

How To Reach The Lost

According To Scripture



To learn how to reach the lost is very important for Christians. That issue is addressed by Paul after the various stern warnings and personal directives throughout 2 Timothy. The Apostle Paul gives his spiritual son the following about how to reach the lost with God's Word, especially those who oppose him. Those instructions are very revealing about the spiritual condition of MOST people, since the majority are lost. The following few verses are packed with important truth:

Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. (2 Tim 2:23)

Arguments for non-scriptural concepts will definitely come from unbelievers. If we are going to know how to reach the lost, we must be aware of these things. Some of those arguments will be sincere and some won't be. In fact, even the Lord Jesus was confronted by hypocrites and others who asked insincere questions and arguments to trap him, if possible (but that never occurred). See Mat 22:15-18; John 8:6; etc. When it comes to foolish and stupid questions, Paul wanted Timothy to know something injurious could result from such arguments—they breed quarrels.

How To Deliver The Word of God To Reach The Lost

And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. (2 Tim 2:24)

So the quarrels generated from foolish and stupid arguments are something that servants of God, like Timothy, must not get involved with. That is basic for how to reach the lost. The servant of God must protect himself from quarrels by avoiding such arguments. Instead of quarreling he must:

- be kind to everyone
- be able to teach
- not be resentful (in his answers and teachings)

Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth (2 Tim 2:25).

We teachers will have people who oppose us. The necessity of **gently instructing** those who oppose the truth and are sincere, is so that such lost and deceived people will ultimately be led to the knowledge of the truth. Never forget that when learning how to reach the lost. Their change will come after they repent, which is granted by God.

Elsewhere we learn that God gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). Hence, when a deceived person is presented God's truth from scripture in a kind, reasonable and non-resentful way, there is a better chance he will come to his spiritual senses. The point here, for the servant of God, is to answer people based on scripture **plus** in the right manner as described. The goal is to rescue the lost by them becoming humbled so they can receive God's grace!

and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken

them captive to do his will. (2 Tim 2:26)

What a sad word picture is described of the religious lost! They are deceived and trapped **by the devil!** So just like there are fur trappers, the devil (who is not in hell now), has trapped in a spiritual way, precious souls for whom the Lord Jesus died. The religious lost need to escape their lethal trap and the servants of God can help with that. It is **not** entirely left up to God to sovereignly elect one person over another, who will never have a chance at salvation, as Calvinism teaches. That includes John MacArthur, R. C. Sproul and other big names! God doesn't want anyone to perish (2 Pet 3:9) and Jesus shed his blood to pay for everyone's redemption (without any help from Mary, as Catholics want us to believe). The servants of God obey and God does what is needed to benefit people. Positive results occur, IF the correction, rebuke, etc. is humbly received and not rejected by those in need.

Note: 2 Tim 2:26 also says the lost are doing the devil's will! Remember that! So as Christians do God's will (Mat 7:21), the lost are doing the devil's will, even if they go door-to-door as Jehovah's Witnesses do with their counterfeit gospel of their 1914 kingdom message. Multitudes of false teachers are on the radio, TV and internet doing the devil's will, as they teach a license to sin under an alleged holiness. Joseph Prince certainly is NOT the only heretic around! We must be alert to the devil's subtle schemes for he has many different types doing his will.

Timothy ministered to the saved and lost in the trap of the devil. In both cases, what he did and said was to be based on scripture (the Bible). There would also be occasions when Timothy was to rebuke:

Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. (2 Tim 4:2)

So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him." (Luke 17:3)

Paul To Titus

Titus was informed the same:

This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith

(Titus 1:13).

These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you. (Titus 2:15)

The way a servant of God is told to minister varies with the type of person he is addressing. How he delivers the Word is very important, including when he is opposed. Note how Paul's Holy Spirit advice to Timothy parallels what he wrote to Titus, showing among other things, there shouldn't be any joking around:

In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. (Titus 2:7,8)

How To Reach The Lost: Personal Observations

Decades ago I was in a religious gathering. The preacher was teaching against sin and the people were getting convicted by the Holy Spirit. He must have sensed it and thought he wouldn't be accepted, but for whatever reason he started telling jokes. After a joke or two the people were no longer thinking about their sins. He then gave an altar call for people to come forward to get saved. Not even one person came! Levity or joke-telling from the pulpit is anti how to reach the lost!

Furthermore, **never** did the Lord Jesus or his apostles ever tell a joke or even smile, much less laugh! Jesus is called many things, including a man of sorrows (Isa 53:3). He wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41), and Paul served the Lord with great humility and with tears (Acts 20:19). Trying to reach the lost is as funny as trying to rescue people trapped in a burning building. Preach the word with seriousness!

These are all very important truths to know about when pondering how to reach the lost. How to reach the lost begins with Christian love for souls.

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