**The Greatest Need**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Many are the needs of our day...

a. The need for peace in war-torn areas around the world

b. The need for food and clothing in poverty stricken countries

c. The need for loving families, civil rights, good paying jobs, etc.

**-- These needs are certainly noble and very important**

2. Yet I suggest that the greatest need for our world is evangelism...

a. Sharing the gospel with every person - Mk 16:15

b. Preaching the word everywhere - Ac 8:5

**-- A need that was met aggressively in the first century AD - Co 1:23**

[Why evangelism is **“The Greatest Need”** may not be apparent to some, so a reminder of...]

**I. WHY THE NEED IS SO GREAT**

**A. THE CONDITION OF THE WORLD...**

1. Billions are dying, lost in sin!

a. For all have sinned - Ro 3:23

b. Without Jesus, they will die in their sins - Jn 8:24

2. What this means close to home

a. Relatives, friends and neighbors will be lost

b. For many Christians are doing little if anything to teach them

3. What this means in nations far way

a. Precious souls will die outside of Christ

b. Because many Christians are unwilling to either go or send - cf. Ro 10:14-15

**-- Unless we do something to meet this need, souls will be lost!**

**B. THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH...**

1. Many congregations have lost their focus

a. They have become little more than a social club

b. Meeting only the social and emotional needs of its members

c. They have become burdened by that which is the responsibility of others - 1 Ti 5:16

2. Many congregations are declining in number

a. As Christians die or fall away, little is being done to convert others

b. Where numerical growth occurs, it is often by Christians moving in to the area

**-- Unless we do something to meet this need, many churches will cease to exist!**

[So the need is great, for to save others and to save ourselves we need to evangelize! Yet consider...]

**II. WHY THE NEED IS NOT BEING MET**

**A. FOR SOME, IT IS A LACK OF CONCERN...**

1. Not concerned for the Lord’s cause, who came to seek and save - Lk 19:10

2. Not concerned for those lost and dying in sin, unlike Paul - cf. Ro 10:1

3. Not concerned for their own welfare, endangered by failing to bear fruit - Jn 15:1-2

**-- Have we become so hardened, that we no longer care?**

**B. FOR SOME, IT IS A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE...**

1. Lacking knowledge of God’s Word

a. Perhaps unaware that Jesus calls us to this mission - Mt 28:19; Mk 16;15; 1Pe 2:9

b. Perhaps needing to be taught again so we may teach others - He 5:12

2. Lacking knowledge of what to do, what to say

a. When it can often be as simple as saying, “Come and see” - Jn 1:45-46

b. When it simply involves sharing with others what you have believed and done

**-- Are we willing to make the effort to learn, that others might be saved?**

**C. FOR SOME, IT IS A LACK OF COURAGE...**

1. There is a fear of being:

a. Rejected by loved ones

b. Ridiculed by friends and strangers

c. Reviled by enemies of Christ

2. Yet there is no need to fear such things

a. People are not rejecting us, but Christ

b. If reviled for the name of Christ, we are blessed - Mt 5:11-12; 1Pe 4:14-16

c. If we are servants of Christ, we seek to please God, not men - Ga 1:10

**-- Are we willing to overcome our fears, to save those who are lost?**

**D. FOR SOME, IT IS A LACK OF FAITH...**

1. Who don’t believe that God’s Word is true

a. When it describes the sinful condition of the world - Ro 3:23

b. When it describes the terrible consequences of sin - Ro 6:23; Re 21:8

2. Who don’t believe in the ability of God Himself

a. To give them the strength to do God’s will - Ph 4:13

b. To give them the wisdom to teach His Word - Jm 1:5

c. To give them the courage to share His Will - 2 Ti 1:7-8

**-- Are we willing to have the faith to trust in God, that others might be saved?**

**E. FOR SOME, IT IS A LACK OF FOCUS...**

1. Distracted by things of the world

a. Stifling our efforts to bear fruit - cf. Lk 8:14

b. Making one unprepared for the day of the Lord - Lk 21:34

2. Trying to do the impossible

a. Such as serving two masters - Lk 16:13

b. Such as loving both the Father and the world - 1 Jn 2:15-17

3. I suspect this is the major reason why people don’t evangelize today

**-- Are we willing to seek first the kingdom of God, making its growth our priority?**

[Whatever the reason for **“The Greatest Need”** not being met, there is no excuse. To encourage us to meet this need, consider some reasons...]

**III. WHY WE ALL NEED TO BE PERSONAL WORKERS**

**A. TO FULFILL THE COMMAND OF CHRIST...**

1. Jesus commanded that disciples be made - Mt 28:19

2. Disciples who be taught to observe what He commanded - Mt 28:20

3. He just gave the command to make disciples - Mt 28:19

**-- The Great Commission is not fulfilled until we are making disciples!**

**B. TO SHOW OUR LOVE FOR OTHERS...**

1. Love for others was the second greatest commandment of the OT - Mt 22:39

2. Love for one another is debt that can never be fully paid - Ro 13:8

3. We are to love even our enemies - Mt 5:44-45

**-- What greater love can we show, than to offer others the way of salvation?**

**C. TO BE LIKE THE EARLY CHURCH...**

1. To be the Lord’s church, we must follow the pattern of congregational:

a. Organization

b. Worship and work

2. To be the Lord’s church, we must also demonstrate the same:

a. Zeal for the Lord’s cause

b. Love for the lost

**-- Unless we restore the spirit and soul of NT Christianity, we are only a skeleton!**

**D. BECAUSE OF THE TERROR OF THE LORD...**

1. This served to motivate the apostle Paul - 2 Co 5:10-11

2. Jesus spoke much about souls being lost - cf. Mt 7:13-14,21-23; Mk 16:16

**-- The reality of the Judgment Day and souls lost should move us to action!**

**E. BECAUSE OF THE JOY IN SAVING OTHERS...**

1. There is the joy you can cause in heaven - Lk 15:7,10

2. There is the joy you will personally experience

a. Paul refereed to his converts as his ‘glory and joy’ - 1 Th 2:19-20

b. John had ‘no greater joy’ than to see his children walk in truth - 3 Jn 4

**-- The joy is magnified knowing that what you do will last for eternity!**

**CONCLUSION**

1. My purpose in this lesson has been twofold; to stress that...

a. The greatest need of the church is to get back to is original mission

b. The greatest need of Christians is to be personal workers in the vineyard of the Lord

2. The current apathy and rate of decline in many churches reveals...

a. There has been a lack of concern, knowledge, courage, faith and focus

b. That this lack has hindered the most important work of the church

3. What can we do...?

a. To ask the question indicates concern. Good!

b. To that one needs to add knowledge. Learn!

c. To knowledge one needs to add courage. Pray!

Then with faith and focus we can work together to fulfill **“The Greatest Need”**. Do we have faith? Do we have the right focus? Do we even care...?