



INTO HIS HARVEST
REACHING
OUT

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January 12, 2015

It has long been our belief that if the various sects of Christianity uncovered the high ideals of Jesus' authentic ministry that have been buried by decades of man-made dogma, and sought to reach for those ideals, the walls separating them would speedily dissolve. And then if Christianity, as a united brotherhood of faith sons of God, took that clear message of high ideals and preached it 'in all the inhabited earth,' then the end to sorrow, suffering and injustice will come. (*Matthew 24:14*)

As we mentioned in our previous article, [Into His Harvest – A Bold Approach](#), we have begun testing our theory by reaching out to churches in our area, and the preliminary results have been very encouraging. So in this article, we will share some of our suggestions on how others can begin such a ministry in their communities.

Emptying Ourselves

In order for a ministry of this type to be effective, those who participate must be humble and must empty themselves of all ideas of religious superiority, as Paul suggested:

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.” – *Philippians 2:1-4*

Think of our exemplar, the master teacher, who, although the Son of God, “made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant.” (*Philippians 2:7*)

It is with this mindset that we should engage in this new ministry. We are not going to churches to usurp, direct or demonstrate our knowledge of doctrines. We are going to uplift, encourage, and inspire them 'in connection with faith,' in connection with things that concern the spiritual salvation of our brothers. Notice Paul's instruction to Timothy:

“Just as I encouraged you to stay in Ephesus when I was about to go to Macedonia, so I do now, in order for you to command certain ones not to teach different doctrine, nor to pay attention to false stories and to genealogies. Such things end up in nothing useful but merely give rise to speculations rather than providing anything from God in connection with faith. Really, the objective of this instruction is love out of a clean heart and out of a good conscience and out of faith without hypocrisy. By deviating from these things, some have

been turned aside to meaningless talk. They want to be teachers of law, but they do not understand either the things they are saying or the things they insist on so strongly.” – *1 Timothy 1:3-7*

Promoting certain doctrines and expounding on theocratic trivia ends up in nothing useful. As Paul wrote, often the teachers of doctrines do not really understand the depth of the matters they espouse so fervently. But matters in connection with faith are the things that effect our relationship with the Father and Christ Jesus and bear on our salvation. These are things all people, no matter their intellectual capacity, can understand and use. Our purpose in engaging in this ministry is to promote the Kingdom of the Heavens and those matters that effect our salvation, and let the Spirit of Truth work out the rest.

This will be a challenge for many of us who were tutored by the Watchtower organization. Our natural instinct might be to immediately correct those who espouse erroneous doctrines, but we recommend restraint in favor of the greater good. Ask yourself: Does holding this belief prevent our brother from gaining salvation? If the answer is no, let the matter pass. Unless you are being asked your opinion or your view of a matter, focus your attention on salvation issues and leave other matters for the spirit, the angels and self-discovery. You will find that, in time, those who fully accept their sonship with God and consciously pursue the Kingdom of the Heavens will soon be able to distinguish the difference for themselves.

The ‘chosen people’ mentality and the religious superiority inculcated into Jehovah’s Witnesses in general is not easy to divorce ourselves from. It will require constant readjustment and diligent effort to humble ourselves and maintain impartiality like our Heavenly Father. (*Acts 10:34-35*) We must learn to accept as our brothers all those who have faith in Christ Jesus and who strive to do their best under their circumstances:

“So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” – *Galatians 3:26-29*

It is inevitable that those who choose to engage in this new ministry will certainly hear doctrines that you disagree with, doctrines that run counter to what you know to be true. But it is helpful to remember that we all were once in relative spiritual darkness and by the efforts of others we gradually moved forward in our faith. We must allow others the same opportunity to progress and discover truth without condemnation. And we can only accomplish this by emptying ourselves and maintaining humility.

Becoming Ambassadors

In the past, hearing what one believes to be erroneous doctrines might cause a person to flee out of fear of being a part of ‘false religion.’ But really how can you help your brothers who you believe are in darkness unless you draw close to them and get to know them?

Jesus was once condemned for associating with people that the religious leaders considered to be in darkness, but he replied:

“On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” – *Matthew 9:12-13*

The sons of the Kingdom are not physicians, but they are ‘the salt of the earth.’ We should be able to reach out to all people and enhance their lives ... unless we have lost our savor. (**Matthew 5:13**) And we are the ‘lights of the world.’ We should be able to lighten up many dark places ... unless we hide our lights under a basket. (**Matthew 5:14-16**) And we are ambassadors of the kingdom of the heavens. We should be able to reconcile all men to God ... unless we lack faith in Jesus’ promises. (**2 Corinthians 5:20**)

An ambassador is a representative of a sovereign nation sent to reside temporarily in a foreign nation for the purpose of ‘declaring the Excellencies’ of his home nation. Jesus was an ambassador of the Kingdom of the Heavens. Thus, those who serve as substitutes for him would also be promoting the Kingdom of the Heavens, not the theories and ideas of any man or organization of men. This role aptly describes this new ministry! If we live up to our role as ‘ambassadors substituting for Christ,’ then we have nothing to fear. There is nothing more thrilling than to become partners and co-workers with Christ in transferring our world ‘from the authority of darkness into the kingdom of the son of his love.’ (**Colossians 1:13**)

But to be effective ambassadors, we must learn to distinguish the difference between mere doctrines and salvation issues. Here are examples of the salvation issues we are concerned with, issues that DO effect whether one gains life:

- God is the father of every man (**Acts 17:28-31**)
- Every man is your brother (**Matthew 23:8-9**)
- Love the Father with your whole being (**Matthew 22:37**)
- Love your neighbor as yourself (**Matthew 22:39**)
- Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (**John 14:6**)
- Obey God as ruler rather than men (**Acts 5:29; Matthew 10:28**)
- There is no mediator between God and men except Jesus (**1 Timothy 2:5**)
- Stop judging others (**Matthew 7:1-1**)
- Don’t call your brother despicable names (**Matthew 5:22**)
- Display the fruits of the spirit (**Galatians 5:22-23**)
- Work good toward all (**Galatians 6:10**)
- The heavens is the destiny of all faithful mankind (**Matthew 11:12**)

Here are some examples of doctrines that DO NOT effect salvation. Whatever side one takes in these controversies does not determine whether they will gain life:

- Celebration of Holidays
- Hellfire vs. everlasting destruction
- Cross vs. upright stake
- Man has a soul vs. man is a soul
- Interpretation of prophesy
- Using Jehovah vs. Yahweh
- Using Jesus vs. Joshua ben Joseph
- Mary was or was not a virgin
- Going to church on Saturday vs. Sunday
- Jesus is or is not a part of a Trinity

You will notice that most Christians can agree on salvation issues. Salvation issues, which are the high ideals of Christianity, serve to unite. Whereas doctrinal issues, which are nothing more than the commands of men, serve to divide us. Placing more importance on

doctrinal issues is why we have so many different sects, and also why we believe if we can expose the unimportance of doctrinal issues by promoting salvation issues, we can achieve unity.

Notice also that salvation issues effect the personality and faith of a person; whereas mere doctrines only effect knowledge. Faith and personality will continue with us as we pursue the heavenly career; whereas the truth about doctrines will perish with the body once we embark on the heavenly career. At that time, we will ‘see’ the truth and all doctrinal controversies that some have built their faith on will be consumed as if by fire.

“If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.” – *1 Corinthians 3:12-15*

These are just some of the issues that you might be confronted with. While there may be opportunities to discuss doctrinal matters, our primary focus should be on promoting the Kingdom of the Heavens, distinguishing salvation issues and serving one another. As ambassadors, we want to prepare our brothers for greater things and help acclimate them to the Kingdom of the Heavens. We are to become interactive in our community, introducing our brothers to the heavenly career, rather than remaining on the sidelines or on the outside looking in. That is what ambassadors do – enter into ‘foreign nations’ to promote their ‘home nation.’ It is what Christ Jesus demonstrated, and what the 1st century apostles and disciples exemplified.

Selecting a Church

Not all churches are suitable for this type of outreach ministry. For example, churches that are run by a central authority could not receive assistance unless it comes from, and is approved by, their headquarters, such as Jehovah’s Witnesses and Catholic churches. Mega-churches and churches that commercialize the ministry would not likely be open to assistance, nor would charismatic churches that center around a particular personality.

Churches that might be a good fit would likely be described as follows:

- A small community church that is conscious of a spiritual need and could use some help. These are churches with low attendance and a limited reach into the community.
- A church that is non-denominational or open to fellowship with other sects. Those who believe they are the ‘chosen people’ and that others must believe and think in unison with them are full and have no room for assistance.
- A church that is not too dogmatic or fundamental. We believe that a church with strict and rigid rules would be very resistant to the plain teachings of Jesus and the progressive ministry of the upward call.
- A church that has some freedom on how they conduct their meetings and what they do. These churches are either community churches or only in a covenant relationship instead of a contractual relationship with a central body.

We, and our ministry partners, found suitable churches within walking distance of our homes. We believe that if we are able to uplift the spiritual conversation in a local church, that would naturally uplift our own community, so that is where we all started.

When you select a church, go with an open mind. Introduce yourself. Ask questions about the church to get familiar with how it is run. Find out when they hold their meetings, if they have a Bible class, what sort of activities they engage in. Pick up their literature, be interested in what they do. If possible, see if you can be introduced to the Pastor or whoever is taking the lead. Let him or her know that you are looking for a church where you could be of some assistance.

And we might add that small churches that are not supported by real estate ventures or book publishing empires depend on donations to survive. So be prepared to offer a small donation at their services if you are able.

Beyond this, you will have to use your own judgment on how you will proceed. Each church will be different and have different needs. As you learn about the church, ideas will come to mind on how you might be able to help. Here are some ideas we have come up with, although it may take some time before you can introduce these possibilities.

- Conduct a progressive Bible class
- Organize food and/or clothing drives
- Invite the Pastor over for dinner to share some ideas
- Teach the church how to conduct a personal ministry
- Show them how to go into the community to invite people to a special talk

Some churches allow other groups to use some of their other rooms for their own meetings. Where there is a large group of our brothers engaging in this new ministry, perhaps you can ask to use one of the rooms. You can discuss the plain and open teachings, and then invite members of the church to join you if they want to. There might be a fee to use one of the rooms and if it the cost can be easily managed by the group; this might be a good

way to reach out. If enough church members attend, then the meeting can become a Bible class for the church and then there should be no fee.

Again, these are just suggestions. You may discover different and better approaches in your own ministry. The key is to be open to possibilities. Don't be afraid to try new things or take risks on behalf of the Kingdom. One of the reasons Christianity has become so stagnant is because its adherents are afraid to imagine, to innovate and to think outside of the box. Man applies himself to advancement in every other endeavor – science, politics, social development, entertainment and recreation – but he is afraid to advance his religion. Let that not characterize the faith sons of God. Let us be like our Lord – fearless, bold, and revolutionary – knowing that as long as our actions are in furtherance of the Kingdom, our celestial family will support us.

Keep Your Eyes on the Prize

We have also found that some churches are especially interested in Jehovah's Witnesses and their experience in the Watchtower organization. Some Pastors want to tap into the training, skill and resources Jehovah's Witnesses might bring to the table. But others want to use ex-Witnesses as a means to attack the Watchtower Society. Though some of us left the

organization on less than favorable terms, and continue to suffer negative repercussions as a result, we caution you about unfairly or unreasonably bashing Jehovah's Witnesses or allowing yourself to be used for a negative purpose. Your motives would be suspect and the beautiful uplifting ministry that you intend to engage in would be tainted.

In one instance, one of our ministry partners was asked what can be done to protect their church members from the erroneous doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses. We suggested that he share this scripture:

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.” – *Matthew 7:1-5*

According to Jesus, the best way to help your brother is to first help yourself. So our brother suggested to the Pastor that the best way to protect the church against erroneous teachings of any organization or any person is for them to know the true teachings themselves. So he is suggesting an in depth Bible study class to help the members develop a strong, unshakeable relationship with the Father and Christ Jesus, and he is offering himself to the Pastor to answer any questions he may have that could be helpful in educating the church. We will see how this turns out.

The important thing in this regard is not to use the church to vent anger. Work those matters out with your confidential friends. Remember always that your association

with the church is as an ambassador substituting for Christ, 'spurring one another on toward love and good deeds.' (*Hebrews 10:24*)

Brothers, great things have already been accomplished in this ministry of promoting the actual, authentic, plain and open teachings of Jesus. Let us not wander into complacency for there is much more work yet to be done. Let us continue to beg the Master for more assistance in the planting of seeds of truth to both young and old, encouraging them to seek with vigor the pearl of high value. And let us prepare for growth by the pursuit of excellence, never doubting divine backing, knowing that nothing is loss and nothing is done in vain in behalf of Christ Jesus.

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” – *1 Corinthians 15:58*

In all things, let humility be the watchword. Keep your mind on the ministry and your eyes on the prize. (*Philippians 3:14*) And, if possible, for those who accept this challenge, please share your experiences with us. And, as always, we stand with you as One in Christ.

“*Elaia Luchnia*”