

# THE ZEPHYRHILLS BEACON



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## 6 Key Barriers Which Must be Overcome

(by Brent Hunter)

### SO YOU WANT TO BE A SOUL WINNER?

The reasons why so many Christians feel uncomfortable sharing their faith is multifaceted. Any successful soul winning effort must begin by laying a foundation of preaching and teaching that deals with six barriers that must be overcome.

### Six Key Barriers Which Must be Overcome

**#1. Fear of Rejection.** **"I don't feel comfortable."** We are surrounded by a culture that is "politically correct" and people today are very easily offended. Unfortunately, many Christians have allowed the culture to change them, instead of the reverse. Indeed, this often paralyzing fear of rejection, is the most commonly stated reason why Christians tell me they don't talk to their friends and neighbors about the gospel. We need to be reminded that the opposite of fear is faith, and that **"without faith it is impossible to please Him"** (Heb 11:6). John admonishes us, **"Perfect love cast out fear!"**(1 John 4:18)!

**#2. A lack of joy and assurance of one's salvation.** If the truth were known, many Christians don't possess assurance of their own salvation! John tells us, **"These things have I written to you, that you might know you have eternal life"** (1 John 5:13). God's intent was for His children to have peace and joy in their hearts. Why? Because we are to trust in Him and God's grace as we **"walk in the light and He is in the light"** (1 John 1:7). Sadly, if Christians don't possess the assurance of their salvation, they can't have joy in their hearts. Beloved, this joy and strength found in the Lord, should naturally flow out of us as we have conversations with others. Berating people for not doing "personal evangelism," and trying to get them to be motivated primarily from guilt, is not a long term



solution to changing the culture in a congregation. We must be insightful enough to deal with the real underlying issues, and not just deal with symptoms. A better course, is to encourage and strengthen personal commitment, and the Christian's faith in the promises of God, and the ***"joy of your salvation"*** (Ps 51:12). It is noteworthy, that after Isaiah promises us that His word will not return void, He says, ***"For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace"*** (Isa 55:12). Make no mistake, the most effective soul winners are those that go out with joy in their hearts and share the gospel with passion and love in their hearts.

**#3. A lack of training and practical instruction.** It has always amazed me that most congregations see the need and value of "men's training classes", to teach men to be more effective and edifying in our assemblies, and more and more brethren understand the value of "singing schools," all of which I commend wholeheartedly. However, what about training classes on "How to Teach Others the Gospel", or "How to Effectively Share one's Faith?" Too often we forget that the Lord's plan of evangelism is to ***"Teach these things unto faithful men, who will be able to teach others also"*** (II Tim 2:2). *Evangelism is not complete, until the evangelized become the evangelist!* How can we obey this command, and ***"equip the saints for the work of ministry"*** (Eph 4:12) if we don't regularly provide instruction and training in *how* to do so? Should there not be instruction provided on what we should be doing *outside* of the assembly, and not just what we do *in* our assemblies?

Frankly, I have found that one of the reasons why Christians are so afraid, is that they are not shown or taught how to win souls. Think about it. All of us are filled with fear, in any area of our lives, when we are told to do something, but have no idea what we are doing! Uncertainty, will always lead to inaction! No wonder, so many good hearted, well-meaning Christians do not share their faith.

Jesus said the field in which we are to be planting the seed is the world (Matt 13:38), and that the problem is not the harvest, the problem is the lack of reapers going into the field. No wonder Jesus admonished us to ***"Pray therefore the Lord of harvest that he would send forth workers into His harvest"*** (Luke 10:2). I pray that prayer



frequently, and whenever possible we all need to put feet to our prayers and answer this plea of Jesus personally.

**#4. We get busy and distracted so we are not ‘prospect conscience.’** Too often we get involved in many worthwhile activities that may strengthen us spiritually, but they can fill up our time and use up our energies so that there are not resources available for outreach. *Maintenance* is important, but so is *mission*! An individual’s discipleship must go beyond just showing up at assemblies and doing Bible lessons. While these are vital, they are *not a substitute for winning souls*. Every Christian needs to see himself/herself as **“an epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men”** (2 Cor 3:2), and be constantly *looking for those who are looking*! The marriage and family literature states that in the 1990’s 98% of men eventually get married. Why? As singles, they were busy with school and work, but they *prioritized looking for a partner*. In the back of their minds, they have their radar up, constantly looking and asking, cultivating relationships along the way, until eventually they get a “yes” to their proposal. Should we not in a similar way, care enough about the souls of the lost, and the privilege of sharing our faith, so that we, too, are constantly looking for those who may be “wed” to Jesus? Beloved, let’s make it a top priority, to pray for God to send us seekers, and be looking and asking, cultivate relationships along the way, always eager to share the gospel with anyone who is willing! Are we focusing on the right things, or are we distracted from what *really matters*? We must become *prospect conscious* if we are to be successful!

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get them to be motivated primarily from guilt, is not a long term solution to changing the culture in a congregation. We must be insightful enough to deal with the real underlying issues, and not just deal with symptoms. A better course, is to encourage and strengthen personal commitment, and the Christian's faith in the promises of God, and the **"joy of your salvation"** (Ps 51:12). It is noteworthy, that after Isaiah promises us that His word will not return void, He says, **"For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace"** (Isa 55:12). Make no mistake, the most effective soul winners are those that go out with joy in their hearts and share the gospel with passion and love in their hearts.

**#6. A lack of modeling.** May I be perfectly blunt? Perhaps the reason why many congregations do not offer classes on "How to do Personal Work" – is that it is rarely being done, and therefore, who can teach these classes? Who is there to show the way? It is true that soul winning is the privilege of all mature Christians (Heb 5:12), not just the preacher, but, if the local evangelist is not willing to set an example and spent a good share of his time teaching the lost, how can he expect the members to do so? Who is going to teach good training classes if the leadership is not engaged, and it is not a part of the lifestyle of those who are to be an example to the flock (I Tim 4:12, I Peter 5:3)? If winning souls is not even an expectation as to something that Christians need to take seriously, and there is no modeling of this behavior by church leaders, it is no wonder that in this type of environment, personal evangelism becomes rare or non-existent.

Once Christians are given a "track to run on" and begin to see conversions as a result, it is amazing how quickly a congregation can be turned around. It is not long until over time a culture of soul winning is developed that glorifies God and is edifying to all. *Success breeds success and enthusiasm.* I have seen it happen in several churches! If needed, you can be a part of sparking a revival in your local church as well. Stay tuned for future articles that will explain how to use a powerful evangelistic tool effectively that is ideal for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**We are saved to serve, won to win, taught to teach!!**