

LESSON ELEVEN

**CHILD EVANGELISM**

**A. THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILD EVANGELISM:**

Scriptural Reference:

*"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 19:14).*

The importance of Child Evangelism cannot be overestimated. We can understand the importance of it when we study the Scripture where Jesus instructed His disciples to permit the little children to come unto Him.

By Child Evangelism we simply mean that type of special ministry needed to win the heart of a child for Jesus. The child is saved in exactly the same way an adult is saved, by being born again. A child must repent, be baptized in the Name of Jesus, and receive the Holy Ghost, exactly the same as an adult. However, we must understand how to reach children, gain their attention, hold their special interest, and win them for Jesus. This definitely calls for a special type of ministry.

Let us list a few reasons why Child Evangelism is so important:

1. Many children die the same as adults. In fact although the average life expectancy is getting longer, yet only a small percentage reach old age. Out of 100,000 children at the age of three years only 59,000 are alive at fifty years of age or a little more than half.
2. As a rule children are more easily led to Christ than adults.
3. They are likelier to stay converted than those converted later in life.
4. They make better Christians since there is not so much to unlearn.
5. Their lives are before them; they may devote their entire lives in the service of the Lord. An elderly person may be saved but he has nothing to offer the Lord except a wasted life.
6. There is untold potential in the life of a child - for good or for bad. It staggers the imagination to think what this world would be like if everyone were converted as a child.
7. The importance of Child Evangelism becomes especially significant when we consider the present day trend in the secular school system. The mind of the average child is constantly bombarded and brain washed with the false theories of evolution. If children are not reached with the Gospel, there is little hope for the future. The reason for so much crime and violence is that we are raising a generation of agnostics.

**B. WHO MAY BECOME A CHILD EVANGELIST?**

The answer to this question is that almost everyone may be a Child Evangelist. The qualifications are few for certainly a person does not have to have many talents to win the soul of a child for the Savior.

There is no age limit here. He may be a child himself or he may be a grandfather and restricted to a wheel chair. Let us list a few necessary requirements: (1) He must be filled with the Holy Ghost; (2) He must love children; (3) He must know God's Word; and (4) He must be able to identify himself with children.

This last point simply means that he must be able to get down to the child's level and express himself in simple but plain language. This is not "baby talk" affection, for these children can quickly discern and will resent.

Children desire to be loved, be accepted and understood. Anyone who is able to meet these simple requirements may become a Child Evangelist.

### **C. HOW OLD MUST A CHILD BE BEFORE HE CAN BE SAVED?**

A child may be saved as soon as he reaches the "Age of Accountability." This is the age when he understands right from wrong, when he receives the knowledge of sin, and is old enough to accept Jesus Christ as a personal Savior.

Naturally this age will vary from child to child. There is no possible way of setting a definite age. The writer has known of children, three and four years of age, filled with the Holy Ghost. Frequently children six and seven years of age are baptized in water.

Moody was converted when he was fourteen years old. Fanny Crosby was converted at eleven years of age. Jonathan Edwards at age seven. Ninety percent of all Christians before the age of eighteen years are converted.

The problem arises concerning the age of a child to be baptized in water. The writer used the following rule to guide him: Wait until the child strongly requests it himself, and then make certain the child understand fully what it means. A child should never be pressed into water baptism and at the same time the child should never be refused for this is a matter of Salvation. The parents should always be included.

### **D. WHERE MAY CHILD EVANGELISM TAKE PLACE?**

Children may be won for the Lord almost everywhere. Wherever children are found they may be won for the Lord. Child Evangelism may be carried on, (1) In the home; (2) In the schools; (3) At church and Sunday School; (4) Outdoors, in the parks, etc. and (5) At summer camps.

Child Evangelism is not a careless ministry for it needs much preparation. However, it is a simple ministry and as such lends itself to many types of services. Children will respond whenever they are shown attention and love.

Let us list a few places where children may be won for Christ:

#### **1. A REVIVAL CRUSADE:**

The evangelists who give no attention to children are sadly failing. He should give them special attention by: (a) Having a special feature during the service for children; (b) Having a special "Family Night" service one each week during the crusade; (c) Having some of the children participate once in awhile in some of the services.

The alert evangelist will find many ways to gain the attention of the children, hold their attention, and win them for the Lord. He will have the satisfaction and joy of seeing them pray through at the altar.

#### **2. SUNDAY SCHOOL:**

The Sunday School is the Bible School of the church, the educational department. However, this does not stop it from being evangelistic in nature. The goal of the Sunday School should be to win every child for the Lord. Children should be accepting Christ in almost every class session. There is no reason why children cannot receive the Holy Ghost right in the Sunday School classroom.

Occasionally an open session is excellent when a water baptismal service may be conducted. In this way the children will not only be taught water baptism in Jesus Name but also they will have the opportunity to witness some of their friends being baptized.

### 3. CHILDREN'S CHURCH:

Children's Church may be conducted while the worship service is being conducted for their parents. It may be held evenings after school, or on Saturday afternoons. It may be held at the church, in someone's home, or in the classroom of the day school after school hours.

Children's Church is very effective for it gives plenty of opportunity for child participation. They can be encouraged to testify, to pray, to sing solos, to read the Bible lesson.

### 4. DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL:

A DVBS is very profitable and generally has results in the salvation of souls. However, a DVBS must be well planned and preparation should start months in advance. There are many fine books available giving instructions how a successful DVBS may be conducted.

### 5. SUMMER AND VACATION CAMPS:

These are generally district projects and the number of children is generally quite large. Discipline and finance are generally the most difficult problems to solve here although it also may be difficult to get the right kind of workers, suitable teachers and supervisors.

## E. A WORD OF CAUTION:

We shall conclude this lesson with a word of caution. The Child Evangelist must never lose sight of his goal, that of the salvation of the child. It is so easy to allow sincere efforts to degenerate to the level of entertaining the child rather than winning him for Christ.

The child evangelist is more than a baby sitter; he is a soulwinner. This he must never forget.

