



Soul-winning Dos and Don'ts

By Kurt von Schleicher

"More souls have been won for Christ by Christians who did what little they could, than by renowned evangelists." —Richard Wurmbrand

Why fail to do what you can in fishing for souls, because of all the things you can not do? Why go out there and make enemies, when God wants us to make friends in His Name? The Apostle Paul once admonished Timothy saying, ***"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves"*** (2 Tim. 2:24). This is good advice for us as well. As we abide in Christ and pray, aiming to be a blessing to the irreligious people around us, we can expect God to hook some of them for eternity. There is no greater thrill than properly fishing for souls!

Here's Some Soul-winning Don'ts:

1. Don't argue! You'll never get anywhere arguing. It will only put a barrier between the sinner and yourself. Either agree with them and go on, or ask the person if you can "set that question or issue on the side for a while." Be gracious, loving, patient – a good listener! Some of the Church's smartest fail to reap a harvest. Yes, many Christian Apologists are notorious for forgetting the last part of 1 Peter 3:15, ***"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense (an answer - apologia) to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience" ...with gentleness and reverence*** (or respect - NAS)." Too many Christians enjoy brutal debate for debate's sake – they like to chew em up, and spit em out in the Name of Jesus. But we are not to be out to win an argument for the sake of winning an argument. Remember, you could win the argument and lose the sinner. Let's win them to Jesus without compromising the truth, rather than driving them away due to insensitivity.
2. Go over the law (God's Top Ten List) with the proud asking diagnostic questions and give the Gospel of grace to the humble. They have to hear the bad news that all have sinned including them, in order to appreciate the Good News. Carefully aim for the conscience like a sharpshooter with your words—never to hurt. Too many Christians are reckless and act like they have a wild shotgun to blast wherever they feel, throwing stern critical words and questions around needlessly. They are insensitive, far from accurate and appropriate in what

they say or quote. They play fast and loose with the truth and are often unable to verify what they say. It's not the Gospel offending people when they are out there, it's their callous inconsideration. But Jesus our perfect example witnessed for the Father carefully using the law to help sinners. Remember the rich young ruler? Why do that? Because the Bible says, ***"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul..."*** (Ps. 19:7). Billy Graham said, *"The Holy Spirit convicts us... He shows us the Ten Commandments; the Law is the schoolmaster that leads us to Christ. We look in the mirror of the Ten Commandments, and we see ourselves in that mirror."* Charles Spurgeon said, *"I do not believe that any man can preach the gospel who does not preach the Law."* George Whitfield said, *"First, then, before you can speak peace to your hearts, you must be made to see, made to feel, made to weep over, made to bewail, your actual transgressions against the Law of God."* John Wesley stated, *"Before I can preach love, mercy, and grace, I must preach sin, Law, and judgment."*

3. When you feel like accusing, inquire. There are too many so called Christians out there preaching in a weird religious way with loud yelling, back-breath, jerking and an accusatory, condemning demeanor as they point out what dogs the people are. Christ didn't do that! He was courteous and showed sinners respect and genuine love. I think that after love, joy is the strongest drawing-quality a Christian can have. Jesus was joyous! Never have a superiority complex. You might be better off, but you are not better than they are. Share the truth accurately with those who are open. If the person is hard-hearted and closed, then your job is to pray for them in love. Maybe they will soften their heart in time. Make the Message clear and understandable. Don't talk over their head. Don't use big theological, churchy or religious words that they won't understand. When you use Bible words, simply define their meaning.
4. Don't shake their hand like a little limp-wristed girl, guys. Shaking their hand in a firm, natural way (this can include handshaking's many up-to-date variations), is still appropriate if this opportunity comes your way.
5. Don't ever compromise to better identify with the sinner. Enter their culture, but short of sin.
6. Don't wait until you are perfect to start sharing Jesus! Remember that none of Christ's original disciple's had it all together. None of them had a seminary degree.
7. Don't have a *do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do* attitude about evangelism before other Christians, Mr. Leader (daily example the soul-winning lifestyle out of an overflow from your close walk with Jesus)!
8. Don't talk down to the sinner or you will forfeit your opportunity. That is, don't have a self-righteous, pharisaical attitude (like you are somehow better or holier than they are).
9. Don't embarrass them before their friends or they will always resent you.
10. Unbelievers can be very oppressive, and they don't realize they are the mere puppet of the ultimate oppressor Mr Lucifer. Don't allow them to verbally beat you down or draw you into fleshing-out or into compromising using Scriptures that are taken out of context. ***"Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go"*** (Josh. 1:9). Honor God always. Defend others wisely and allow God to be your defense. Don't lie, exaggerate or commit sin for anyone. The Bible says, "Do not steal. Do not cheat one another. Do not lie" (Lev. 19:11). The Apostle John said, ***"I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth"*** (1Jn. 2:21 emphasis mine). He said, ***"...the same anointing teacheth you of all things,***

and is truth, and is no lie"(1 Jn. 2:27). William Shakespeare said, *"The devil can cite Scripture for his own purpose."* You remember how Jesus tempted in the wilderness. What did the devil use with Christ? It was Scripture, but Jesus untwisted what the enemy twisted and He didn't sin.

11. Don't look upon any as hard cases. There are not "big sinners" and "little sinners."
12. Don't raise unnecessary objections.
13. Don't get sidetracked on to man's opinions, denominational differences, which TV preacher is ok, religious controversy, the apocrypha, secondary doctrines like which eschatology is correct—a pre, mid or post tribulation rapture, or what sin is worse than another sin. It's so easy to be smoke-screened or distracted to another subject. Get back to the truth of the Word of God and where they are at spiritually. Talk about Jesus – stay with the Gospel!
14. Don't put him on the defensive. Do not criticize or condemn their church, religion or opinion. That would just put a major barrier between the two of you.
15. Don't try to clean the fish before you catch it. Don't start frying the fish before he is hooked. You'll just waste your time if you try to reform the sinner. In trying to moralize them you might get them to switch vices (idols), or you might lose them altogether. Too many Christians try to get the sinner off cigarettes or beer and baptized before they are saved.
16. Don't ever be rude to the sinner!
17. Don't try raising funds (for even the best causes) when you are out witnessing to the lost. They've already experienced too many so called Christian preachers working them for their money (be different by serving them practically or giving them something [edifying or spiritually neutral] that they would find cool).
18. Don't talk to the sinner in their own home like the average preacher would preach from the pulpit. Respect their turf!
19. Don't try to make them comfortable in their lostness or try to save the person's conscience by implying that they are a good fellow, (there is only One good). You've got to get them lost before you can get them saved. Without resorting to inordinate scare-tactics, they must be made to realize that they are a lost sinner headed for hell.
20. Don't operate on last week's soul-winning experience. Get with God in prayer and win a soul to Jesus each day.
21. Don't talk too much and don't let them do all the talking (you need dialogue to hear their heart and to plant seeds), get back to the Scriptures.
22. Don't wear out your welcome. If you notice that they are becoming restless and they keep looking at their watch, make your graceful exit. In doing this, you will leave the door open for another visit.
23. Don't ever call them a liar, even if they are the biggest one that ever lived.
24. Don't take their excuses too seriously, but let their excuses go in one ear and out the other (an excuse is said to be the skin of a reason stuffed with a lie).

25. Don't be harsh and austere like some New York attorney in intense cross-examination. Show tenderness, genuine concern, mercy and love for the sinner.
26. Don't interrupt each other (if you go witnessing with another Christian). Don't allow the "silent partner" (Christian helper) take you off on some irrelevant rabbit trail. Decide which one of you will do the verbal witnessing and let the other one sit back (for the most part), smile and pray hard. Be yourself, natural, well-mannered, polite and gracious.
27. Don't try to get the sinner to have an experience just like yours. Give him the pure Gospel and get him to seek Jesus, not an emotional experience. Too many baby Christians depend on feelings.
28. Don't push the sinner beyond his/her measure. You don't want to forcibly pick green fruit. Your part may be to sow seed, or to water. The increase may come later.
29. Don't laugh at or scold the sinner for not "seeing" all at once, (for not understanding). Some are coming from quite a long distance, like me from the Roman church.
30. Don't be dogmatic over doubtful periphery things, (controversial issues).
31. Don't try to do the work of the Holy Spirit, He alone convicts.
32. Don't be obnoxious with your body language or mannerisms, be winsome and gracious.
33. Don't be in a hurry, slow down! Act comfortable and casual in their presence. In building relationships with people, fast is slow and slow is fast.
34. Don't ever embellish the statistics or your story into what's not true for more impact's sake.
35. Don't sell them on Jesus by primarily concentrating on the life-enhancing fringe benefits of being a Christian (Christ can make you happy, joyful, successful, rich... whiter teeth etc.). Tell it to them straight. The issue is there will be persecution, and trials, but there's a hell to avoid and a heaven to gain.
36. Don't let sinners pull you down, (limit your time with them, as well as with carnal Christians if you start to waiver – be with them as long as you are influencing them in a positive way, rather than visa versa).
37. Don't walk across their lawn when going door to door, or step on their flowers, or lean on their car, or look in their window, or wear out their door bell, or put your foot in their door (you might lose it).
38. Don't betray a confidence and if you make a promise, keep it! In the "hood," word gets around and if you lose your credibility, you're dead in the water.
39. Don't be known for "narking" on them, if you can avoid this. If they tell you how they have broken the law in their neighborhood, then privately encourage them to turn themselves in. If they won't and others might be in danger, see the police and your pastor as soon as possible before harm is done. A lot of times with non-threatening matters it all depends on the situation.

40. Don't feel like you must change them – leave the results up to God.
41. Don't accept a "No" too quickly if you sense their heart is saying "Yes." Back off that particular appeal and come in from another basis. For that matter, you also don't want to hear a "Yes" if their heart is saying "no" [Ye'd make him twofold more the child of hell. See Matthew 23:15].
42. Don't ever lay down your pole, just because you've become an expert with a fishing net. Jesus always made time for individuals.
43. Don't put down other people to the irreligious (even if that person or so called minister is a real jerk). It's ok to be warning people to steer clear of the spiritual arsenic in false teacher's popular false doctrine. That's important, but making the premier goal of your ministry the putting down of other ministers, ministries or churches is not wise. Sure, Paul named a few negatively-influential and we should follow his godly example, but why make enemies needlessly? We are to be fruit inspectors. Hate sin, love the sinner and remember it's the teacher's message we judge in the light of the Word, not his heart or motives. You can't say if they will go to heaven or hell, so don't cast the final judgment so to speak.
44. Don't be afraid to say, "I'm sorry I don't know, but I'll find out." Then do your homework with the Word so you will know in advance, be ready and not have to respond like that again.
45. Don't assume they can pray without your help or without some simple prayer options.
46. Don't tell them to think about it for awhile. Always ask them if they would like to receive Christ now. Attempt to draw the net without pressure, they'll tell you if they need more time.
47. Don't assume that assurance is a built-in commodity with every conversion. Leading them to this is your next responsibility.

George McCloud said, "I simply argue that the cross be raised again at the center of the market place, as well as on the steeple of the church. I'm recovering the claim that Jesus was not crucified in a Cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves, on a town garbage heap at a crossroads of politics so cosmopolitan they had to write His title in Hebrew and Latin and Greek. And the kind of place where synchs talk smut and thieves curse and soldiers gamble. Because that is where He died and that is what He died about. And that is where Christ's people ought to be and what church people ought to be about."

Preach Christ and Him crucified out where the ones are that this murder happened for. Paul said, ***"Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"*** (Phil 2:4-5). Don't just talk about yourself and what you are into. Listen carefully. Take interest in what they are interested in. Use their name as you dialogue with them. Hey, they are a person with real feelings, real dreams and wishes. God knows and uses their name. He has plans for them like He does for you. Yes, don't be fake, but begin to take interest in the unbeliever and in their non-sinful interests. Christ humbled Himself and made what was important to people (I'm not talking about the habits and things that are evil) important to Himself. Christians, He still takes interest and perfects what concerns us, as we turn to Him over and over again with our problems. Our problems are His

problems and He is big enough to deal with them. Can we relate this to unbelievers too who are struggling to pay their bills or to get their child into a school? God cares and can meet their needs as well and they have got to know this. He knows about all that is troubling them and underneath it all it is sin and self-will that is holding them back, but He can forgive and liberate them in a moment!

Jesus talked about the Father's forgiveness and how wonderful He is. He was out there where the sinners were as their Friend. They knew it. He met real needs. His primary hope was that the people could start a close relationship with the Father. Jesus kept the Main Thing the main thing and he kept to the topic of conversation on what was most helpful at the time. Jesus zealously fished for people to show us what to do and what not to do.

Here's Some Soul-winning Dos:

1. Do pray for open doors, guidance and divine appointments, trusting God to prepare their hearts in advance.
2. Do practice your three-minute testimony before hand, and use it in sharing the Gospel.
3. Do your homework! Know the felt needs of today's unbelievers in your location. Why scratch an itch that's not itching (or scratch a yesteryear's-itch)? Religionists and most preachers these days busy themselves answering questions the people are not asking.
4. Do steer the conversation back to the person of Jesus when it gets off the wall (especially with cultists).
5. Do trust God for Christ-like compassion, yoke-breaking anointing, soul-winning signs and wonders. But be normal, rather than televangelaaastic!
6. Do show greater respect to those older than you (using Sir and Ma'am are proper).
7. Do go out by twos and trade off praying for each other when the other one is talking.
8. Do learn more than just the person's name.
9. Do focus in, listening intently!
10. Do show all people respect, for they are made in the image of God and have great value.
11. Do compliment their intelligence (wisely) and try to ask questions where you will get as many "yes" answers as possible.
12. Do explain what Jesus did and said, in order for them to receive new life. Tell about Christ's death, burial and resurrection- that's the Gospel (many preachers think they are preaching the Gospel, but they fall short). Many also leave out sin, repentance and certain judgment ahead.
13. Do be innovative and creative in expressing truth in new ways, (transform traditional apologetic statements). Jesus taught in Mark 7 to avoid letting man's traditions get in the way of us obeying God.

14. Do be genuine, sincere and affirming of the good you see.
15. Do be profusely grateful for anything they might give you or do for you.
16. Do learn the language and nuances of the people you are called to.
17. Do dress like the people you are called to win ...to a degree if you feel led, but do this within the bounds of you being yourself. Some in an attempt to be really cool with younger people come off really lame.
18. Do use deodorant and breath-mints, along with clean language! If they are "slain" by bad breath or body odor, what kind of witness is that?
19. Do be a witness on the job by being the best worker your employer has! Be careful to never let your "verbal sharing" hinder your productivity on the job, or any other worker's for that matter. By the way, there's a name for that when you're on company time – it's called stealing. You can certainly concentrate on your tactful verbal delivery when you are on a break. There's also a name for people who verbally witness all the time, but don't obey or get their work done. It's called: "unemployed."
20. Do speak clearly and confidently (even if you don't feel like it). Paul told Timothy to preach the Word. It doesn't return void. Preaching is for evangelizing sinners, teaching ministry if for edifying saints. Yes, use the Word of God (you can even paraphrase it into terms and phrases that they use everyday).
21. Do find something positive to say about their children or pet that doesn't sound phony. Be honest and sincere. Be genuine and honest!
22. Do enthusiastically brag on Jesus Christ the most! They might want to divert the conversation away on to ministry controversy about some fallen TV preacher or someone, but we are not called to justify, condone or magnify ministers or their ministries. Thank God, Jesus didn't say, *"Follow my people."* Do not preach your denomination, just lift up the Lord. Some Christians talk solely about their denomination, church or pastor thinking that's somehow witnessing for Jesus. Remember not to talk about yourself more than about Christ and His finished work either. Exalt Jesus!