

CHAPTER 4

Steadfast Truths in Evangelism

“When God permits pastors to die for the Gospel,
they preach more loudly and more effectively from the casket than they did during their lifetime.”
Claude Brousson, *Lettres aux Pasteurs réfugiés*, 1683¹⁶²

I. Timeless Realities of Evangelism:

Introduction:

V. Raymond Edman gave this advice to Wheaton College students, “Never doubt in the dark what you saw in the light.”¹⁶³

In evangelism there are some realities that must be faced, in order to become effective in evangelism—note this possible progression in the life of the Apostle Paul...

“Reality Therapy” in the Life of the Apostle Paul

Nascent Optimism →	Alarm at Antagonism →	Humble Realism →	Divine Perspective →	Humble Submission →	Holy Motivation →	Holy Expectation
Note the Apostle Paul’s early optimism as to the receptivity of religious leaders in Jerusalem, Acts 22:19-20	Paul warned the Philippian church not to be alarmed by opponents to the Gospel, Phil 1:28	Hard lessons learned through trial and persecution because of sharing the Gospel, Rom 5:3-5	Recognizing that the trials for the Gospel result in glory for those who receive it, Eph 3:13	Sacrificial submission to God’s will and working in the midst of the trials that come from evangelism, Rom 9:1-3, 18	Desire to bear fruit; sense of divine obligation; eager evangelizing, Rom 1:13-15	Expecting the Gospel itself to be powerfully at work when evangelized, Rom 1:15-17

It was therefore important for the Apostle Paul to remind new believers that trials and afflictions were a part of their destiny as Christians:

Acts 14:21-22, “And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, ‘**Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.**’”

1 Thess 3:1-4, “Therefore when we could endure *it* no longer, we thought it best to be left behind at Athens alone; and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith, so that no man may be disturbed by these afflictions; **for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this.** For indeed when we were with you, we *kept* telling you in advance that **we were going to suffer affliction**; and so it came to pass, as you know.”

And even in the midst of trial, Paul was content that his past and present sufferings were worth it, as long as those who had believed remained faithful:

1 Thess 3:6-8, “But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always think kindly of us, longing to see us just as we also long to see you, for this reason, brethren, **in all our distress and affliction** we were comforted about you through your faith; for now we *really* live, if you stand firm in the Lord.”

¹⁶²Léopold Nègre, *Vie et Ministère de Claude Brousson, 1647-1698* (Paris: Sandoz et Fischbacher, 1878), front cover; translation mine.

¹⁶³V. Raymond Edman, *The Disciplines of Life* (Minneapolis: World Wide, 1948), 33.

For example, “Suffer hardship with me” [συγκακοπάθησον] 2 Tim 1:8:

On the Translations of κακοπαθέω and συγκακοπαθέω in 2 Tim 1:8

Wycliffe*	DRA [Ⓢ]	NAB [Ⓢ]	NET	NJB [Ⓢ]	NKJ	NASB; NIV	RSV; CSB; ESV	ERV; ASV	Geneva; KJV	Tyndale; Bishops	Young's; Darby
Travel thou together in the gospel	Labor with the gospel	Bear your share of hardship for the gospel	Accept your share of suffering for the gospel	Share in my hardships for the sake for the gospel	Share with me in the sufferings for the gospel	Join with me in suffering for the gospel	Share in suffering for the gospel	Suffer hardship with the gospel	Be partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel	Suffer adversity with the gospel	Do thou suffer evil along with the good news
“Therfor nyl thou schame the witnessyng of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, nether me, his prisoner; but trauele thou togidere in the gospel bi the vertu of God”	Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but labour with the gospel, according to the power of God	So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord, nor of me, a prisoner for his sake; but bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God	So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me, a prisoner for his sake, but by God's power accept your share of suffering for the gospel	So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to our Lord, or ashamed of me for being his prisoner; but share in my hardships for the sake of the gospel, relying on the power of God	Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God	Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God	Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God	“Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God”	“Be not therefore ashamed of the testimonie of our Lord, nether of me his prisoner: but be partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God”	Be not a shamed to testyfy oure lorde nether be a shamed of me which am bounde for his sake: but suffre adversite with the gospell also thow the power of god	“therefore thou mayest not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but do thou suffer evil along with the good news according to the power of God”

*A translation of the Latin Vulgate.

On the Translations of κακοπαθέω or συγκακοπαθέω in 2 Tim 2:3

Latin (Migne): Labora		Greek (Critical edition): συγκακοπάθησον						Greek (Byzantine textform): σὺ οὖν κακοπάθησον				
Wycliffe	DRA [Ⓢ]	NJB [Ⓢ]	NAB [Ⓢ]	NIV	ERV; ASV; NASB	RSV; CSB; ESV	Darby; NET	NKJ	KJV	Tyndale; Geneva	Bishops	Young's
Trauele thou as a good knyyt of Crist Jhesu	Labour as a good soldier of Christ Jesus	Bear with your share of difficulties, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus	Bear your share of hardship along with me like a good soldier of Christ Jesus	Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus	Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus	Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus	Take thy share in suffering as a good soldier of Jesus Christ	You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ	Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ	Thou therefore suffer affliction as a good souldier of Iesus Christ	Thou therefore suffer afflictions as a good souldier of Iesus Christe	thou, therefore, suffer evil as a good soldier of Jesus Christ

Therefore, our goal as Christians is **not** to avoid all trial and difficulty at all cost. Rather our goal is to be obedient to the One who called us:

2 Cor 11:7 (Rotherham), “Or, a sin, did I commit—abasing myself, that, ye might be exalted,—in that, free of charge, God’s glad-message, I announced unto you?” [slight variation in punctuation]

A. Fear Is Inevitable:

Introduction:

- a. In a day when teens are competing in “Fear Factor,” it is inconceivable that Christians are scared to tell of Christ... But that’s the way it is!
- b. Listen to some of the closing words of Jean Bertrand to his judges and executioners:

“Therefore noting that they would be able to get nothing more from him, the lawyer for the King told him, if he wanted to recant, Jesus Christ forgives, it would also be forgiven him, and that he would pray the lords for him. Bertrand responded that it is written, that in this one must not fear men, who only have power over the body, but that one must fear God, who has power over the body and the soul, and who is able to put all into the Gehenna of fire. He also promised that those who will confess Him before men, will be confessed similarly before God His Father; adding that he was not expecting to lose even one hair from his head, seeing as they were all counted.”¹⁶⁴

1. The principle of fear:
 - a. The positive **fear of God**, 2 Cor 5:11
 - b. The negative **fear of man**, Luke 12:4-5 (cf. Isa 51:7, e.g. I Sam. 15:24, Matt 14:5, 21:46), “Peer-pressure”
 - 1) The pressure to conform, Rom 12:1-2
 - 2) Loving the approval of man, John 12:42-43 (cf. Rom 2:29)
 - 3) Fear because of the risk of breaking a relationship, Matt 10:35-36
 - 4) “The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the Lord will be exalted,” Prov 29:25
 - 5) “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the Lord.” Jer 17:5
 - c. Aspects of fear:
 - 1) Fear in evangelism, Phil 1:14 (cf. 2 Cor 7:5)
 - 2) Fear to acknowledge Christ, John 7:13 (cf. John 12:42-43)
2. Examples of fear in evangelism:
 - a. The apostle Paul, Acts 18:9-10, 1 Cor 2:3, 2 Cor 7:5
 - b. Those who were encouraged by the imprisonment of Paul, Phil 1:14
 - c. Consider the admonition of Paul to Timothy in 2 Tim 1:7:

Translating δειλία in 2 Tim 1:7

Introduction: Does it not seem like Paul is encouraging Timothy not to be a “femmelette” (effeminate) in 2 Tim 1:7?

Byzantine Greek	Wycliffe (1388)	Tyndale (1534); Geneva; KJV; DRA; NKJ; NET; ESV	Darby (1884); NAB	ERV (1885); ASV; CSB	RSV (1952); NAS; NIV; NJB	NLT (2004)
δειλία	Dread	Fear	Cowardice	Fearfulness	Timidity	Fear and timidity
Οὐ γὰρ ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ θεὸς πνεῦμα δειλίας	For whi God yaf not to vs the spirit of drede	For god hath not geven to vs the sprete of feare	For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice	For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness	for God did not give us a spirit of timidity	For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity

All other OT LXX uses of δειλία:

Lev 26:36, “As for those of you who may be left, I will also bring **weakness** into their hearts in the lands of their enemies...”

Psa 55:4, “My heart is in anguish within me, And the **terrors** of death have fallen upon me.”

¹⁶⁴Jean Bertrand [martyred in 1556], Jean Crespin, ed. *Histoire des vrais tesmoins de la verite de l’evangile, qui de leur sang l’ont signée, depuis Jean Hus iusques autemps present* [History of the True Witnesses to the Truth of the Gospel, Who with Their Blood Signed, from John Hus to the Present] (Geneva, 1570; Liège, 1964), 433. Translation mine.

Psa 89:40 (Brenton), “Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast made his strong holds a **terror.**”

Prov 19:15, “**Cowardice** [δειλία] possesses the effeminate *man* [ἀνδρογύναιος]; and the soul of the sluggard shall hunger.”

Notice also the reverse gender emphasis in Paul:

1 Cor 16:13 reads, “act like men” [the plural command ἀνδρίζεσθε is from ἀνδρίζομαι]

3. The results of fear:
 - a. Positive: greater dependency on God, Jos. 1:9, Acts 18:9-10, Eph 6:19-20
 - b. Negative:
 - 1) Denial of Christ, Matt 26:69-75
 - 2) Silence, Acts 18:9-10 (cf. 2 Kings 7:9)
 - 3) Inaction, laziness and compromise, Prov 22:13, 25:26
 - 4) Serving the creature rather than the Creator, Rom 1:25
4. God wants the Christian to overcome fear:
 - a. The importance of prayer, Eph 6:19-20 (a continual need)
 - b. Through putting one’s confidence in God, Psa 27:1, 56:4-5, 12
 - c. The command to be strong and courageous, Deut 31:6, 7, 23, Joshua 1:6, 9, 18, Prov 28:1
 - 1) The “be strong” verb [chazaq] is translated in the Greek LXX using ἀνδρίζομαι, “act like men,” [ἀνδρίζου] which is picked up by Paul in 1 Cor 16:13, the only use of this verb in the NT
 - 2) The singular imperative in the OT is replaced by the plural imperative in 1 Cor 16:13, addressed to the entire church!
 - d. The admonition to stand firm, 1 Cor 15:58, Heb 3:6
 - e. God’s encouragement, “Do not fear,” Deut 31:6, 8, 23, Jos. 1:6, 9, Acts 18:9-10
5. God helps the Christian overcome fear:
 - a. He forgives us for times that we have not told of Him, John 21:15-17
 - b. The importance of a knowledge of God’s presence, Deut 31:8, Jos. 1:5, 9, Matt 28:19-20, Acts 18:9-10
 - c. The importance of faith in God, Psa 27:1, Prov 3:25-26
 - d. God sees, knows and will judge everything, Gen 16:13, Psa 32:8, Isa 51:8
 - e. God is salvation and defense for the Christian, Psa 27:1
 - f. The importance of good examples to give courage, Phil 1:14
 - g. It is possible to evangelize without fear, Phil 1:14
6. Summary: Fear Is Inevitable, but it can be overcome. Praise the Lord!

B. Difficulties Are Inevitable:

1. Difficulties in Evangelism:
 - a. Evangelism is hard work, e.g. 2 Cor 1:8-9:
 - 1) “Sow with tears,” Psa 126:5-6
 - 2) “Others have labored,” John 4:38
 - 3) “Struggle in the cause of the Gospel,” Phil 4:3, “Contended” (NIV)
 - b. The Gospel lifestyle often brings rejection, 1 Cor 4:9-13 (e.g. Acts 17:5), 2 Cor 6:8-10 (cf. Jesus was the stone rejected by the builders, Psa 118:22-23; Acts 4:11)
 - c. There is suffering in evangelism, 2 Tim 1:8 (e.g. Acts 9:16)
 - d. There are adversaries to the bold proclamation of the Word, 1 Cor 16:8-9, Phil 1:17
 - e. Other Christians may desert the evangelist, 2 Tim 4:16-17 (cf. Matt 26:56)
 - f. Jesus prophesied that though there are few workers (Matt 9:37; Luke 10:2), yet there are many false prophets and false teachers (Matt 24:11; Mark 13:6; Luke 21:8; cf. 1 John 4:1)
2. Difficulties in seeing responses to the Gospel:
 - a. Some are blind to the Gospel message, Isa 6:9-10, Matt 13:4, 19, Acts 28:26-27, 2 Cor 3:15, 4:3-4
 - b. Only a few will ever accept the Gospel, Matt 7:13-14, 1 Cor 7:16, 9:22 (“all” > “some”).

3. Difficulties in seeing the continued impact of the Gospel in lives:
 - a. Some who “accept” the Gospel fall away from the Lord, Matt 13:18-23
 - b. Sorrow for some people’s lack of spiritual growth, 2 Cor 2:1
 - c. There is a burden for those who come to know the Lord, 2 Cor 11:28
4. Difficulties in life:
 - a. Sleeplessness, 2 Cor 6:5, 11:27
 - b. Hunger, 1 Cor 4:11, 2 Cor 6:5, 11:27, “often without food.”
 - c. Hardships in travel, 2 Cor 11:26 (e.g. Acts 27:9ff.)
 - d. Living in need, Phil 4:11-12 (cf. 1 Cor 4:11)
5. Even difficulties from false brethren, 2 Cor 11:26 (e.g. 1 Cor 4:6-13):
6. Two results of difficulties (i.e. of Paul’s imprisonment):
 - a. Discouragement:
Eph 3:13, “Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.”
 - b. Greater courage in evangelism:
Phil 1:12-14, “Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in *the cause of* Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.”
7. Overcoming difficulties:
 - a. Trusting in God’s sovereignty over circumstances, 1 Cor 16:9
 - b. Trusting in God’s faithfulness, 1 Thess 5:24 (cf. Isa 49:14-15)
 - c. Perseverance in God’s will, Gal 6:9
 - d. Rejoicing in the Lord, 1 Pet 4:12-16
8. Conclusion: Yes, difficulties in evangelism abound. Nevertheless, the Lord remains true to His promises! “For the Lord will not abandon His people, nor will He forsake His inheritance,” Psa 94:14.

C. Antagonism Is Inevitable!

1. Seeking to live uprightly:
 - a. Be blameless, Acts 24:16, Eph 1:4, Phil 2:15
 - b. Give no offense, 1 Cor 10:32-33, 2 Cor 6:2
2. Reasons for antagonism:
 - a. The world’s hatred of Jesus and His followers, John 15:18-20 (cf. Psa 25:19)

On the Translation of ἀφιλάγαθοι in 2 Tim 3:3

[Issue: Haters of those who do good? Or haters of good?]

Context: 2 Tim 3:1-5 (NKJ) “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, **despisers of good**, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!”

Byzan-tine	Geneva (1560); Bishops (1595)	Geneva (1599)	KJV (1611, 1769); Web-ster’s	Mur-dock (1852)	Young’s (1862)	Tyndale (1534)	NIV (1984)	Darby (1884)	English Rev (1885); ASV	Douay-Rheims ²¹ (1899)	Bible in Basic Eng (1949)	RSV (1952); NASB	NKJ (1982)	CSB (2003)	NLT (2004)	NET (2005)
Referring to individuals who do good					Open			Referring to the concept of good								
ἀφιλάγαθοι	des-pisers of them which are good	no louers at all of them which are good	des-pisers of those that are good	haters of the good	not lovers of those who are good	des-pisers of the [sic] which are good	not lovers of the good	having no love for what is good	no lovers of good	without kindness	hating all good	haters of good	des-pisers of good	without love for what is good	They will ... hate what is good	opposed to what is good

*Interestingly, while the 1522 French Lefèvre followed the Latin Vulgate: “without beneficity” (as the Douay-Rheims above), the French Geneva (1669) translated this term as “haissans les bons” (hating the good [people]); likewise, the French Martin (1707) and the French Geneva Revised (1977) added the word “gens” (people), translating ἀφιλάγαθοι as referring to those who do good: “ennemis des gens de bien” (enemies of people of good). The French Darby and all the other translations changed the translation to refer to the concept of good, as exemplified above.

- b. Professing Christians share in the sufferings of Christ, 2 Cor 1:5 (e.g. Acts 5:41)
 - c. The sinfulness of man, John 3:20
 - d. Jealousy, Acts 5:17-18, 13:45, 17:5
 - e. Evangelism draws opposition, Phil 1:27-28
3. Examples of antagonism:
- a. David was lonely and afflicted, Psa 25:16
 - b. Jesus had pretenders following Him to catch Him in His words, Luke 20:20
 - c. Throughout the Acts, antagonism to the Gospel was evident, Acts 4:1-2
 - d. False brethren, 2 Cor 11:26
 - e. Alexander the Coppersmith, 2 Tim 4:14-15
4. Describing this antagonism:
- a. A battle:
 - 2 Cor 10:3-5 (NKJ), “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

b. Conflict:

1 Thess 2:2, “but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God **amid much opposition**”

Translating ἐν πολλῷ ἀγῶνι in 1 Thess 2:2

Degree	Least struggle														Most struggle				
Version	Vulgate (435)	Wycliffe, 2 nd ed. (1388)	Douay-Rheims st (1899)	Bible in Basic English (1945/1962)	Complete Jewish Bible (1998)	New American Bible st (1901)	English Geneva (1560)	King James Version (1611/1769)	Young's Literal (1962)	English Revised (1885)	American Standard (1901)	English Standard Version	New American Standard (1977)	NET Bible (2004, 2005)	God's Word for the Nations (1995)	Revised Standard Version (1952)	New Jerusalem Bible st (1985)	New Revised Standard (1989)	New Living Trans (2004)
ἐν	in	in	in	though	even under	with	with	with	in	in the midst of	amid	in spite of	in spite of	in the face of	in spite of				
πολλῷ	multa	myche	much	everything	great	much	muche	much	much	much	much	much	strong	great	great				
ἀγῶνι	sollicitudine*	bisynesse	carefulness	was against us	pressure	struggle	striuing	contention	conflict	conflict	opposition	opposition	opposition	opposition	opposition				
Full translation	in multa sollicitudine	in myche bisynesse	in much carefulness	though everything was against us	even under great pressure	with much struggle	with muche striuing	with much contention	in much conflict	in the midst of much conflict	amid much opposition	in spite of much opposition	in spite of strong opposition	in the face of great opposition	in spite of great opposition				

*meaning, “uneasiness of mind, care, disquiet, apprehension, anxiety, solicitude” (C. T. Lewis, *An Elementary Latin Dictionary* [1890]).

Translating ἐν πολλῷ ἀγῶνι in 1 Thess 2:2 in French

French Lefèvre st (1522/1530); Louvain st (1550)*	French Jerusalem Bible st (1973)*	Ecumenical Translation—TOB (1988)*	Bible en français courant (1997)	IBS' <i>Le Semeur</i> st (1992/1999)	French Geneva (1669)	French Darby (1859/1885)	Louis Segond (1910); New Geneva Revised (1976)	French Martin (1707); French Ostervald
with great care	in the midst of a difficult struggle	in the midst of many struggles	regardless of strong opposition	in the midst of a great opposition	with a great battle	with many battles	in the midst of many battles	in the midst of great battles
Care	Struggle	Struggles	Opposition		Battle	Battles		
en grands soing	au milieu d'une lutte pénible	à travers bien des lutes	malgré une forte opposition.	au milieu d'une grande opposition	avec un grand combat	avec beaucoup de combats	au milieu de bien des combats	au milieu de grands combats

*It seems like the first three translations soften the level of conflict due to their reliance on the Latin Vulgate.

5. Overcoming antagonism:

- a. Being aware of the antagonism, 2 Tim 4:15
- b. Boldness is key to overcoming opposition, 1 Thess 2:2
- c. Ministering regardless of the antagonism, 1 Cor 16:8-9
- d. Warning the antagonistic, Acts 28:25-29

6. Conclusion: Antagonism is inevitable in evangelism!

D. Persecution Is Inevitable (2 Tim 3:12):

Introduction: Prior to being saved, the Apostle Paul was filled with a demonic spiritual rage against the people of God (Acts 26:11), something he regretted later (1 Tim 1:13); therefore:

- a. He understood that there were particular individuals who vehemently opposed the Gospel message, as he himself had, e.g. 2 Tim 4:14-15
 - b. He knew that their only hope was that they be saved
 - c. And he knew, not only that God was working out His perfect will in the midst of persecution
 - d. But that persecution was essential to spiritual growth and vitality, Rom 5:3-5
1. The reality of persecution: It cannot be avoided!
 - a. God's Word promises persecution, sorrow, and tribulation, Matt 10:17-18; Mark 13:9; John 16:20-22, 33, Acts 14:22, Phil 1:29-30, 1 Thess 3:3-4; etc.
 - b. All faithful Christians will be persecuted, 2 Tim 3:12
 - c. Persecution is happening to Christians all over the world, 1 Pet 5:8-9.
 - d. "But an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God." John 16:2
 2. Reasons for the Persecution (most of these are in the context of evangelism):¹⁶⁵
 - a. **Spiritual Battle**, Eph 6:12
 - b. Persecution because of **Jesus Christ**, John 15:18-20
 - c. Persecution because **the cross** is an offense, 1 Cor 1:23
 - d. Persecution for **the Gospel**, 2 Tim 1:8
 - e. Persecution "because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God," Rev 20:4
 - f. Persecution for being a **Christian**, 2 Tim 3:12
 - g. Interestingly, in and through their persecution, the ungodly receive an apologetic for their rage against God:

Psa 22:7-8 (NKJ), "All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*, 'He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!'"

 - 1) The ungodly are living by the age-old friends of Job dictum, "If they hadn't done something bad, bad things wouldn't be happening to them"—although they would likely deny it!
 - 2) The ungodly are transferring their rage against the righteous demands of God waging war within their own souls, and taking it out on those who are living godly under those same righteous demands
 - a) Thus eating the righteous as one eats bread (Psa 14:4; 53:4)
 - 3) In their self-vindication via persecution, the ungodly reach the height of their arrogance; Yes, pride is is to them as a necklace! (Psa 73:6)
 3. Evangelism through Persecution:
 - a. Persecution should not be sought, but it will be there. Rather, the Christian should seek to live to be at peace with all men, Rom 12:18, 14:19, 2 Cor 13:11, 1 Thess 5:13, 1 Tim 2:1-2, Heb 12:14.
 - b. Persecution should be seen from God's perspective:
 - 1) It is in God's will, Psa 105:25, Matt 5:10-11, John 16:33
 - 2) In how it helps advance the Gospel, Luke 21:12-13, Phil 1:12-14.
 - 3) From the perspective of eternity, 2 Cor 4:16-18
 - 4) God might be testing our faith in Him, Psa 105:18-19
 - c. God's Help to Overcome Persecution:
 - 1) Introduction: Persecution can be overcome through, 2 Tim 1:8-12:
 - a) Faith and trust in the God of the Gospel (cf. Prov 3:25-26)

¹⁶⁵T. Johnston, *Mindset*, Chap 6, IV.B & D deal with persecution in greater detail, in the context of persecution as a result of a verbal witness of the Gospel and evangelism through persecution.

- b) A decision of the will not to be ashamed, but to go forward:
 - (1) “Be strong and courageous,” Deut 31:6, 7, 23, Joshua 1:6, 9, 18, 23
 - (2) Continuing with perseverance, Gal 6:9
 - c) Looking to the promised victory, Deut 11:25
 - 2) God as a refuge and strength, Psa 46:1, 91:1-2
 - 3) He tells us not to fear: “Fear not!” Deut 31:8, Jos. 1:5, 9, Isa 41:10, 13, Matt 10:28-33, Luke 12:4-5, 8-9
 - 4) He is present with us: “I am with thee,” Deut 31:6, 7, 23, Jo. 1:5, 9, Matt 28:20, Heb 13:5
 - 5) He encourages through times of fear, Acts 18:9-10
 - 6) He gives us the appropriate words at that time, Luke 21:14-15
4. Let’s remember that Christ gave His life to make the Gospel available to us!

II. Tremendous Truths in Evangelism:

A. God Desires the Salvation of All Men!

1. Ezek 18:23, “‘Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked,’ declares the Lord God, ‘rather than that he should turn from his wicked ways and live?’”
2. Ezek 18:32, “‘For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies,’ declares the Lord God, ‘Therefore, repent and live.’”
3. Ezek 33:11, “‘Say to them, ‘As I live,’ declares the Lord God, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his ways and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then do you die, O house of Israel?’”
4. 1 Tim 2:3-4, “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (note v. 7)
5. 2 Pet 3:9, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”
6. For example, note the words of the 17th Century Puritan, John Owen:

“Sufficient we say, then, was the sacrifice of Christ for the redemption of the whole world, and for the expiation of all the sins of all and every man in the world.... This fullness and sufficiency of the merit of the death of Christ is a foundation unto two things:—First, The general publishing of the gospel unto ‘all nation,’ with the right that it hath to be preach to ‘every creature,’ Matt xxviii.19; Mark xvi.15; because the way of salvation which it declares is wide enough for all to walk in.... Secondly, That preachers of the gospel ... may from hence justifiably call upon every man to believe, with assurance of salvation to every one in particular upon his so doing, and being fully persuaded of this, that there is enough in the death of Christ to save every one that shall so do; leaving the purpose and counsel of God ... to himself.”¹⁶⁶
7. Paul’s desire was to have an impact on “every man” he encountered—note his repetition of these words:

“And we proclaim Him [Christ], admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ. And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me” (Col 1:28-29, NAS)

¹⁶⁶John Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1959), 184-86.

Considering Translations of Col 1:28

Analysis	Greek Byzantine	Geneva (1560)	KJV (1611/1769)	Darby (1884)	Bible in Basic English (1949)	Holman (2003)	Cont English Version* (1991)
Paul's message	ὅς	Whome	Whom	Whom	Whom	... Him	...the message about Christ
Paul's methodology	καταγγέλλω	we preache	we preach	*we* proclaim	we are preaching	We proclaim	We announce
	νουθετέω	admonishing	warning	Admonishing	Guiding	warning	Warn
	διδάσκω	teaching	teaching	Teaching	Teaching	teaching	Teach
Paul's audience	πάντα ἄνθρωπον (twice)	euerie man (twice)	Every man (twice)	every man (twice)	every man (once)	everyone (once)	everyone (once)
Paul's mindset	ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ	in all wisdom	in all wisdom	in all wisdom	in all wisdom	with all wisdom	...and we use all our wisdom to...
Paul's goal	ἵνα παραστήσωμεν πάντα ἄνθρωπον τέλειον ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.	that we may present euerie man perfect in Christ Iesus	that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus	to the end that we may present every man perfect in Christ	so that every man may be complete in Christ	so that we may present everyone mature in Christ	so that all Christ's followers will grow and become mature

B. God Is Always Present!

1. Deut 31:6, "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."
2. Jos. 1:5, "Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you nor forsake you."
3. Jos. 1:9, "Do not tremble or be dismayed for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."
4. Psa 139:7-10, "Where can I go from Thy Spirit? Or where can I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, Even there Thy hand will lead me, And Thy right hand will lay hold of me."
5. Matt 28:19-20, "Go therefore and make [win] disciples of all nations ... and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
6. Acts 18:9-10, "And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, 'Do not be afraid *any longer*, but go on speaking and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city.'"

C. God's Word Is Always Effective!

1. Isa 55:10-11, "So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without *accomplishing* what I desire, And without *succeeding* in the matter for which I sent it."
 - a. It will always accomplish God's desire (planting, watering, reaping or hardening - cf. 2 Cor 10:4-5, e.g. Jer 6:10, 36:24)!
 - b. It will always have success in God's will!
2. Jer 1:9-10, "Then the Lord stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said, 'Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, To pluck up and to break down, To destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.'"
 - a. The condemning aspect of God's Word (cf. Psa 149:6-9, Prov 10:29, 2 Cor 2:16)
 - b. The edifying aspect of God's Word (cf. Prov 10:29, 2 Cor 2:16)
3. Rom 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power (δύναμις) of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."
4. Heb 4:12-13, "For the word of God is living (ζών) and active (ἐνεργής) and sharper than any two edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."
5. Application: The important thing is to get the Word out, the response to the Word rests on those who heard. Ours is to get the Word out, Ezek 3:16-21.

D. The Harvest Is Always White!

1. John 4:35-36 (NKJ), “Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.”
- Amos 9:13 (NKJ), “‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD, ‘When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And all the hills shall flow *with it*.’”

The Punctuation of John 4:35-36

Byzantine Textform	New King James (1982)	Comments	New American Standard Bible (1977)	Critical Edition Text
³⁵ Οὐχ ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι Ἔτι τετράμηνός ἐστιν, καὶ ὁ θερισμὸς ἔρχεται; Ἴδού, λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐπάρατε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑμῶν, καὶ θεάσασθε τὰς χώρας, ὅτι λευκαὶ εἰσιν πρὸς θερισμὸν ἤδη. ³⁶ Καὶ ὁ θερίζων μισθὸν λαμβάνει, καὶ συνάγει καρπὸν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον· ἵνα καὶ ὁ σπείρων ὁμοῦ χαίρη καὶ ὁ θερίζων.	“Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and <i>then</i> comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! ³⁶ “And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.	Because of the change in punctuation in the Greek and behind these two translations, the readiness of the Gospel may be downplayed in the NASB, whereas it is more emphatic in the NKJ.	“Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and <i>then</i> comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. ³⁶ “Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.	³⁵ οὐχ ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι ἔτι τετράμηνός ἐστιν καὶ ὁ θερισμὸς ἔρχεται; ἰδοὺ λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐπάρατε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑμῶν καὶ θεάσασθε τὰς χώρας ὅτι λευκαὶ εἰσιν πρὸς θερισμὸν. ἤδη ³⁶ ὁ θερίζων μισθὸν λαμβάνει καὶ συνάγει καρπὸν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, ἵνα ὁ σπείρων ὁμοῦ χαίρη καὶ ὁ θερίζων.

*A similar change in Punctuation was used in the Revised Standard Version (1952) perhaps removing an argument for the deity of Christ from Romans 9:5, “to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, God who is over all be blessed for ever. Amen”; the RSV translation followed a variant in wording and punctuation recommended by the “critical edition” Greek text of that time (Nestle-Aland, 25th edition, 1949).

The John 4:35-36 change in punctuation was brought to my attention in 2006 by a former student, Nathan Dawson ☺ Thank you!

The American Bible Society’s *Contemporary English Translation* is replete with changes in punctuation in significant passages, including using paragraph breaks and section breaks to divorce ideas from each other (including a paragraph break between Rom 5:8 and 9). This method is also used in other language translations that seem to have Rome’s fingerprints, including a number of UBS translations after the implementation of the 1968 and 1987 SPCU and UBS “Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible.”

2. Matt 9:37, “The harvest is *plentiful*, but the workers are few.”
3. Luke 10:2, “The harvest is *plentiful*, but the laborers are few.”
4. John 12:32, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.”
5. Application: Prov 10:5.

E. There Is Always a Need for Workers!

1. Ezek 22:30, “And I searched for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.”
2. Matt 9:37, “The harvest is plentiful, but the *workers are few*.”
3. Luke 10:2, “The harvest is plentiful, but the *laborers are few*.”
4. Rom 10:14-15, “How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him in whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things.”
5. Application:
 - a. One student said, “Need doesn’t constitute a call.” But it did for God who sent Jesus because of a needy world. It’s the Great Commission that constitutes the call of God on our life!
 - b. Prov 10:5. Now is the harvest time for the church!

F. Sharing the Gospel Is Always Appropriate!

Introduction: While it is important that it be done with appropriately, winsomely, and with humility!

1. Psa 71:15, “My mouth shall tell of Thy righteousness, And of Thy salvation all day long.” (cf. Psa 34:1; 35:28; 40:16; 70:4; 71:8, 24; 75:9; Eccl. 11:6)
2. Prov 3:27, “Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in your power to do it.” (cf. Prov 24:11-12)
3. Ezek 2:7, “But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious.” (cf. Ezek 3:11; 1 Cor 9:17)
4. John 9:4, “We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work.” (cf. John 5:17)
5. 2 Cor 2:14, “But thanks be to God who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.”
6. 2 Cor 6:2, “For He says, ‘At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you’; behold, now is ‘the acceptable time,’ behold, now is ‘the day of salvation.’” (cf. Eph 5:15-16)
7. Eph 5:15-16, “Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.”
8. Col 4:5-6, “Conduct yourself with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.” (cf. Eph 4:29, 5:15-16)
9. 2 Tim 4:2, “Preach the word; be ready in season (εὐκαιρῶς) and out of season (ἄκαιρῶς); reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.”
10. Application: We should never have to apologize for speaking about Jesus (cf. Mark 1:19-20, the example of Christ).

G. Sharing the Gospel Always Has an Impact!

Introduction: Many of the prior verses could be placed here, such as Isaiah 55:10-11; see point D. God’s Word is Always Effective.

1. Psa 40:3, “And He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to my God; many will see and fear, and will trust in the Lord.” (cf. Psa 67:7)
2. Psa 67:2, “That Thy way may be known in the earth, Thy salvation among all nations.”
3. Isa 25:9, “And it will be said in that day, ‘Behold this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us, this is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.’”
4. Jer 6:10, “To who shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ears are closed, and they cannot listen. Behold the Word of the Lord has become a reproach to them; they have no delight in it.”
5. Ezek 2:4-5, 7, “And I am sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children; and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’ As for them, whether they listen or not—for they are a rebellious house—they will know that a prophet has been among them. . . . But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious.”

H. Victory Is Sure!

1. Deut 11:25, “There shall be no man able to stand before you; the Lord your God shall lay the dread of you and the fear of you on all the land on which you set foot, as He has spoken to you.”
2. Joshua 1:8, “. . . Then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”
3. 2 Cor 2:14, “But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.”
4. 1 John 5:4, “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world—our faith.”
5. Application: The example of the Apostle Paul, 2 Tim 4:7

III. Conclusion:

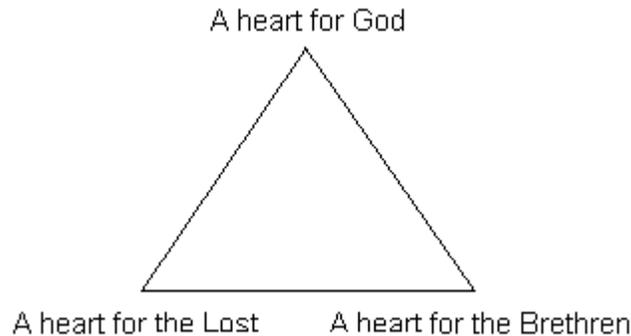
As a Christian, if you are not concerned primarily for the souls of men, your primary concern is secondary. Satan loves to lead Christians to major on the minors. If he can get us concerned about money, a church building, an excellent education, a positive image in the eyes of the world, or anything that at the heart does not have souls as a priority, he is content.

“But,” you say, “very few Christians have souls as their priority. It must be those who are gifted in evangelism who need this passion.” The fact that most of the prophets in the day of Elijah, Micaiah, or Jeremiah were false prophets did not make them right. The majority vote does not qualify when it comes to obeying God’s commands. Concerning the fact that only those gifted in evangelism seem to have this heart for evangelism. This is an *ipso facto* argument. Since by definition anyone who has a heart for

evangelism also has the “gift of evangelism,” it follows that all those who have the “gift of evangelism” also possess the corresponding heart. Yet, it is my strong feeling due to the Great Commission and the many other comments of Scriptures that all Christians need to “fan the flames” of a heart for the lost.

Only with a heart for the lost will we be able to live as Christ would have us live: with eternity continually in focus. It is when I perceive the tremendous spiritual needs of the lost around me that I begin to perceive the immensity of my lost estate. When I understand my great needs, then I can have fellowship with other believers with a perspective to encourage them towards the Lord (Heb 10:24). As I see the needs around me and begin to see the depth of my need, then I am able to develop a thirst for the Lord which I ought to be developing (Psa 42:1-2). A heart for the lost allows me to develop a heart for God—what an amazingly simple, yet extremely difficult thing!

So my growth in the three primary relationships depends on my developing a heart for the lost:¹⁶⁷



Where does Christ fit into all this? He is the center of our lives. He is the focus of our reason for being. All that really matters is Christ (Eph 1:10; Col 1:16-18). Nothing else in life matters more than Christ. What have you done with Christ? This is what really matters. It follows that what others have done with Christ is the only thing that really matters for them. Are they living for Him? Do they know Him? Have they heard of Him? Are they heeding His word?

It is with deep humility that the Christian who sees the lostness of souls around him, who sees his own need for the Master, and who understands some of the needs of Christians around him, can minister to others of similar lowly estate. The great theological denominator under which every human being can be identified is sin. And because of the universal problem of sin, the focus shifts to the universal remedy for sin: Jesus Christ. He has done it all. Praise His name!

Therein is the mindset of eternity. Seeing others and ourselves in an eternal context. A context that causes us to lament our sin and cry out for salvation which is found only in and by the blood of Jesus Christ. A mindset which sets the pace for all our relationships, the use of our time, the use of our money, our minds:

“All for Jesus, All for Jesus!
 “All my being’s ransomed pow’rs:
 “All my thots and words and doings,
 “All my days and all my hours.

“All for Jesus! All for Jesus!
 “All my days and all my hours;
 “All for Jesus! All for Jesus!
 “All my days and all my hours.”¹⁶⁸

At the Christmas conference in 1784, John Wesley gave this injunction to the preachers:

“You have nothing to do but save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those who want you, but to those that want you most. Observe: It is not your business to preach so

¹⁶⁷An enlargement of this illustration is found in Chapter 27: A Graphic Look at Biblical Follow-Up, “Developing the Spiritual Passions.”

¹⁶⁸Words by Mary D. James, “All for Jesus” in *Church Hymnal* (Hillsboro, KS: Mennonite Brethren, 1953), 284.

many times, and take care of this or that society; but to save as many souls as you can. to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹Setting from Dawson C. Bryant, *Building Church Membership Through Evangelism* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1952), 8, and quote from Robert E. Coleman, *Nothing to Do But To Save Souls!* (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press of Zondervan, 1990), 1.

Chapter 4 Appendix

Undermining the Primacy of Evangelism

Introduction:

Attacks on the primacy of evangelism are multitudinous. They may cause the believer to question: (1) those who led him to Christ; (2) his home church; (3) the faith of his parents; or (4) his own perspective. False teachers prey on the untaught and un-established by bringing up doubts in their minds. These doubts rarely lead toward the primacy of New Testament evangelism, but away from it. They rarely confirm the faith of the Christian, but bring up countless doubts and unending confusion of mind.

These attacks on the primacy of evangelism come in many shapes and sizes. The following illustrates four primary areas within which doubts may be grouped: biblical authority, hermeneutics, theological systems, and missional emphases:

