

Summary of The Master Plan of Evangelism by Dr. Robert E. Coleman

Objective and Relevant – determines the significance of all our activity.

Guiding Questions – Is it worth doing? And does it get the job done? Are our efforts fulfilling the great commission of Christ? Do we see an ever-expanding company of dedicated people reaching the world with the gospel as a result of our ministry? Are we accomplishing our objective?

Eight Guiding Principles –

1) Selection –

- a. Men were his method of winning the world
- b. Men who would bear witness to his life and carry on his work
- c. Men willing to learn, teachable
- d. The more concentrated size (fewer in number) of men, the greater the opportunity for effective instruction
- e. Needed people who could lead the multitudes and give them personal care
- f. With that as a model today, this will require more concentration of time and talents on fewer people in the church while not neglecting the passion for the world.
- g. It will mean raising up trained disciples “for the work of ministering” with the pastor and church staff.
- h. With that strategy, the multitudes can be won easily if they are just given leaders to follow.
- i. We must decide where we want our ministry to count – momentary recognition or reproduction of our lives in a few chosen people who will carry on our work to future generations

2) Association –

- a. Jesus made a practice of being with them; letting them follow him was his training program. Knowledge was gained by association before it was by explanation.
- b. The disciples were his spiritual children and the only way that a father can properly raise a family is to be with it.
- c. Follow-up was needed for immediate personal care of new converts and he delegated this to his disciples. Principle of reproduction. That then became the church ministering to each other. But this they could do only as they themselves were trained and inspired.
- d. Preaching to the masses will never suffice in the work of preparing leaders for evangelism. Building men and women requires constant personal attention, much like a father gives to his children.
- e. Unless new Christians, if they are saved, have parents or friends who will fill the gap in training them, they may fall away and not mature. This can't be done in a church assembly line basis a few days out of the year.

- f. This means that some system must be found whereby every convert is given a Christian friend (mentor) to follow until such time as he or she can lead another. If a church does not have such committed counselors willing to do this service, then it should be training some.

3) Consecration – (To make, or declare to be, sacred; to appropriate to sacred uses; to set apart, dedicate, or devote, to the service or worship of God)

- a. Jesus expected the men he was with to obey him. They were not required to be smart, but they had to be loyal. In time obedient followers invariably take on the character of their leader.
- b. No one will follow a person in whom he or she has not trust, nor sincerely take the step of faith unless he or she is willing to obey what the leader says.
- c. Jesus did not have the time nor the desire to scatter himself on those who wanted to make their own terms of discipleship.
- d. There can be no dillydallying around with the commands of Christ. Every day that we are indifferent to our responsibilities is a day lost to the cause of Christ. There is no place in the kingdom for a slacker.
- e. There is a general indifference today to the commands of God, or at least, a kind of contented complacency with mediocrity. The obedience of the cross and the teachings of Christ regarding self-denial and dedication have been replaced with “do as you please” philosophy.
- f. The need of the hour is not for despair but for action.

4) Impartation –

- a. He gave himself away. Love is like that. It is always giving itself away. When it is self-contained, it is not love.
- b. Everything Christ did and said was motivated by his consuming passion for evangelism.
- c. Experiencing the living Christ in any personal way is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- d. Jesus was God in revelation; but the Spirit was God in operation.
- e. All the disciples were asked to do was to let the Spirit have complete charge of their lives.
- f. The secret of the victorious life – evangelism had to become a burning compulsion within them, purifying their desires and guiding their thoughts. After all, the power is in the Spirit of Christ. It is not who we are, but who he is that makes the difference. If we do not understand and live by this principle, any evangelistic work will be lifeless and it is meaningless.
- g. We must give ourselves away in service and devotion to our Lord.

5) Demonstration -

- a. He showed them how to live through the practice of prayer and using scripture.
- b. He led through demonstration not explanation.
- c. Mere knowledge is not enough. There comes a time for action.

6) Delegation –

- a. He assigned them work. He kept the vision before them by his activity.
- b. The disciples were told to concentrate their time on the most promising individuals in each town who would thereby be able to follow up their work after they had gone. This was to receive priority over everything else.
- c. They were going forth with a revolutionary gospel, and when it was obeyed, it effected a revolutionary change in people and their society.
- d. The disciples were to be the actual representatives of Christ as they went forth.
- e. Evangelism is not an optional accessory to our life. It is the heartbeat of all that we are called to be and do. It is the commission of the church that gives meaning to all else that is undertaken in the name of Christ.
- f. The best way to be sure that this is done is to give practical work assignments and expect them to be carried out.

7) Supervision –

- a. He kept check on them.
- b. He continuously reviewed and gave them application to their lives.
- c. He taught them lessons on patience.
- d. Christ's lesson – not to be satisfied with the first fruits of those who are sent out to witness but to bring them to maturity. It is crucial that those engaging in the work of evangelism have personal supervision and guidance until such time as they are mature enough to carry on alone.
- e. We fail, not because we do not try to do something, but because we let our little efforts become an excuse for not doing more.
- f. The goal is world conquest. We have not been called to hold the fort, but to storm the heights.

8) Reproduction –

- a. He expected them to reproduce his likeness.
- b. Jesus envisioned that the victory would be won through witnessing and he depended on the faithfulness of his chosen disciples to this task. That was his only plan.
- c. Jesus called men to evaluate the product of their lives. This was the revelation of what they were and whether they (we as a comparison) were bearing fruit first in their (our) lives and then the lives of others. Are those who have followed us to Christ now leading others to him and teaching them to make disciples like ourselves?
- d. In more recent times, mass recruitment was the easier strategy to evangelism. Jesus' plan has not been disavowed; it has just been ignored.

- e. Men are God's method. Programs, ceremonies and organizations are well intended but unless the personal mission of the Master is vitally incorporated in the policy and fabric of all these plans, the church cannot function as she should. Evangelism is not done by something but by someone. These are men and women who know their Redeemer from personal experience.

9) Epilogue –

- a. Life has a plan, what is the plan of your life? Everyone has to live by some plan. Jesus' objective and way is the rule by which every action should be tested. Some of our plans may have to be redirected or abandoned.
- b. The Master gives us an outline to follow but methods will vary.
- c. Jesus' life teaches us that finding and training people to reach people must have priority. Multitudes cannot know the gospel unless they have a living witness. Merely giving them an explanation will not suffice. They must have a mentor who will stand among them and say, "Follow me, I know the way. Here is where all our plans must focus. It requires deliberate planning and concentrated effort.
- d. Christ is the leader not ourselves. So keep the focus on Jesus.
- e. If our followers are to see through us what they are to become we must be with them and involve them in what we are doing and how we serve. And expect something of them ; give them assignments. Teach them how to assume ministry in their own sphere of influence.
- f. It does not matter how many people we enlist for the cause, but how many they conquer for Christ.. That is why all along our emphasis must be on quality of life. If we get the right quality of leadership, the rest will follow; if we do not get it, the rest have nothing worth following.
- g. Christian service is demanding, and if people are going to be of any use for God, they must learn to seek first the Kingdom. Our satisfaction is in knowing that in generations to come our witness for Christ will still be bearing fruit through them in an ever-widening cycle of reproduction to the ends of the earth and unto the end of time.
- h. The world is desperately seeking someone to follow. Will that person be one who knows the way of Christ? This is the decisive question of our plan of life and the relevance of all that we do.