

# The Way to Winning Souls

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When you saw the title of this article, did you quickly shove it aside?

Most folks are possessed of a desire to see the church of Christ grow and prosper. I seriously doubt you would get one negative answer if you asked every Christian you know if he wants the borders of the kingdom of our Lord to grow and be extended. But how many of us are actively engaged in such work? Are you? How many people have you brought to Jesus? How many erring brethren have you encouraged to return to a right relationship to the Lord? Now, I realize those are hard questions and I don't ask them to be harsh or unkind, but they are questions worthy of both our consideration and our personal honesty. You see, in the answer to these questions is to be found the principal reasons we are not seeing more people baptized into Christ or erring brethren coming back to their places among the saints.

We tend to forget (or ignore) the fact that it takes more than just desire to win souls to Christ. If wishing could make it so, I doubt that anyone we know would ever be lost, for all of us have someone about whom we are concerned and who we would like to see either be baptized into Christ or return to Him—one or the other. Everyone has a family member, or a friend or a neighbor—even a husband or wife—they would like to see obey the gospel. But, brother or sister, just wishing will not make it so. It takes more than that.

**Winning souls for Christ takes consideration.** In order to win a person to Christ one must stop and think about where that person is who does not have Him in his life. If we would just take a few minutes to stop and consider the serious state of people in the world—they are lost, folks!—I am convinced we would be more considerate of the urgency of their situation and more anxious to help. If you saw a car coming toward someone, would you try to warn them? Do we realize, brethren, that the person who dies without Christ in his life is destined for hell for eternity. Now that sounds blunt and straightforward, but it must be said—and without any added trappings which diminish its urgency. And do we realize that we have in our possession the word of God which addresses that need for that lost one (Mark. 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 1:16-17)? Consideration of these facts will help us to stop stopping and start starting.

**Winning souls takes preparation.** The first rule of a good teacher is to know well what he is about to teach, Why is it that so many Christians have a natural desire for almost every kind of learning except the religious variety? And yet when it comes to learning gospel truths, a back seat becomes his place—at least “for now.” I aver that a person cannot study as he ought without, in some way or the other, recommending that teaching to others (II Timothy 2:2). The sheer joy of seeing gospel truth work is indescribably delicious. “Study” is meant to “show yourself approved unto God,” and is one of the ways He approves of it is the use of that word for the conversion of souls. And the joy of seeing some person obey the truth you presented for their consideration

is one of the joys of life. But it seems to me that we will talk about almost any subject—even those about which we know very little—before we will discuss with that someone what is necessary to save his soul.

**Winning souls takes time.** Most people are jealous of their own time. They will tell you right away that they have so little of their own time that they have to protect what is their's carefully. Far too many people, methinks, spend only as much time on religious matters as they feel they must. It's bothersome to me that some folks seem satisfied to spend only as much time in their religious pursuits as they feel is necessary to get them to heaven—And no more. And even then, isn't it a shame how little time we spend telling others what we have found to be so valuable? Should we not take proper care of our time (Ephesians 5:17), and prioritize as to what is important in the finality of matters? Yes, winning souls takes time and that's one reason some folks are not actively involved in it. Are you?

**Winning souls takes patience.** Almost everyone has at one time or the other talked with someone about obeying the gospel. And when that effort failed, what do we do? We quit. How sad. Would it not have been terrible if Christ had manifested that same degree of impatience with us? The fact is, in today's world very few folks are converted on the first try. It takes patience to win souls to Jesus, but we should "be not weary in well-doing, for in due season we will reap if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9). And remember, the next person you encounter with the gospel message may be just the one who obeys it. Don't give up—and remember the value of even one soul that repents (Luke 15:7).

Some are more adept at winning souls than others. But every person can do better, and every Christian can at least try. If we will consider the plight of the sinner, prepare ourselves for the work, take the time to do it, and patiently put to work the truth of the gospel, we can bring someone to Christ. Remember, His word will work—but only if we work it. Let's get up, get out, and get at it!