

**“The Culture and Practice of Evangelism”
Adult Sunday Studies Class on Evangelism Training
CPC Summer 2015**

Week 2, How does one become a Christian?

I. Review of Last Week

A. Missionary God-Throughout history, God chases after sinners

B. Corporate and Individual

1. Eph. 4

2. God uses individuals and church communities

C. Your barriers: What makes it hard for you to share the gospel?

1. Fear of rejection

2. Loss of friendships

3. Being perceived as judgmental

4. Misrepresenting Christ or Christians

5. Not knowing enough (about Christianity, about objections)

6. Lack of gifting, personality, disposition

7. Lack of non-Christian friends

8. Don't want to serve out of guilt

9. Others?

II. What is a Christian and how does one become a Christian?

A. Before we consider our role in evangelism, we need to consider how one becomes a Christian.

1. What is a Christian?

2. A Christian isn't...

- someone who attends church or even participates in the sacraments.
- someone who has cleaned life up, removed all doubts, or reached a decision!

3. What does evangelism look like when the goal is to produce a decision?

4. What role does the church play when the goal is to produce a decision?

B. Faith in saving work of Christ alone

John 1:12-13 To all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

1. What is faith?

WSC¹ 86

A. “Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.”

2. A gift of God

¹ WSC and WLC stands for Westminster Shorter Catechism and Larger Catechism

[8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV)

3. From beginning to end, salvation is the work of God. It is the Father who calls us and sent Jesus the Son. The Son accomplished our salvation by his blood. This work of redemption is then applied to us by the Holy Spirit and gives us faith and seals us into God's family.

4. A Christian, therefore, is one who is united to Christ and his benefits by the Holy Spirit.

WLC 58

Q. How do we come to be made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured?

A. We are made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured, by the application of them unto us, which is the work especially of God the Holy Ghost.

C. What role does the church play in the process of becoming a Christian?

1. Acts 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" 38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him."

2. WSC 88: It is the ordinary means.

Q. What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?

A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption are, his ordinances, especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

3. By the power of the Spirit, the human community of the church is the body of Christ on earth (Eph. 1:22-23). By uniting to that body, we unite to His Body.

"For from her womb we are born, by her milk we are nourished, by her spirit we are animated [...] Whoever is separated from the Church [...] is separated from the promises to the Church; nor can he who forsakes the Church of Christ attain to the rewards of Christ [...] He can no longer have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his mother..." (Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (AD 250)).

"so that, for those to whom he is Father the church may also be Mother." John Calvin, Institutes 4.1.1

4. WSC 92 & 94: Sacraments

Q. 92 What is a sacrament?

A. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.

Q. 94 What is Baptism?

A. Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

5. Your Vows: PCA Book of Church Order ch. 57-5

- 1) Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign mercy?
- 2) Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?
- 3) Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?
- 4) Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?
- 5) Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

III. How does this effect evangelism?

A. How is your role is put in perspective...

1. If God is sovereign in conversion from beginning to end...
2. If the church is the outward and ordinary means of grace...
3. If (ordinarily) a Christian is one who is baptized into a church...

B. How does this shift your approach to sharing the gospel?

1. Burden of "closing the deal" doesn't rest on your shoulders
2. You can honestly say, "I'm not trying to convert you that's God's job"
 - a. I'm just inviting you to the place where you can meet him.
 - b. I'm just passing along a truth that has changed my life.
 - c. I'm just interested in what you have thought about this stuff.
3. It takes a village a church.
 - a. This doesn't absolve you of involvement.
 - b. It should free you to be involved.

IV. Revisiting Barriers

A. How does this view of becoming a Christian address some of the barriers to evangelism?

1. Fear of rejection
2. Loss of friendships
3. Being perceived as judgmental
4. Misrepresenting Christ or Christians
5. Not knowing enough (about Christianity, about objections)
6. Lack of gifting, personality, disposition
7. Lack of non-Christian friends
8. Don't want to serve out of guilt

B. What barriers remain?