

witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who are able to teach others also."

If each of us in this room, without any outside help, would in addition to our other duties, win and train just *one* person yearly and then they'd do the same thing repeating the process yearly, we could evangelize our world before the end of this century.

I can't win thousands but I can win and train one just like the man won and trained me. Just like I can't swallow a whole elephant but I can take one bite at a time. And remember, there are thousands like me...it wouldn't take 1,000 long to eat an elephant.

What do laymen want? We want to be involved in what really counts. And we need you to show us how to study the Bible, how to pray, how to live in love, how to witness, how to have Christ formed in us.

We need you. We want to be one with you. Let's withstand Satan by closing the gap between the clergy and laity. *This is not a biblical division!*

We need your leadership, your challenge. What do you want from us? I hope you'll want more than nominal commitment to use the common believers. I hope you'll want laymen so much that you'll challenge us in commitment, train us to win and train others so that we, too, might be personally involved in world evangelization.

A LAYMAN LOOKS AT WORLD EVANGELIZATION

Jan Nickolaas Huwae

The 20th century is the layman century. Church leaders and ministers around the world are in agreement that the mission of the church is to evangelize and propagate the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To insure that the church will not die but flourish, evangelism done by laymen is fast becoming a part of the regular church program. To carry on an active, effective program of evangelism, the church *must* have the full support of its laity. Every believer can and should be a witness. In effect, they are either good or bad, for the Scripture points out very clearly that we are "epistles of Christ" known and read of all men (II Cor. 3:2,3). More than that, we are in the world the holy priests and ambassadors of our heavenly Father to witness and to glorify Him (II Cor. 5:20; I Peter 2:5).

The layman in this twentieth century is a potential witness. He need not be a super-salesman nor a super-human being to be used of God. In fact, God has called the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things to confound the mighty (I Cor. 1:27). We need but to turn our life and our personality over to God and we can say like Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." There is no excuse for not serving God daily as a witness. Not that we should leave our business to serve Christ, but make it our business to serve Christ in and through our business.

In order to do that, first of all we must have:

1. *Personal assurance* of sins forgiven, of life eternal, of positive relationship and of positive present possession.
2. *Awareness of responsibility* to glorify God, to bear witness and have fellowship one with another, to read and obey God's Word, to spend time in prayer, to obey God's will and the Holy Spirit.
3. *The discipline of devotions* — through daily devotions we get a knowledge of the Bible and keep close to the Lord to maintain a victorious, spirit-filled, dynamic Christian life. With Christ in control life is balanced and effective.

We have already pointed out that the mission of the church is to evangelize and propagate the faith. Every believer then as a member of the body of Christ becomes responsible to bear witness.

Witness means: To give facts or evidence, to testify to one with a personal knowledge of anything.

Let us briefly find out and answer the following questions.

1. *Who should witness?* To consider reverends, pastors, and bishops, as the only group specially called to serve the Lord is irrelevant to God's standpoint. "Ye shall be my witness or ambassador ..." (Acts 1:8; II Cor. 5:18-20) means everyone — every believer, every born-again person. It can be a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher, a clerk, or a policeman like me. We have only to obey the Great Commission as a good Christian soldier.

We thank God that since the beginning of the twentieth century there are many spiritual fighters without using any church title who wit-

ness to the great salvation and proclaim the Word of God.

2. *When shall we witness?* There is no set time of day, week, or month. The early-century Christians were busy daily. Our life is a witness and will be until we die. Maybe we are very busy with our business earning money and have no time at all to witness for Christ. But the Bible says, "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Businessmen might well learn the art of making a living, but not many of them have learned "how to live."

3. *Where shall we witness?* Acts 8:4, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Our Jerusalem is the office, shop, school, neighborhood. Each of us as laymen have our sphere of influence. We are called to be "the fishers of men." The ponds are everywhere.

4. *What shall we witness?* You don't need to be a good speaker but you can give facts and personal testimony. Who were you before you met Christ and accepted him as your personal Savior? You can give facts or testify what happened during the conversion and then what Christ has done for you. Once you were blind, namely spiritual blindness, walking in the darkness and going to hell, but once you accepted Christ Jesus as your personal Savior by faith and grace, your soul awakened, your mind enlightened and your will converted. The result is your conscience is purified and your affections renewed.

5. *How shall we witness?* We work not on our own, but we are workers together with God. God provides the Holy Spirit for witness as the power and the guide to witness. God provides his Word for faith and practice and God promises to bless it. We must faithfully sow the seed, his Word. Our part is to be willing to witness by our life. Our lives should be attractive for the Savior.

Before I close my presentation, let me ask you, "What is your occupation? A doctor? A merchant?" Do not run away from these callings. Who you are and what you are God will use as a tool in his hand to proclaim the Gospel, to bear witness in your position in the community.

A LAYMAN LOOKS AT WORLD EVANGELIZATION

Luis Santiago Botero

Since I was touched by the Gospel in the university fifteen years ago, I have been disturbed by several features of the contemporary church that it seems to me do not adjust to the instrument proposed by God to take the light to the world. I wanted from the beginning to be just a plain Christian. Denominational differences have been for me, as they are for many who seek the Gospel, a burden. The lack of unity between brethren belonging to different organizations and their insistence on emphasizing whatever separates them, has always disturbed me very much. You cannot find in the body of Christ the unity required so "that the world may believe" (John 17:21).

One of the most relevant distortions that I find in the contemporary church is institutionalization, understood as the organic conformation of the church to a business enterprise model or to a social club. To this you must add the professionalism of the ministry, once clergy and laymen are distinguished, with the consequent dependence of the members of the congregation with respect to the ministers in order to function as church. The communication of the Gospel has thus become the task of specialists, with the risk that it may no longer be the normal task and the privilege of every believer. On the other hand, isolation of the redeemed in church buildings, does not allow them to effectively be the salt of the earth. The buildings for the assembly of the faithful have become a substitute of the very notion of church.

Within such a frame, the Holy Ghost finds very little freedom to move. The Word of Life does not reach those to whom it is addressed, and the life of fellowship between the brethren is very limited. We do not see nowadays many Christian communities of which they can say they persevere unanimous every day as in the example of Acts 2:43-47, communities where the fellowship in Jesus Christ reflects itself in inter-family relations, in mutual help, in secular work, in service and in all realms that give practical expression of our faith.

I find another hindrance to the extension of the kingdom of God in the marginalization of the church from the contemporary world, caused by institutionalization, by the absurd dichotomy between the material and the spiritual, and by a wrong interpretation of what separation from the world means, which we have adopted as an excuse not to give a permanent witness in our work, in our social and family relations, in our responsibilities as citizens, in the arts, and in sport. This other worldly position, qualified by a conservative ethic that we stress too much in our message, has made us lose our contact with reality. We do not go to the world to seek those for whom Jesus died, expecting that somehow they will become interested in attending our evangelization meetings. Our message sounds very strange to the ears of the man without Christ, or there is no response at all because the message is not relevant to his problems. The proclamation of the Gospel fails in being an existential witness. We do not take advantage of our situation in the world where the