

THE SCOPE OF EVANGELISTIC PROGRAMS

(Reaction to the paper by Eduardo Duque Madrid)

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THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

We also take into account that we evangelize because it is a mandate from God to go and make disciples. It is taken into account that to make disciples, evangelization is the first step, but only the first part of God's plan. We evangelize because it is obeying our Lord. In reality the most important reason we evangelize is because doing evangelism is because the Lord himself commanded us to do it and to do the will of God in life, this commandment has to be obeyed.

We need to recognize also that God by means of his prevenient grace is preparing each heart to receive the Good News. In every moment God is trying to call his lost children to return to him and every redeemed child is an instrument of God to present God to others. In reality, everyone has to listen to God's call when Jesus says: "Follow me."

It is certain that the mission of God come from the heart of our heavenly Father. We know that since the fall and even before the creation God planned the redemption of mankind. From the Old Testament and the God's mission that he gave to his chosen people, the primordial task and the desire of God to reconcile with his children shows.

EVALUATION OF SELECTED CASES

Mexico 1987

I appreciate Dr. Duque's observations and would like to add two aspects that the program "Thrust to the Cities" did not take into account. The first: we are all responsible for evangelizing, but many churches for economic and/or spiritual reasons do not do it effectively. Many of the churches and small missions still need to be encouraged, disciplined and equipped to do evangelization. And second-with all due respect, I never understand why certain people refuse and reject evangelization because the plan, strategy or vision is not theirs. But I understand the issue of proposing a plan that has not had the participation of individuals in the local church. It is important to have more participation where all own the vision, the plan and the strategy. Dr. Duque is right that we must establish goals that can be reached and are realistic.

Impact Plan

Every church that I am aware of that adopted and implemented the Impacto Plan has had growth in the mother church and has planted daughter churches or mission. Perhaps what my brother and friend Dr. Duque mentions concerning the conservation of the results was the case in some places, but I believe the Impact Plan also includes that the big brothers are responsible after the conversions to help his sons or little brothers to be disciplined. Dr. Duque is right that unfortunately we do not have the same intentionality and seriousness in respect to discipleship

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and therefore we have the problem of losing many new converts. Until every member of the Church of the Nazarene participates in discipleship and spiritual formation, there will not be maturity, the participation and the holiness that God requires of us.

The Jesus Film

The film has greater acceptance and more results in rural areas. But it is also my experience the factor that has impeded the results is the lack of preparation in prayer and following the steps that are included as part of the Impacto Plan.

Evangelistic Cube

I am in agreement that the Evangelistic Cube is a tool of Personal Evangelism that has taken the Church out its church buildings into the streets where the lost are. But my greatest fear and concern is the difficulty in follow-up which is lacking in the majority of cases.

“Ser como El” (Be Like Him)

I agree with everything that my brother Dr. Duque says in regard to the program “Ser como El” (Be like Him) as it touches the main issue of every ministry, or that is, commitment and consecration. The Word of God clearly says, we have to give ourselves as a “living sacrifice”, or if we first give ourselves then everything else will be easier to fulfill.

Development of ministries

I share with my brother the opinion that small groups are probably the most effective method. John Wesley’s small groups were for discipleship and also for evangelism.

CONCLUSION: REFLECTIONS AND PROPOSALS

It is true that Mark 9:35-38 gives us a strategy for the evangelization of the world. (1) “*A global evangelistic program*”. Acts 1:8 shows that the plan includes our Jerusalem, our Judea, Samaria and to the end of the world, but it is not sequential. All are evangelized simultaneously. (2) “*A holistic ministry*”. It is good to note that Wesley, with his method reached the entire human being; a different need in every level, and for him it was essential to preach, minister to and provide for the poor. (3) “*That rescues the social element of the Gospel*”. Wesley believed that the world and society could change and that change began with the poor. Every “Methodist” had to contribute financially to the poor. (4) “*That they be extensive evangelistic programs.*” John 3:16 clearly says: “For God so loved the world...” God’s plan includes every place, all peoples and every person. The mature, discipled and Spirit-filled church, due to its nature will evangelize the world without stopping. Christ’s love motivates us to evangelize. The man or woman who loves God with all of his or her being and doing, will evangelize the world without fear and with boldness. Let us fall in love with Christ, and allow his Spirit to fill us and purify us, and may we obey God’s commands!