

HARVEST ROCK CHURCH

HOW TO LOVE YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS INTO GOD'S KINGDOM

Family Series

Dr. Ché Ahn

June 4, 2023

TEXTS: Matthew 22:35 One of them, a lawyer, asked Him *a question*, testing Him, 36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” 37 And He said to him, “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ 38 This is the great and foremost commandment. 39 The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ 40 On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 11:19 “The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a *friend* of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

Matthew 20:28 “just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

INTRODUCTION:

A major conviction that we must have in our spirits: The lost matter to God; therefore, the lost matter to me. A general definition of evangelism is the whole Church giving the whole gospel to the whole world.

What is personal evangelism? The Archbishop of England came up with a good definition in 1918: “To evangelize is so to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men and women shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Savior, and serve Him as their Lord in the fellowship of His Church.”

I want to share with you an effective way to evangelize the lost that every believer can do. I want to talk about loving our family and friends into the Kingdom through friendship evangelism and servant evangelism. Jesus set an example for us to follow. 1 John 4:17 says as He was in the world, so are we now.

We know that Jesus was a friend to sinners. And He came as a bondservant to save the lost (Philippians 2:5-9). The Bible says that He came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for all, out of a heart of love for us. Matthew 20:28 “just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” This is what love looks like. Through love,



serve one another (Galatians 5:13). I want to talk about how we can reach the lost through friendship and service.

I. JESUS BEFRIENDED THE LOST

A. WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM?

1. Friendship evangelism is loving and befriending those who don't know Jesus that God brings into your life. It is the way you relate to the lost.
2. You don't do witnessing. You are already a witness, either a witness for or against God based on how you relate to and love the lost.
3. "You are a witness to whatever or whoever is foremost in your life. You are telling the world right now what god you really belong to. You cannot live life without showing the world your real interests. Your words and your life are tied inseparably together; you will always convey to others around you what you really love and live for most. Your words will either prove this or call you a liar. Anyone who watches you closely, follows you around for a day, can tell if you really mean what you claim with your lips." – Winkie Pratney.
4. Pratney goes on to say, "Every day you are witnessing. What are YOU witnessing to? Your witness is the total package of your attitudes, character, and actions. It does not lie. No careful observer is fooled. What are you witnessing to? Whatever your god is, you will show the most interest in. If it is anything else but Jesus, your closest friends already know. It will be the thing you like to talk most about, read most about, center your life around, love and live for."
5. If you call yourself a Christian, you have already been witnessing—for or against Him. If you have claimed to belong to Him, but your life does not back up your words, men and women have rejected Christ and the Gospel because of you. That is why Jesus said, "He that is not for Me is against me; and he that gathers not with Me scatters abroad."
6. I know of no Bible plan that will enable you to present Christ to others without your OWN life being Christlike. True Christianity IS Christ! You can present another philosophy or religion without its founder by a "canned" plan and change a few words to sell soap just as effectively with it; but you cannot present Christ to another until you properly represent Him and His love. (Pratney, *Youth Aflame*: 1970, p.332-33)
7. We are talking about your life, your character.
8. "Christians are to *be* good news before they *share* the good news." – Joe Aldrich

9. **“My life is my message.”** – Paul Little, former Professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and President of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.
10. My sister came to know Jesus when I started to take out the trash.
11. People who would never come to our Sunday service are checking you out.
12. Richard Wambach said to the serial murderer, “Jesus is like me.”
13. The difference between fine perfume and cheap perfume.

B. JESUS BEFRIENDED THEM WITH UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

1. Luke 15:20 “So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion *for him*, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’”
2. The Father showed unconditional love for the prodigal. When the son returned, the Father ran out to meet him, hugged him and kissed him *before* the son repented. We have to learn to love and accept the lost before they give their hearts to Jesus.
3. **Romans 5:8 Jesus loved us and died for us while we were still sinners.**
4. I need to demonstrate unconditional love to the lost—whether they come to know Jesus or not. Unconditional love is simply loving sinners without any strings attached.
5. **Proverbs 17:17 A friend loves at all times...**
6. You want to love and accept them whether they come to Christ or not.
7. Have a goal to have genuine friends among the unchurched.
8. **The difference between acceptance versus approval. Jesus accepted the prostitute who washed His feet; He didn't approve prostitution.**
9. The woman caught in adultery: **John 8:11 “Woman, neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on sin no more.”**
10. **“Don't expect unbelievers to act like believers until they become believers.”** – Rick Warren

C. JESUS BEFRIENDED THEM BY GIVING TO THE LOST

1. Before the prodigal left, he asked for his inheritance, and the Father gave it to him, even though the Father knew that simply asking for his inheritance early was very dishonoring and selfish. Still, he gave.
2. **Luke 15:11 And He said, “A man had two sons. 12 The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.’ So he divided his wealth between them...”**
3. After the prodigal came back, the Father is still lavishly giving him the very best.

4. **Luke 15:22** “But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.’”
5. **Luke 16:9** “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.”
6. Robert Morris shares in his book, *The Blessed Life*, how he and his wife had a date night and went out for coffee. They gave the waitress a \$100 tip, and she gave her heart to the Lord and became a member of their church.

D. JESUS BEFRIENDED THE LOST THROUGH COMMUNITY AND FELLOWSHIP

1. **Matthew 11:19** “The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”
2. **Luke 15:1** Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. **2** And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”
3. **Acts 2:46** Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, **47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.
4. The early Church met from house to house, eating together.
5. This may be the most effective way to reach the lost. Winkie Pratney said that there are basically two effective ways to reach the lost. One is to take a small group of Christians out into the world and let the world see how we love each other and to be loved by the church. The second way is to bring an unbeliever into a small group of believers and let the unbeliever see the love we have for one another and also love on the unbeliever.
6. Georgian Banov was won to the Lord through hospitality and food.
7. You can befriend the lost without compromising.
8. **There is a difference between isolation and separation. We are not to be isolated from the lost, but we separate from the sin.** E.g., drugs and alcohol.
9. My uncle’s professor colleague (UNC) that invited my uncle’s family and me for dinner. They were the nicest people, and it was the best fried chicken I ever had. This planted a major seed in my life. Nine months later, I gave my life to Jesus.

10. There is another professor at an Ivy League school who is effective in evangelizing the students, especially foreign students. He has a group of believers and unbelievers over to his home once a month for dinner. “I love them until they ask me why?”

II. JESUS SERVED THE LOST

A. Matthew 20:28 “just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

1. Matthew 14:13 Now when Jesus heard *about John*, He withdrew from there in a boat to a secluded place by Himself; and when the people heard *of this*, they followed Him on foot from the cities. 14 When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.
2. Jesus healed the sick, cast out demons, and fed the hungry.
3. We need to know the needs of our family and friends, and ask God to give us creative ways of meeting those needs.
4. We need to earn the right to be heard.

B. SERVING THE LOST THROUGH COMMUNITY

1. Steve Sjogren of Cincinnati Vineyard. Free car wash.
2. Dream Fest giving out free food and prizes.

III. JESUS SHARED THE GOSPEL WITH HIS FRIENDS

A. Matthew 4:17, Matthew 10:1, Luke 9:1ff

1. John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.
2. If you are praying for them, blessing them, loving them, and fellowshiping with them, then you need to look for the opportunity to share the love of God. People will not get saved until they know God's plan of salvation through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.
3. **Romans 10:14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”**
4. The story about the trash collectors: August 1980 in Silver Springs, MD.

CONCLUSION

