

Simple Evangelism Series #7

## Seed Sowing

By Bill Denton

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Tonight we return to our series on “Simple Evangelism”

1. Hopefully, what impresses you is that there are some things about evangelism that we need to stress
  - a. to a large extent, evangelism is an attitude, a mind-set
  - b. the foundation to everything we do in life can, and should, lead to something that encourages other people to consider their problem with God and how Jesus provides the answer
  - c. none of it has to be all that difficult
2. Whether it is inviting people to church assemblies, giving them something to open a door, using your personal story to connect with them, just being enthusiastic about church, communicating the real message of the gospel, or loving people who are lost – it doesn’t take an expert
  - a. these are things we can all do
  - b. they are all much more powerful than you think

#### B. Tonight I want to talk about one more element to simple evangelism – seed sowing

1. This is not something new to us – sowing seed is a familiar Bible picture
2. What may be new is to think of yourself as a seed-sower

### I. THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR BEING SEED-SOWERS

#### A. The parable of the sower (Mt 13, Mk 4, Lk 8) is an obvious place to start

1. The story is about a farmer planting seed in a field
2. As he sows, the seed falls on four different kinds of ground
  - a. the wayside ground
  - b. the stony ground
  - c. the thorny ground
  - d. the good ground
3. It is a picture that all who heard the story would understand, but it is not really a story about a farmer planting seed in a field
  - a. Luke 8:11 “Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. NASB95
  - b. wayside soil – the devil comes and takes the word from their heart
  - c. the stony soil – shallow ground, seed can’t take firm root
  - d. thorny soil – seed choked by worries, riches, pleasures of life
  - e. good ground – seed roots and produces much fruit
4. Great lesson for us – the word of God is seed to be planted

#### B. 1 Peter 1:22-25

22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, 23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For, "ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF, 25 BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER." And this is the word which was preached to you.  
NASU

1. Again, Peter uses the idea of the word as seed
2. We learn something about this seed
  - a. the seed that is the word is imperishable
  - b. this seed that is the word endures forever
  - c. this is the word which was preached to you (sown in you)

#### C. James 1:21

21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. NASU

1. James focused on the soul saving power of the word
2. But to save, it must be planted or received

#### D. 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

5 What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. 7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. 8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. NASU

1. Paul was actually combating division in which Christians were calling themselves after their favorite teachers
2. Neither Paul or Apollos (two of the teachers) were anything
  - a. the real power was in the seed that was planted
  - b. one of the planted it, the other came along and watered it
  - c. God gave the increase
3. What I want you to see is how consistent is the picture of people as the field in which seed (the word of God) is sown, God giving the increase, all to God's glory according to God's plan

## II. WE NEED TO BE MODERN-DAY SEED SOWERS

A. I think you would all agree with this: there will never be a crop in any field until or unless somebody plants some seed

1. It is such an obvious thing that it amazes me that it can be overlooked or ignored
2. In other words, we will never evangelize the lost until we plant some seed, the word of God, into the hearts and minds of people who are lost
3. Nothing takes the place of sowing the seed, the word of God

B. Mistakes that discourage us from sowing the seed

1. Thinking that it's only the job of preachers or some other expert
2. Thinking that it's too difficult, or that it requires too much from us
3. Thinking that nobody is interested
4. Thinking that it's too expensive (can be if all you do is expensive things!)
5. Planting everything except the right seed (word of God)

C. What can average Christians do to help plant the seed of God's word

1. Use your preacher! Bring people to hear him preach!
2. Give away some of those free things (like your church bulletin) that will get messages from God's word into the hands of others
3. Give away tapes or CDs of sermons and Bible studies
4. Share your personal story with people
5. Write letters to people and use the opportunity to point people to scripture
6. Share God's word in personal conversations with others
7. Study the Bible with others (or set up a study and get somebody to help you)

D. Illustration

Ken Blanchard, the author of the One Minute Manager, once shared a story about what can happen when individuals in a company model servant leadership, no matter where they are on the totem pole.

A business consultant was training more than 3000 employees of a mid-western grocery chain to approach their jobs with a goal of creating a memory for their customers. She stated that "this is what will distinguish your store from all others."

Johnny was a 19-year old bag boy that had down-syndrome. His first response to the consultant's suggestion was "I'm just a 'bag boy.'" Nevertheless, he went home and shared what the consultant said with his mother. They began to ponder the consultant's words about how he could create a memory for his customers. Johnny had a habit of collecting inspirational thoughts that he would often read. He decided he would begin printing these sayings and place one in each of the bags of his customers. When customers came through the line he would place the sayings in their bag and say, "I've included some of my favorite sayings in your bag in hopes it will encourage you today. Thanks for shopping with us."

After just a few weeks, an amazing thing began to happen. One day the store manager noticed that all the customers were lined up at only one cashier station when there were other stations open. He began to panic, thinking the other stations were broken. After further investigation he found this was not the case. Actually, customers wanted to come through Johnny's line in order to get his saying of the day.

One woman came up to the manager and said, "I used to come to the store only once a week, but now I come everyday!" Johnny's example spread to other departments in the store. The florist began giving a flower to each florist customer. The meat department put Snoopy stickers on each meat order with a special greeting. This one act by a bag boy changed the entire climate of the store.\*

\*Ken Blanchard, presentation made at 2004 His Presence in the Workplace conference, San Antonio, TX, 2005

## CONCLUSION

A. What I'd like you to think about is that the bag boy at the grocery store was basically sowing some seed.

1. Granted, it wasn't exactly the same as I've talked about tonight, but it's the principle involved that's important
2. It was just a small effort on his part, but it had big results

B. Sowing the seed of God's word is much the same.

1. It's often the seemingly small thing that produces big results
2. You can sow the seed of God's word, you just need to figure out how you can do it – so many ways, so many opportunities with so many people

C. Bottom line, here's what I know – evangelism stops dead unless we sow the word

D. Invitation