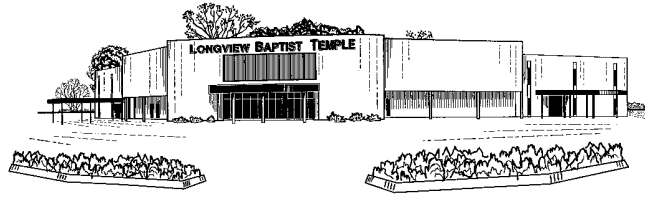


Longview Baptist Temple
Sunday School Lesson
February 8, 2009



=I HAVE SET BEFORE THEE AN OPEN DOOR=
The Responsibility for World Evangelism, Whose?

Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 24:45-48

LESSON AIM: From a study of the Scriptures to show where the responsibility of world evangelism lies.

INTRODUCTION: For two thousand years, ever since Christ's command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel," we have been trying to determine who is responsible for doing the job. Most Christians will readily agree it is the church's job, the church will readily agree it is the missionaries' job. As a result everyone agrees it is someone's job, but nobody is doing the job that Christ commanded to be done. If you doubt this statement check the results of world evangelism over the past fifty years.

I. HOW THE CHURCHES HAVE NEGLECTED THEIR RESPONSIBILITY OF WORLD EVANGELISM.

- A. The churches have been deceived into the area of neglect of world evangelism by Satan. This is nothing new. Satan has always opposed world evangelism. A detailed study of Scripture reveals this.
- B. Churches have assigned the task of world evangelism to others thus neglecting their responsibility.
 1. The task has been assigned to mission societies, mission boards or mission movements. They have done this believing it right and proper because of tradition or thinking the task too large.
 2. The task has been assigned to certain people within the framework of the local church. Such as:
 - a. Ladies Missionary Society
 - b. Certain Sunday school classes, or missionary circles.
 - c. Missionary men's groups, etc. Dozens of such organizations have surfaced in the churches. Many believe this is the way to evangelize the world.
- C. Churches have shirked their responsibility of world evangelism by putting forth all their efforts in their own city, town, state or nation. Sad to say, but some missionaries do the same thing on the mission field. Start a church and never instruct the people in world evangelism.

II. HOW THE CHRISTIAN HAS NEGLECTED THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD WORLD EVANGELISM.

- A. People, Christians included, are followers; not leaders. What we are led to do is what we do.
- B. Many believe that mission work is to be carried on by a few rather than the many. We have taught this by concept and precept. Using Acts 13 as a springboard text, many are instructed to believe that only a few are called to foreign mission endeavors. All are called—only to different facets of the endeavor. **EVERY CHRISTIAN IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD IS RESPONSIBLE TO GOD FOR WORLD EVANGELISM.** We will answer to God for our part in world evangelism. How can we dare think a **HANDFUL** of missionaries can accomplish the task of world evangelism. In World War II every American was involved in some type of war related industry. The war we are engaged in is for souls. Hence the all-out effort needed!
- C. The neglect on the part of the individual Christian is caused by failing to understand personal accountability. We will answer as individuals for our life on earth. Not as a collective body.

III. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF WORLD EVANGELISM.

- A. First and foremost the responsibility falls upon the New Testament Churches.
 1. He commanded the church—Matthew 28:18-20
 2. He empowered the church—Acts 2:1-4
 3. He employed the church by selecting the missionaries from her—Acts 13:1-3
 4. He enjoins the church to give to sustain HIS work of World evangelism--II Cor. 8 & 9
 5. He expects the church to accomplish the task—Matthew 28:20
- B. Secondly, the responsibility falls upon the New Testament believers. (I will divide them into groups as to their calling. None of the groups have a greater or lesser responsibility. As the body is one, so must the effort of world evangelism be one.)
 1. The pastors—Ephesians 4:11-12
 - a. I mention the pastors first because the cause of Christ will rise or fall here. These are God's leaders. If they do not know, or will not instruct, little will be done.

- b. Pastors of Churches MUST understand God's program of world evangelism. They are the key. Church history reveals the truth that Christ was made known to the world when Godly men knew God's plan and carried it out.
 - c. To many, "other" things have entered into the minds and lives of pastors and blinded their vision of world evangelism. Pastors should keep in mind that everything they involve themselves in should have as its ultimate aim world evangelism.
2. Missionaries
 - a. We label those called to serve on fields outside of their nation as missionaries. The word cannot be found in the Scriptures, but modern usage identifies the world with the work and the worker.
 - b. The missionary's responsibility is great. He is the one God uses to challenge believers of his native tongue to unite in the work. Many times he is used to instruct believers relative to world evangelism.
 - c. Once on his field of labor; he may become a pastor, and evangelist, a teacher, as well as a missionary to the people to whom God has called him to. He must win people, baptize them, instruct them, and challenge them to become involved in world evangelism. The life and ministry of the apostle Paul is the number one example of this type of ministry. His life should be the example of all men called to this responsible position. (Acts 20:17-35, Study his ministry at Ephesus.)
 3. All Other Believers
 - a. This includes all full-time workers, evangelists, church staff workers, musicians, etc. Every believer!
 - b. World evangelism must be carried out by each one of God's people. No one is exempt! We must shed the idea that missions is a specialist's job. Performed by just a few, it must be a task shared by all! It is our task to perform, not theirs.
- C. Mission Boards, Societies, Mission Committee's—Their Responsibility.
1. Organizations known as mission societies, boards, etc. are an outgrowth of Churches or Christians trying to find methods and the mechanics of implementing a mission program. Many of these organizations function well for a while, but unless the right leadership stays at the helm they usually go astray.
 - a. They lose their vision for world evangelism...become entangled in humanitarian efforts.
 - b. Money, property, etc. become entanglements causing them to drift from their position. Mission money is invested in other things; the emphasis of world evangelism is lost due to secondary things.

IV. **THE RESPONSIBILITY OF WORLD EVANGELISM.**

The responsibility of world evangelism is the New Testament Churches, the pastors, missionaries and people who comprise the membership of the churches. It is NOT the responsibility of mission boards, societies or committees. Those organizations are to be used to implement the mechanics and are not to be an end themselves.

MEMORY VERSE: 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: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen."