

The Cornelius Method of Evangelism

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Preaching the word of God is a responsibility of believers (Acts 8:4). We preachers therefore must get every member of our congregation to know that they have a part to play in bringing sinners to the Lord. The Lord is very clear about His love for souls and punishment for sins,

Behold all souls are Mine,

The soul of the father

As well as the soul of the son is Mine,

The soul who sins shall die (Ezekiel 18:4).

Acts 10 talks about Cornelius, a centurion who lived in Caesarea. Though he was a Gentile, he had regard for the God of the Jews. He devoted himself to prayer to God and generously gave alms to people until his prayers and alms came as a memorial before God. One day the angel of the Lord brought good news to Cornelius, telling him that his prayers and alms had come as a memorial before God. The angel also told him to call the Apostle Peter to come and tell him the words by which he and his entire household would be saved (Acts 11:14). After he had sent for Peter, while he was still waiting to hear the word of God from Peter, Cornelius called his relatives and close friends (maybe neighbors inclusive) as well (Acts 10:24, 27). The Scripture says all those whom Cornelius called heard the word of God delivered by the Apostle Peter (verses 34-43), and they all were filled with the Holy Spirit (verse 44), and all were baptized, thus they were converted (Acts 10:48).

Cornelius' experience with God provoked him to call his relatives and close friends to come and hear the word of God from the Apostle Peter. Growing Christians, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious (1 Peter 2:3) should have sufficient zeal to do what Cornelius did, call people around them to listen to the word of God. In this way, they will be participating in evangelism as they bring sinners closer to God's word (Romans 10:14).

I encourage preachers to teach members of their congregation to bring their relatives and close friends to church, the way Cornelius did. Christians may not be in position to preach to their relatives and friends but can be in position to invite them to meetings of Christians to hear the word of God which is able to save 'their' souls (James 1:21), as it is written, "Now faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Rom 10:17).

The Cornelius method of evangelism is very practical and achievable. If everyone can bring someone to church, just one person per month, preachers will have many classes to teach, and probably more baptisms. This is working very well in our congregations in Uganda. John 4:28 records what the Samaritan woman did. She went into the city and told the men to "come and see a Man (Jesus) who told me (her) all things that I (she) ever did. Could this be the Christ?" Then they went out of the city and came to HIM (John 4:30), and many who were invited by the woman to meet Jesus believed (John 4:39-42). We cannot overlook the efforts of the Samaritan woman towards the salvation of the many who believed as a result of her call.

Our church members have a lot they can do. They should be encouraged to bring non-believers to church, or Bible studies, or prayer meetings, or lectures, where the word of God is preached. The word has power to change the hearts of non-believers. Just bring them. It is God who saves through His word. Who knows?

In Uganda many people who have been invited have requested more study, eventually have believed the word, and have been baptized and converted. I've called this "**The Cornelius Method of Evangelism.**"

God bless you as you reach out to sinners.