

Good personal workers are good stewards!

Series: Personal Work and Personal Evangelism

Intro:

- → **series on personal work and personal evangelism** — something congregation very interested in doing more actively
 - ● **lesson 1: Be a good neighbor** — paradigm, view, perspective, way of thinking
 - live by the golden rule: have compassion for people, move to show mercy
 - “good neighbor” personal work
 - “good neighbor” evangelism
 - **compliment congregation**
 - “good neighbor” attitudes that exist
 - **personal work that is occurring:** encouragement, meals to sick
 - e.g., all the encouragement and help given me and my family
 - **illus.:** received two card in the mail last week, as have before, both totally made my day
 - **lesson 2: Don’t worry, just do it!**
 - **sometimes we leave our first love**
 - **solution:** we must repent
 - **sometimes we are afraid of rejection, afraid we’re not perfect**
 - **solution:** believe that the battle belongs to the Lord — its not about you, its about God
 - **don’t worry, just do it** — God already equipped you, know you can do it
 - e.g., **David and Goliath** — the battle belongs to the Lord
 - **lesson 3: What works today, to bring people to Christ?**
 - authority for this discussion: apostolic examples, use expediencies to take the gospel to others
 - recent history of expediencies used by brethren:
 - gospel meeting, cottage meeting
 - visitor’s meeting works today
- ● **PP - chart**, reasons for people going to a particular church — **point out what’s important today and what’s not, to reach people**
- → **This lesson (4):**
 - **Title:** Good personal workers are good stewards!
 - **Purpose:** help us to be good stewards of our personal resources, spend some of them to reach the lost
 - **talk about time management and resource (\$) management, before talk about specific things we can do to reach the lost**
 - **Programing note:** future lessons suggest specific ways to be a personal worker and evangelist
 - **compliment congregation:** thinking about these things, seeking for ways to put them in practice
- **#1 Problem: I don’t have enough time to do personal work (evangelism).**
 - **We are living in a society where most Americans are overworked and stressed out, and have little time or energy for “church work”.**
 - **Stat: Percentage of Americans who say they:** (Lori Joseph and Bob Laird, "Americans Working Too Hard," USA Today Snapshots; source: Hilton Generational Time Survey of 1,220 adults)
 - **Need more fun: 68%**
 - **Need a long vacation: 67%**
 - **Often feel stressed: 66%**
 - **Feel time is crunched: 60%**

- Want less work, more play: 51%
- Feel pressured to succeed: 49%
- Feel overwhelmed: 48%
- **Application:** As Christians, we can't allow ourselves to become overburdened by worldly cares and concerns to the point that there is not enough time or energy (physical, mental, emotional) to be workers in the Lord's kingdom.
 - **It takes time and energy to:**
 - be zealous for good deeds (Tit. 2:14)
 - walk in the good works for which we were created in Christ (Eph. 2:10)

→ **More and more Americans have no time for relationships. For Christians who fall into this trap, they're not evangelistic — not building relationships.**

- **Stat: In his book Bowling Alone, Robert Putman says the following statistics are indicators of the decline in community life in America over the past 25 years:** (Alan Wilson, Nyon, Switzerland; source: Robert Putman, Bowling Alone, Simon and Schuster, 2000)

- Attending club meetings: down 58%
- Family dinners: down 33%
- Having friends over: down 45%

- **Application:** If we conduct our lives like many of the people around us, we will not have time to build relationships, not have the influence we need to lead people to Christ.

- **Saying:** We have to be different to make a difference, and bring people to Christ.

→ **Many Americans fill their lives with too many activities that eat up their time, money, and energy.**

- **Stat: In a lifetime, we'll spend time:** (Reported in U.S. News & World Report, 1989, Leadership, Vol. 10, no. 3.)

- **Six months** sitting at stoplights
- **Eight months** opening junk mail
- **One year** looking for misplaced objects
- **Two years** unsuccessfully returning phone calls
- **Five years** waiting in line

- **Application:** To be successful personal workers and evangelists, we must streamline and "uncomplicate" our lives.

- **not spend so much time and energy** looking for material possessions we don't really need
- **not spend so much time and energy** try to take care of "things"
 - **illus.:** Beth, insurance agency, lady who had to reopen to castle
- **not spend so much time and energy** in lines

➤ → **What's this mean to you?**

- as Christians, we can't be so busy and preoccupied with physical life, that we don't have the time, energy, and resources we need to do personal work and evangelism
- **i.e., we have to be good stewards (segue to next point)**

➤ #2 **What does the Lord teach us about stewardship?**

→ **Faithful stewards are busy doing the Lord's work, ready for His return.**

- **Read - Lk. 12:35-40** Jesus' - be ready, like men waiting on master to return from wedding feast
- **Read - Lk. 12:41-44** Jesus' teaching on stewardship, doing master's work and ready for his return
- **Application:** faithful stewards are busy doing the Lord's work, ready for His return
 - **????:** Are you doing the Lord's work? Are you ready for His return?

➤ → **Unfaithful stewards are squandering the Lord's possessions. — time, energy, \$, possessions, health**

- **Read - Lk. 16:1-7** master learned that his manager (steward) had squandered possessions, then we see example of squandering (not deal with vs. 8-9)

- **Read - Lk. 16:10-13** if not faithful stewards in this life, not rewarded with eternal life
- **Application:** faithful stewards don't squander their master's possessions (Lord's blessings) — must be faithful today, to be rewarded for eternity
 - **????:** Are you squandering the Lord's blessings, or faithfully using them in His kingdom?
- → **We will be judged in regards to our stewardship. — according to our use of God's blessings**
 - **Matt. 25: Story of the talents**
 - master goes on journey, entrusted his possessions to slaves, talents (1 talent = 15 years wages for laborer), according to ability
 - 5 talents = 3,120,000 / 2 talents = 1,248,000 / 1 talent = 624,000
 - 5 talent slave made 5 more, 2 talent slave made 2 more, 1 talent slave hid it in ground
 - master returned, judged slaves for their stewardship
 - **Read - Matt. 25:20-21, 22-23** faithful slaves rewarded, enter into joy of master
 - **Read - Matt. 25:24-28, 30** unfaithful slave punished, outer darkness
 - **Application:** We will be judge as stewards of God's blessings
 - **Read - Matt. 25:29** principle of judgment, according to stewardship
 - **Quote - 2 Cor. 5:10** all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ
 - **Quote - Lk. 12:48b** given much, much will be required
- **What's this mean to you? — Summary**
 - **Stewardship:**
 - Faithful stewards are busy doing the Lord's work, ready for His return.
 - Unfaithful stewards are squandering the Lord's possessions.
 - We will be judged in regards to our stewardship.
 - **Thought questions:**
 - What are some things we are stewards over today? — **time, energy, \$, possessions, health**
 - How is your stewardship today, effect your personal work and evangelism?
 - What will the Lord say, when you give account for your stewardship?
- **#3 Attitude: Much of being a good steward results from have a proper attitude.**
 - **Attitude of self: unworthy slave**
 - **Read - Lk. 17:7-10** attitude, after doing all: unworthy slave
 - **Quote - Rom. 12:1-2** living sacrifice, KJ
 - **illus.:** proper attitude regarding our life and the Lord's blessings (time and money)
 - Roe Rives: the \$ I have is a gift from God
 - other people work just as hard, even harder, and lose all the money they ever made
 - **Application:** when we give to others (time, \$, etc.), we are just stewards of God's gifts
 - **unworthy slave:** personal work, evangelism
- → With the right attitude, we'll **make the most of our blessings**, working in His kingdom.
 - **We'll make the most of our time:**
 - **Read - Eph. 5:15-16** be careful, wise, making the most of your time
 - **each of us have the same** amount of time - President of US, etc.
 - **difference is how** we use our time
 - **If we make the most of our time:**
 - **Quote - Tit. 3:8** be careful to engage in good deeds. . . .
 - **Quote - Tit. 3:14** learn to engage in good deeds, meet pressing needs
- **Personal work and evangelism often does not require much additional time or energy, just making the "most" out of our time. — good stewardship**

- **personal work illus.:**
 - **dinner for sick, shut-in, needy:**
 - when make dinner, make a little extra to take to a person (family) in need
 - freeze it and take it later, if necessary
 - takes a little extra work, and a little extra time - not much
 - **visitation:**
 - running errands, stop and pick up someone who is lonely and take them with you
 - or visit 5-10 minutes
 - doesn't take much more time, takes very little extra effort
 - **calls and cards:**
 - sit down to watch TV, get the portable phone and make a couple of calls, or write a card
 - even do it during commercials
 - takes very little effort and practically no additional time
 - **evangelism illus.:**
 - **woman pulled over and gets a ticket, family converted:**
 - story several have told, women, church having gospel meeting, been praying about inviting someone, stopped and got speeding ticket, talked to the policeman and asked if interested in coming to the meeting, said not but his wife had been looking for a church, asked if she could call wife, called her and invited, wife was converted, policeman was converted later
 - how much time, energy, and \$ did it take the neighbor to invite Gerald to church, so that he could be exposed to the truth
 - **man walks down to invite man to church, while working in yard, many times, family converted:**
 - Gerald, man down the street come by on Saturdays while working in yard, invited many times, finally went, he and whole family converted
 - how much time, energy, and \$ did it take the neighbor to invite Gerald to church, so that he could be exposed to the truth
 - the inviting man did not teach Gerald, another member taught him (evangelist)
 - **neighbors over to visit with church members:**
 - having some friends for church over, invite and friend or neighbor who is not a member of the church (talk in detail later)
 - takes little additional effort and practically no additional time

→ **What's this mean to you?**

- it doesn't necessarily time much time or energy to do personal work and evangelism, just the proper attitude by which we make the most of our time — **good stewardship**

Conclusion:

➤ → **Summary:**

- **all of us want to be better** stewards in the Lord's kingdom
- **perhaps most important:** have the proper attitude of servitude, make the most of our time, do the work
 - battle belongs to the Lord, just do it
- **programing note:** future lessons, specific things we can do as good stewards in the Lord's kingdom

→ **Inv.:**

- if not a faithful Christian, not a profitable steward of the Lord's blessings
- inv.

Audio sermon notes:

- ▶ denotes where to proceed to the next slide PowerPoint slide.
- All Scriptures are NASB, unless otherwise noted.
- Sermon recorded 12/11/2005, Church of Christ, South Livingston Ave. In Lutz, FL, Allan McNabb, BibleGuide.org.