anyone to hell have no conception at all of the depth of God’s love. They have got some mushy, wishy-washy idea of a gooey love that would be no good at all. They would sacrifice the justice of God for some meaningless entity they call “love.” But if you divorce love from any concept of doing right, of being just, what kind of love do you have?

For example, if a husband talks about his love for his wife and then mistreats and abuses her, what kind of love would that be? Love removed from any framework of “right-ness” is a love that has no meaning. It becomes an empty word. For a person to know something of the love of God, he must understand that God did not put away justice, but in His love He intervened and paid the penalty that justice required so that we could be forgiven. This is the

point that must be driven home to people. They need to understand they are sinners; they need to understand that as sinners they are lost; but then in sharing the Gospel, you must bring them around to God's solution.

Faith Is the Way

There is one more thing that must be understood if a person is to obtain God's forgiveness. Faith is the way that Christ's payment is credited to each person's account. Romans 10:9 says, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved." God wants each person to believe in his heart that Christ died for him. Why? "For with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed'" (Rom. 10:10,11). Further, verse 13 says, "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved."

In these verses, God offers forgiveness. In a nutshell, this is the offer you could make to a person to whom you are presenting the Gospel:

"You are a sinner like me. You are under condemnation for your sin, just like I am. God in love had His Son die to pay the penalty for our sin. Now He offers to you the free gift of forgiveness. There is nothing you can do to earn it or merit it. To pay your own penalty, you would have to remain separated from God in this life, experience physical death and remain separated from God through all eternity in hell. There is no hope for you to pay that penalty. But Jesus Christ, God's Son, paid it for you. God said if you will accept the payment He made on your behalf, He will cleanse you and forgive you. Would you be willing to believe that Christ died for you personally?"

Review

1. **Man is a sinner**—Romans 3:10; 3:23.
“There is none righteous, not even one” (Romans 3:10).
“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

2. **The penalty for sin is death**—Romans 5:12; 6:23.
“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12).
“For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).

3. **Christ came and paid the penalty for sin**—Romans 5:8.
“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

4. **It is by believing in Christ that we experience His forgiveness**—Romans 10:9,10.
“If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation” (Romans 10:9,10).

C H A P T E R T W O

Technique and Sample Conversation

This is all fine and good, but how do you do it? How do you remember all these verses and questions when you are talking to somebody?

If you know the four points discussed in chapter 1, you can present the Gospel to anyone in a very short period of time, and you do not have to have any of it memorized.

One method is to carry a little pocket Bible with you. On the back flyleaf, write the four points with their accompanying verses. Under point number one, the first supporting verse is Romans 3:10. Turn to that verse and in the margin write “Romans 3:23” in red ink. That is the next verse in sequence. Then, turn to Romans 3:23, and write “5:12.” This is the first verse under point number two. Do this with all the verses.

You are following the Roman Road. You go from one verse to the next. As long as you find Romans 3:10, you can find the rest of the passages by following the “signpost” references you have written in the margin. All you have to remember is the starting point, Romans 3:10, and if you can’t remember that, write it with a big magic marker on the front of your Bible. That will get you there!

The next thing to do is practice, practice, practice. Go over the points and the verses so that they become second nature—like driving your car. When you are driving your car, you do not have to stop and think: *OK, tilt the steering wheel down. Turn the key. Check the*

brake. These are things you just do automatically.

You can make a practice of running over this presentation every day. Go into your bedroom, close the door, sit down in a chair and enter into a conversation with an imaginary friend. “It is good to meet you. You got a family? How many kids do you have? That is interesting. Do you enjoy your job?” After a few minutes of general chit-chat, you might ask, “Do you go to church?” or “Are you a religious person?”

Introductory Questions

How do I get them from there to where I want to go?

After you have asked them if they go to church or if they are religious, you can follow up with a couple of questions that are very helpful in presenting the Gospel.¹ It does not matter if they say they are not interested in religious things—the questions can still apply to them.

Suppose they do say that they are religious—most people will. Then say, “Have you come to the place in your religious convictions that if you died tonight you would know for sure that you would go to heaven?” This question helps you find out where they are—and it helps *them* to find out where they are too! Most people have not thought very much about this most important question.

They may say, “Oh, sure, I am pretty confident of that” or “I don’t know” or “That is hard to say” or “I sure hope so!” To follow up this question, then ask, “Suppose you did die tonight and you stood at the gate of heaven. (Do not read any theology into this—it is just a question to get *into* the theology!) There you are at the gate of heaven and God says to you, ‘Why should I let you into My heaven?’ What would you say to Him?”

Most of the time you will get an answer such as, “I have been a pretty good person,” “I have done the best I can” or “You know, I think we are all going to make it.” This gives you a foundation to work from. You might even want to write their answer down to refer to later.

1 *Evangelism Explosion*, D. James Kennedy, Tyndale House Pub., Wheaton, IL, pp. 17, 18.

You could then say, “So you basically think that because you have been ‘good’ or you have ‘tried your best’ or because ‘God is a loving God’ that you’ll get into heaven and He will accept you?”

The person might say, “Oh, this is silly! I don’t think it will happen this way anyway.” Of course, they are right, so you could say, “No, I do not think that is the way it will happen either. But why do you think you will go to heaven? On what basis do you think God is going to accept you into heaven?”

With these questions you can establish where the person is in his thinking. It is so frustrating to present the Gospel to an unbeliever only to have him say, “Oh, yeah, sure, that is what I believe too.” If you get him to voice his thinking *before* you get started, then you have something to refer back to. Then you can gently remind him of his own words by saying, “But remember, *you said* that you thought you could get to heaven because you ‘tried your best!’”

Getting Into the Gospel

At this point you can introduce the Gospel by saying, “Would you mind if I just shared with you a couple of things that God says in His Word about us and our getting to heaven?”

“Hmmm, well, I don’t have a lot of time—”

“This won’t take five minutes. In fact, I can do it in two, if you can listen fast.”

“Oh, OK.”

You don’t want him to think you are getting him involved in a long, drawn-out conversation. You know where he is and you know where you want to bring him, so it really should not take much time.

Now you can pick up on the Roman Road. You could do it this way: “You know, the Bible says that if we are to go to heaven, the first thing we have to understand is that we are all sinners. I had a hard time with that. It took me a few years to really understand that to go to heaven I first had to understand that I was a sinner.”

That is your cue to open your little pocket New Testament to Romans 3:10. You can show him the verse—let him read it for himself, because as soon as you mention the Bible he will say, “Well, everybody has his own interpretation.” You might answer with,

“Yes, and maybe your interpretation does not agree with mine. It is true—there *is* a lot of confusion over Bible interpretation, but let’s just look at a couple of verses that zero in specifically on what God says about going to heaven. After all, if God is interested in us getting to heaven, we would expect Him to speak to us in a clear way so that we could understand it.”

Now go back to Romans 3:10 and read, “There is none righteous, not even one.” Not much difficulty in interpretation there. You could read this verse to a little kid and he could understand it. Those who say that the problem with the Bible is its interpretation haven’t really considered what it has to say. That is why it is so important to keep a small pocket Bible handy. You can display the verse and even let him read the context if he wants. You might want to mark all the verses in the Roman Road so that they stand out—so that when you open up your Bible, that is what his eyes will be drawn to. If you do not have a Bible, then you are just talking to him.

The next verse, Romans 3:23, is just as clear: “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” That is not too difficult is it? When we read “all” that means *everyone*. “Have sinned” means we have all failed to be perfect at some time or another.

Most people will concede this point if you include yourself. Rather than pointing the finger and saying, “God says *you* are a sinner,” it is more effective to say, “God says there is none righteous. That means you and I are sinners.” It takes some of the edge off. Then the conversation becomes just a matter of one dirty sinner talking to another.

Here Is the Rub

At this point you might say, “We are all sinners, but the most difficult thing to understand is what it means to be a sinner. God talks about this also in His Word.” Then you turn over to Romans 5:12, “Just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin.”

Of course, as soon as you begin talking about Adam and how his sin brought death into the world, people will say, “Wait! I do not believe all that rubbish about Adam, you know. That is just a myth!” All of a sudden you are drawn into a battle about evolution and

creation, an argument that has nothing to do with getting to heaven. You can answer this objection with, “Yes, there is a lot of discussion and a lot of argument about the opening chapters of the Bible, about whether Adam really lived or not. We are not going to resolve that here. Let’s just let that go for right now and concentrate on what the Bible says about our sin: When sin did come into the world, death came with it.”

You do not want to get sidetracked. If you are talking to a person with whom you have an ongoing relationship, maybe you could work through that topic with him. Sometimes that kind of issue can be a real opportunity to work into the Gospel. But be careful not to get sidetracked in all these other areas when a person’s real need is to know about Jesus Christ. Besides, until the unbeliever does believe in Jesus Christ, he cannot possibly understand the truth of the rest of the Word of God. You need to control the conversation. You do not want *him* to control the conversation. He does not know what he needs to know to get to heaven, so why should you follow him down all these rabbit trails?

You could continue with, “Perhaps another verse will help us to understand that. Over in Romans 6:23 God says, ‘The wages of sin is death.’ When you go to your job, you expect to be paid, right? God says when you sin you can expect to be paid too. The wage—what you earn—is death.”

There is not going to be any problem of interpretation with this verse. “The wages of sin is death” is pretty simple to understand. Most likely your listener will not raise the issue.

Then you can continue by saying, “When the Bible talks about death it is talking about separation. There are three kinds of death. There is physical death, for one—when a person leaves his body. Did you know that when you die you will not cease to exist? Your body will be dead, but you as a person will simply have left your body.”

“Oh, I don’t believe that.”

“Maybe you don’t, but it is interesting to note that is what the Bible says about it anyway.” Again, you want to avoid getting sidetracked into the issue of life after death.

“The Bible also says there’s another kind of death—spiritual death. This is when a person is separated from God. A lot of the

frustration in our lives is a result of this separation. The Bible says that God created us to enjoy a personal relationship with Him. Because of sin, that relationship has been broken and we are separated from Him. There is an emptiness—there is ‘something missing’ in life.”

If you had already been talking to this person—found out about his family, that he has been married for 15 years—then you could say, “You know, it would be like losing your wife. There would be an emptiness there—something missing. Well, even more so, in your basic being you were created for a relationship with God. But because of sin, that relationship is broken, and the very meaning and purpose God has for your existence is being frustrated.”

“God says that there is a third kind of death: separation from Him for eternity. If you and I die in this condition of being separated from Him, the Bible says we will be separated from Him for all eternity.”

They might say, “I do not believe in hell either.” You might say, “Obviously, that is your choice. I would prefer not to believe in it myself, but I also must be aware that if the Bible is the Word of God—and I realize I cannot prove that to you—then this is a serious matter. We ought to at least be aware of what the Bible has to say about the penalty for sin. After all, that is all we are doing, looking at what the Bible says about getting to heaven.”

If you left it there, it would be a pretty hopeless situation, which is really what you want. Perhaps he said earlier that he believed he was going to heaven because he was baptized. You could say, “Now that is quite a problem, isn’t it? Because the Bible says that I am a sinner and that the penalty for sin is death—not baptism. Even saying that you are going to do good for the rest of your life would not pay the penalty for sin. The penalty is death.” You want to drive home the point of the hopelessness of this person’s condition.

“Do you see that if it were left here, it *would* be hopeless? We would all be going to hell! But you know, the Bible does hold out help.”

Going on, you might share just a little of your testimony. “It was exciting to me that one day someone showed me from the Bible that there is a solution to my problem, and that solution is found here: ‘God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were

yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Rom. 5:8). God had His Son, Jesus Christ, leave the glory of heaven and come to earth, to become a man and die on the cross."

"Did you ever wonder why we celebrate Christmas and Easter so much? What is the significance of all that? The Bible says the real significance is that God became a man so that He could die on the cross and pay the penalty for my sin and for your sin. That is amazing—that Jesus Christ should die on the cross to pay the penalty for my sin. Although I was a sinner saying, 'I'm really not interested, I've got my mind on other things, I'm busy living my life,' Jesus Christ came, took my place, died on the cross and paid the penalty for my sin. No one else has ever loved you enough to die for you."

The Point of Decision

"But the story is not over. Knowing all of this, you can still die and go to hell. You know why? God says you must accept the life that He offers. You must receive His payment for your sin. The Bible puts it this way in Romans 10:9, 'If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.'"

Then share with them, "You need to believe. God says the way you receive His forgiveness is to recognize that you personally are a sinner. We have both acknowledged that we are sinners. You need to understand what it means to be a sinner. You are under God's condemnation, not because you are worse than I am or I am worse than you are, but simply because that is the penalty that a righteous God demands for our sin. But His Son Jesus Christ has intervened on our behalf."

By going over this you are reviewing the points of the Gospel with him, to fix them in his mind.

"You know the greatest thing that ever happened to me was when I received that gift by believing that Christ died for me. I quit trusting in my good works, in my going to church—all those things. I realized I had to trust that Christ died for me. I told Him that. I said, 'God, I don't understand it all, but I believe Your Son died for me. I want Him to be my Savior.'"

At this point you might ask this person, "Can you see any reason why you should not trust Jesus Christ as your Savior?" He may

say, “Well, I am not sure—you know—the Bible and all that confusion.” You could say, “We are not talking about all of this right now. These basic, simple facts are clear. This is what you really need to know and understand and believe to go to heaven. God is not asking anything of you. He has done it all. Is there any reason why you should not receive the gift of life that He has provided for you in the death of His Son? Is there any reason why you would say, ‘No, I do not want it, even though He died for me’?”

In this way the person has been brought to the point of decision. He might say, “No, I am not willing to consider doing that.” There may be times when you want to continue by asking, “Would you mind if I prayed right now?” You might review the Gospel in your prayer and ask God to help this person understand and believe. Then tell them, “You know, right now you can tell God you are a sinner and you want Christ to be your Savior. It is just that simple.”

This is an example of one way to work through the Gospel with people. It is not that complicated. You do not have to know all about the issue of Bible interpretation or evolution versus creation. That is not what a person really needs. He needs to understand that he is a sinner; that the penalty for sin is death; that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died and paid the penalty for sin and that He was raised from the dead because the penalty had been paid.

Bringing in the resurrection can depend on how the person responds. The penalty for sin is death, not resurrection. The resurrection is the *evidence* that the penalty had been paid. The significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is that God accepted His payment: Jesus Christ is alive. Depending on the person’s response, you might zero in and focus on that toward the end, when you talk about His payment for sin.

The most important thing is practice. You need to work it through so you can get from one verse to another. Even when you know the verses, it might seem like you are stumbling to get from one point to the other, when you actually talk with an unbeliever, so try to go over it enough that you can present it well. Then pray, *Lord, give me an open door. Give me boldness to speak with clarity.*

You must keep in mind that there is spiritual warfare going on. Do you know what happens as soon as you begin a conversation

like this? “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness” (Eph. 6:12). Satan does not sit back and say, “Let’s wait and see how he does.” He engages in warfare. You also must realize that ultimately it is the ministry of the Spirit of God to take this truth as you present it and carry it to the heart of that person. If you have done everything you can, then you have fulfilled your responsibility.

C H A P T E R T H R E E

Being Prepared

Maybe you have another presentation that is a little different from the one described in this booklet. That is fine. It is important to fix in your mind a basic presentation of the Gospel so that if someone next to you were to fall over with just sixty seconds to live, you would be ready and able to share the Gospel with them. You certainly would not have time to invite them to church. You could not call a pastor. It would not do any good to say, "God loves you and so do I." That just does not get to it.

You have the verses. You have the points. Challenge yourself to work on it this week. Every day make it a point to sit down and go over it in your mind. Practice it. Try to get some time alone and go over it out loud. The advantage of doing that is that it is good to hear yourself say, "Do you know that God says that we are all sinners?" The first time you really listen to yourself, you think, *Is that my voice?* You want to become so used to it that it is as normal as saying, "Oh, I see the sun is shining today." Practice, practice, practice. *Then* you can pray for open doors and for boldness to share, because now you have something to share.

Making Your Move

One of the major downfalls in witnessing is waiting for the unbeliever to take the initiative.

For example, if you are out looking at cars, you want someone

to try to sell you a car. You probably won't buy a car there if you come out of the showroom and say, "You know the problem with that place? They wanted me to sell *myself* a car. I knew more about their product than they did!"

That is often the way believers are with the Gospel. We pray, "O Lord, open the doors! Help them to say something to me." What are we asking? Not too many people will stop you on the street to say, "Excuse me sir, could you tell me how to get to heaven?" They do not even know they are not going to heaven. The man next to you on the airplane won't say, "Hmmm, I wonder if this man can tell me how to get to heaven?" It is as if you are a physician and can see the telltale evidences of a fatal disease all over him. You know the cure—"but, hey, I am not going to mention it unless he asks me!" How foolish! He would not even know you are a doctor!

Similarly, lost people do not know they are lost. They do not know they have the fatal disease of sin. They do not know that you are a physician—that you have a cure. So you have to take the initiative. That is exciting! There is nothing more exciting than having the opportunity to share with someone the Good News of Christ.

One more thing you can do. You can carry a few tracts containing the basic Gospel message. You can buy them at any Christian bookstore. When you have had an opportunity to share the Gospel, it is good to have something concrete to give away.

After you share the Gospel you could say, "I would like to give you this little booklet." The person might think, "Oh, what is he giving me now?" You can say, "It just covers what we talked about. Stick it in your pocket. Sometime today, maybe while you are waiting for your next plane or when you get home, just take it out and look it over. Consider these matters again." In this way he does not have to depend on his memory, but he will have something he can refer back to, to remind him. Even if he does not look at it—who knows? Maybe he will go home and give it to his wife!

EPILOGUE

I was in a restaurant sharing the Gospel with someone at the table, and I noticed that the people at the next table were listening more closely than the person sitting across from me. When I got up to leave, I said to them, “I noticed you were listening in on our conversation.” They turned red with embarrassment, but I added, “That is fine, really. I was glad to have you be part of it. I would like to give you one of these little booklets.” Of course they were so flustered they did not know what to do, so they took the booklets.

Stop and think. If we were all prepared to take advantage of situations such as this, we would be amazed at the open doors we would find all around. The Apostle Paul was effective. He prayed for open doors; he prayed for boldness—but the important thing was, he was *ready* when the opportunities came. That is what I am saying. Let’s get ourselves ready. *Lord, I have talked to that empty chair so many times, give me a body to work on!*

I trust God will give us many open doors and much boldness so that many might have the joy and privilege of hearing about Jesus Christ and, through the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit, come to know Him.

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By Faith: Abraham
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Church Discipline—An Evidence of Christian Love
Deliverance Workbook
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(A) Different Gospel: An Evaluation of the Teachings of Robert Schuller
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Divorce on Trial
Election: Whose Choice?
Endurance: Standing Firm in a Throw-Away World
Evangelism: Treading the Roman Road
Freedom From Addiction
Giving: A Result of Grace
Homosexuality: A Biblical Perspective
Instruction to Husbands, Fathers & Their Wives
Instruction to Wives, Mothers & Their Husbands
Living the Life
Marks of the True Believer
Prayer
Promise Keepers and the Rising Tide of Ecumenism
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Psychology: The Trojan Horse
Rendering to Caesar
Reversing the Reformation
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Spiritual Gifts
Statement of Faith and Constitution
To Earth With Love: A Study of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ
To Tie the Knot or Not: A Biblical Study of Marriage and the Single Life
When the Bible Doesn't Say
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Lordship Question: What Does a True Believer Believe?
Pare! Y Piense A Donde Va (Spanish tract)
Statement of Faith
Stop! And Think About Where You Are Going
What About Tongues?