



REACH THE WORLD: PERSONAL OUTREACH (Sabbath School Program)

February 2, 2019

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Scripture Focus: John 4:28-30

Suggested Hymns: No. 358 “Far and Near the Fields are Teeming”
No. 362 “Lift High the Cross”
No. 365 “O Zion, Haste”

Opening Hymn: No. 373 “Seeking the Lost”

Effective Outreach.

Over the past few years, the Seventh-day Adventist church has been encouraging its members to get involved in ministry by introducing the Total Member Involvement campaign. In keeping with biblical principles, different means have been employed to reach out to the souls that are waiting to be saved, and it has proven to be a valuable strategy in engaging people from different walks of life. Personal outreach is truly an important aspect of the Adventist experience, and in turn it must be effective outreach. The Bible has several examples of people that engaged in effective personal outreach. For instance Dorcas (Acts 9:36) was involved in charitable work in her community, and Philip (Acts 8:26-30) is known for giving Bible studies along the roadside. There is also the Samaritan woman at the well sharing Jesus with her community (John 4:28), just to mention a few.

When writing about the Samaritan woman who talked to Jesus at Jacob’s well, Ellen White had this to say about her, “She proved herself a more effective missionary than His own disciples” (*The Ministry of Healing*, 102). What is it about the Samaritan woman’s personal outreach that made her a more effective missionary than those who spent countless hours with the Saviour?

Ministry becomes effective when our concerns shift from ourselves to the concerns of Jesus.

“Leaving her waterpot spoke unmistakably as to the effect of His words. It was the earnest desire of her soul to obtain the living water; and she forgot her errand to the well, she forgot the Saviour's thirst, which she had purposed to supply. With heart overflowing

with gladness, she hastened on her way, to impart to others the precious light she had received” (*Desire of Ages*, 191.2).

Because of her lifestyle, the Samaritan woman was not welcome at the well during the hours when all the other women would go to fill their waterpots. This meant she could only go to the well about noon day when nobody else was there. But upon encountering Jesus, she moved in swiftness to share the precious words that she had heard; leaving her waterpot, she forgot about her personal plans. All personal needs forgotten, with no idea of the outcome and not a care about what would happen to her, she stepped out of her comfort zone and went into the unknown. Likewise, we must be willing to let go of all our earthly cares and be concerned solely with the concerns of our Father.

Supporting scripture: Galatians 2:20; Galatians 5:24; Revelation 12:11

Ministry becomes effective when there is consistency between our lives and the message we carry.

“‘Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did,’ she said to the men of the city. ‘Is not this the Christ?’ Her words touched their hearts. There was a new expression on her face, a change in her whole appearance. They were interested to see Jesus. ‘Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him’” (*Desire of Ages*, 191.3).

Ellen White describes the Samaritan woman as having a ‘new expression on her face’ as well as a ‘change in her whole appearance.’ While her words touched their hearts, there was a visible change in her because of the time she had spent with Jesus. It was this change that ultimately drew the townsfolk in and sparked an interest in them to want to see Jesus. This is a change that must be visible in us, as we minister to those around us. The word of God must change us from within and these changes must be visible on the outside.

Supporting scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:17

When speaking to prospective Adventists in the mission field, one of the complaints often encountered is their failure to see the Christ about whom they are told reflected in the lives of their believing neighbours. Many have been lost because of this inconsistency.

“Our influence upon others depends not so much upon what we say as upon what we are. Men may combat and defy our logic, they may resist our appeals; but a life of disinterested love is an argument they cannot gainsay. A consistent life, characterized by the meekness of Christ, is a power in the world” (*Desire of Ages*, 143).

When we look at the ministry of Jesus, we come to realise that He never had to hold big ad campaigns in order to draw a crowd. It was the character of Christ that drew people to Him. Not once do we read about the disciples soliciting for the interest of the masses. It was through the power of the Holy Spirit and relinquishing of self, thus giving way for Christ to work within them, that drew people to their message. While we are privileged with the advancement of

technology and the ease of communicating the gospel to the masses, the only argument for Christ that can stand the test of time is a consistent life. People will be successfully drawn to Christ because of the changes that allow them see Him working within us.

It is not enough that we support mission work, give out tracts, speak publicly, write, sing, cook, etc. Our actions and our words must match the message we carry. If not we become ineffective in our outreach.

Closing Hymn: No. 369 “Bringing in the Sheaves”