

# OBEYING THE GREAT COMMISSION

Please read Matthew 28: 16-20

In these well-known disciples together and out and preach the a command readily unfulfilled after two



verses Jesus calls His commands them to go Gospel to all nations - obeyed but still millennia.

I am more than ever major reason for failing to engage in

we really do not know how to do it and even if we do have some vague idea, we do not know where to start.

convinced that one many of us Christians Gospel outreach is that

I wish to outline five steps to follow in leading lost souls to the foot of the Cross.

The first is to **FIND** them. It is not sufficient merely to advertise a series of meetings or a campaign and hope that folk will attend. There is nothing to equal face-to-face contact - even one-to-one. The Gospel narratives reveal several instances where Jesus met individuals in this way, e.g. the woman of Samaria (John 4 vs 1-26), blind Bartimeaus (Mark 10 vs 46-52) and many others.

In a recent conversation with an open air preacher, the subject of Election arose. We concluded that we do not find out who the “whosoever wills” are by studying books, but by going out and proclaiming the Gospel message and weighing up the response.

When the Apostle Paul was in Corinth, the Lord said to him, “I have much people in this city” (Acts 18 v 9). He may have many more in Ulster.

Having found lost sinners, the next step is to **FOLD** them. That is, we need to display Christ’s love to them. One of our children’s hymns expresses it like this:

“The weakest lambs amidst the flock, His tender mercies share,  
And folded in the Saviour’s arms, Are free from every snare.”

Let me suggest that this would imply that we be good listeners. This is absolutely necessary to discern the root of everyone’s problems and discover what is basically keeping them away from the Saviour. In the case of the rich young ruler, we read that initially Jesus loved him before He touched the sore spot in his life. So here we too must identify the obstacle in anyone whom we hope to point to Christ - but we must do it in love for their souls.

The next step is to **FEED** them. It goes without saying that feeding means acquainting our seekers with the Word of God – the Holy Scriptures. This is an absolute priority for Christians and “would be” Christians alike. However in dealing with someone who has no, or very little, knowledge of “the Word”, I would not recommend either quoting or showing them a multiplicity of texts – after all, we aim to nourish folk with the Word, not give them “spiritual indigestion”.

Instead I would suggest using some small booklets published by Scripture Gift Mission, which contain specific texts on conversion, salvation and related subjects, and invite them to study and possibly memorise some particular verses.

Nevertheless, reading and study of the Word itself cannot be excluded. Perhaps an earnest seeker could be referred to portions such as: the creation and fall of man (Genesis 1-3), Psalms 1, 23, 24, 46, and 103-139; the book of Proverbs with its 31 chapters (one for each day of the month); the Gospel of Mark; Romans 1 - 12; 2 Corinthians 5 vs 17-21; and, for practical purposes, the letter of James.

At this stage we shall assume that a seeker is ready to make a commitment of his/her life to Jesus Christ – and what a joy that would be! But two more steps are required from us as believers, the first of which is to:

**FORTIFY** them. I have stated before, but it is worth repeating that the Christian life is not to be lived in isolation. All of us, and especially new converts, need above all else, fellowship with other believers. So it falls to us at this stage to ensure that our converts attend a good Bible-believing and Gospel-preaching church or other assembly - that is if they do not already do so. Also they should endeavour if possible to attend a weekly Bible class/prayer meeting and maybe join a CU such as our own. In this way they will be built up and consolidated in their newfound faith.

Lastly, **FOLLOW UP**. This would follow on naturally from fortification. It involves maintaining regular contact with our new disciples and making sure they are going on with the Lord and attending on the means of grace and growth.

Perhaps you could arrange to meet periodically for a meal or to go to a meeting or mission. There are many possibilities, so adopt whichever suits best.

So there we are – FIND, FOLD, FEED, FORTIFY, FOLLOW UP. If we keep to this pattern we should hope, by our ministry, to see many become “the slain of the Lord” in these days.