



Christians for all seasons

Introduction:

In today's text, Paul writes emphatically about an activity that is central to the life of the individual Christian, and to the life of the church: evangelism. Everyone who has come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ has the obligation to share the good news of God's grace with those who are floundering – after all, if we do not tell them the life-transforming news that Jesus has done it all, and has bridged the gap between God and man, how are they to know? Doing so should be a natural outflowing of our own joy in the gospel and our love for others.

Our obedience to Jesus's command to go and make disciples is not, however, met without cost to ourselves. Paul explains how, in order to fulfil this mandate, he has had to live a life of servant-hood, self-sacrifice and discipline. And while we must be prepared for these same demands, we should always be spurred on by the knowledge of our great and certain reward, and by the assurance that our efforts will be empowered by the Holy Spirit and will have the blessing of God.

Today's Scripture Text

1 Corinthians 9:19-27

Sermon Points

#1. The call to follow Jesus is also an invitation to fish for others

- Read Matthew 4:18-20, Matthew 28:16-20 and Acts 1:18

Jesus's mission for his disciples can be distilled into two simple phrases: "Follow me" and "Fish for people." If we are interested only in the following, and not in the fishing, we will not be living the full Christian life that Christ intended for us. After we ourselves have encountered Jesus and put our faith in him, our lives as his disciples should be marked by growth in obedience through faith and by multiplication – all of which God has designed to take place in the context of life-on-life relationship in community.

- ♣ How did you become a Christian? Who were the people in your family or friendship circle who shared the gospel with you, and do you know how they themselves came to Christ?
- ♣ In Acts 1:18, for what purpose was the Holy Spirit to be given? Do you allow the Spirit to work in you for this purpose, or have you been limiting his power in your life?
- ♣ What steps are you taking to grow as a disciple who makes disciples? Can you think of any ways in which BBC/MBC or your GC could help you to become more effective in evangelism?



#2. The call to fish is also a call to forsake

In 1 Corinthians 9:19-27, we see the overriding power, in Paul's life, of his drive to spread the gospel. This drive overrides Paul's own preferences and temptations, as he gives priority to sharing the message with all manner of people, often at the expense of his own comfort and entitlements. We should be willing to do the same because of the blessings that the gospel confers on us, in this life and the next.

- ♠ *"I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some"* (1 Corinthians 9:22): Think about your own context – your friends, family and community who do not know Jesus. Are there things that you could take up or forsake, in order to reach them with the gospel?
- ♠ Do you think there are any dangers involved in contextualising the gospel? How might such dangers be avoided?
- ♠ What do Paul's words in verse 26 teach us about how we should pursue holy living?
- ♠ What is it about joy-filled holy living that can draw people to the gospel? How does this differ from mere displays of morality?
- ♠ Do you share Paul's sense of urgency in sharing the gospel? If not, how might we, individually and as a community, foster that sense of urgency and excitement in ourselves?

#3. The call to fish is a call to the great adventure of the mission of God

We can often associate the word 'evangelism' with feelings of guilt and inadequacy, but the reality is that, when we respond to the call to make disciples, we get to partner with God in his plan for the world! We can start doing this today, by implementing B.L.E.S.S.

- ♠ Based on your notes from Sunday's sermon, what does B.L.E.S.S stand for?
- ♠ Why does the B.L.E.S.S approach have the potential to be an effective way of sharing the gospel?
- ♠ *Personal Reflection: Pray and ask God to reveal to you the people or families you should commit to 'B.L.E.S.S.-ing' over the next few months.*