



# THE SEVIERVILLE SOWER

*Sowing the seed (Luke 8:11) into the hearts of mankind.*

Sevierville Church of Christ | 208 Hicks Drive | Sevierville, TN 37862 | (865) 453-8009 | [seviervillecoc.org](http://seviervillecoc.org)

January 30, 2022

## In Evangelism, Be Like Children

*Rodney Nulph*

To a divided, problematic congregation, Paul penned, “Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men” (1 Corinthians 14:20). Paul was not advocating that these brethren act childish, but rather become childlike – quite a difference indeed! To become childlike would cause these quarreling brethren (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:11) to put away their proud arrogance and then love and accept one another. Paul’s statement regarding childlikeness seems to be quite similar to the Savior’s (Matthew 18:1-4). Interesting is the fact that the answer to many congregational dilemmas can be found in the attitudes and actions of its youngest constituents (i.e., her children). Out of the mouths of babes (cf. Psalm 8:2; Matthew 21:15-16) often come encouraging, sobering words!

Regarding evangelism such is true as well. Nearly every congregation finds itself from time to time re-evaluating its evangelism efforts. Undoubtedly, the question arises, “What can we do to become more evangelistic?” “How can we win more souls?” While these questions are certainly sincere and seriously needed, often the answers are found in unlikely places. This author knows of a young man, who although is young in years, could teach most adults (myself included) some necessary helps concerning evangelism. Please allow me to share some “child-like” observations.

Firstly, this young man sees PROSPECTS. This author is often amazed at how seemingly everyone this young man meets is a prospect. However, is that not exactly what Jesus saw when He viewed the world in which He lived (cf. John 4:35; Matthew 9:37)? I wonder how often Christians fail to see each person they meet as a prospect. **Everybody houses a soul that will be somewhere in eternity** (John 5:28-29), thus everyone we meet is a prospect for Jesus Christ. Since this “treasure is in earthen vessels” (2 Corinthians 4:7), it is our distinct privilege and responsibility to use every opportunity to share this “treasure” with everyone we meet. **Everyone is a prospect!** This is certainly one “child-like” observation this author has gleaned from a particular young man.

Secondly, this young man sees POTENTIAL. It seems as though no matter what background, spiritually or physically, a person may have, this author has seen this young man note other’s potential. Just recently, as this young man viewed a person ringing a bell to collect money for a particular denomination, he said, “We should find that guy something to do for the church of Christ.” I have to admit, I was not thinking along those lines as I approached the storefront. However, this young man’s words hit me and I thought, how true! Every person we meet has potential that could be and should be being used for the cause of Christ. Obviously, zeal is not all that is needed (cf. Romans 10:2-3), but it is certainly a good place to start (cf. Acts 8:26ff). Oh, the potential that Satan is stealing from the Lord! Everyone has potential that should be used for the Lord’s kingdom! This is certainly one “child-like” observation this author has gleaned from a particular young man.

Thirdly, this young man sees PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. Almost weekly I have heard this particular young man say, “I am going to school tomorrow and tell my friends about the church of Christ.” On other occasions I have observed him in a doctor’s waiting room handing out spiritual literature to those with whom he was playing near by. I have found myself embarrassed before God Almighty because I have not always used such occasions to personally evangelize. When these situations occur, I cannot help but think of Andrew, who personally told his brother about the Messiah (cf. John 1:41), or Philip who personally told his friend (cf. John 1:45). I wonder how many sinners would be converted to Christ, if each adult were to apply this “child-like” mentality. However, sadly, we often feel it is someone else’s responsibility to evangelize or become involved. This “child-like” observation has certainly made me think seriously about those with whom I come into contact.

So then, “What can we do to become more evangelistic?” “How can we win more souls?” In emulating this particular young man, we each must see PROSPECTS, POTENTIAL and our own PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY, and in doing so, I am certain that God will give increase (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:6)! So may I exhort you dear reader, IN EVANGELISM, BE YE LIKE CHILDREN.

## Prayer Requests & Announcements

Please keep Dennis Danilchuk in your prayers as his neurologist has had to double his medication because of the severe tremors he has been experiencing.

Remember in prayer Rachel Pozdoff's daughter, Lilianna, who will be having tubes put in her ears and her adenoids removed at the beginning of February.

Shirley McKnight had successful hip replacement surgery but had some difficulties that required a blood transfusion. She is doing better now and is recovering at home.

Paul Rolen, Mary Kate's brother, is recovering from successful back surgery and will be staying with Mary Kate. He has been experiencing considerable pain during his recovery.

Remember Jerry Sutton's brother-in-law, Darrell Layman, in prayer as he is in ICU on a ventilator with COVID complications and kidney failure.

Connie Duncan had successful shoulder surgery and has been recovering at home.

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The *Great Smoky Mountain Marriage Retreat* will be held February 16–20 at both the Gatlinburg and Sevierville congregations. Sevierville members will be able to attend at our building without cost. For schedule info go to <https://smokymountainmarriage.com>.

Next month, we will begin a monthly fellowship night on February 25 at 6:30 in the fellowship hall (it will usually be held on the third Friday of each month). All are invited to come and bring friends, games, and finger foods.

### Continue to Remember...

Chris Bender, John and Helen Carr, Dennis and Marty Danilchuk, Lindsey Johnson, Shirley McKnight, Sue Moore, Lyn Morris, Joanne Roark, Shirley Yeager, Becky Duncan (Joe and Connie's daughter-in-law), Brittany Hutchcraft (Shirley Yeager's granddaughter), Adam Lane (son-in-law of Vickie Price), Harlie McClung (John and Helen Carr's 12 year-old great-granddaughter), Anita Ogle (Sherry Simms' friend), Casie Rains (friend of the Hansens), Paul Rolen (Mary Kate's brother), Frankie Simms (Scott Simms' father), Wayne Tart (Tammie Fish's brother).

**Ladies' class Thursdays at 6:15 at the Hansen's house**

**Monthly afternoon song service: Today**

**Fellowship lunch: February 6**

**Fellowship night: February 25, 6:30**

## Evangelism Materials

Extra supplies for our evangelism work are freely available in the supply room to our members. Instructional books, DVDs, and Bible study materials are available. We also have a variety of cards for our Compassion Card work.

## Weekly Assemblies

**Sunday:** Bible Study ..... 9 a.m.  
Worship ..... 10 a.m.  
Worship ..... 1 p.m.  
**Wednesday:** Bible Class ..... 7 p.m.

## Defending the Faith

*Bruce Daugherty*

Among the earliest Christian writings appearing after the New Testament respond to attacks on Christianity by pagan and Jewish authors. These writings had a two-fold aim. On one hand they wanted to prove Christians innocent of false accusations made against them. On the other, their purpose was evangelistic; they wanted to lead others out of error and into truth. In Church History, these writings are known as the Apologists.

The Apologists took their cue from the New Testament (Gamble 84). The apostle Paul stated that he "was appointed for the defense of the gospel" (Philippians 1:17 NKJV). This word for defense in Greek was *apologia*, meaning "verbal defense, answer, reply." To preach Christ included a defense of the truth. The Apologists followed the spirit of Peter as he said, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

By the second century, Christianity was winning converts from the upper levels of Greco-Roman society. Some of these converts were educated in the philosophical schools of their day and were taught the rhetorical skills of formal debate. They put their learning to good use as they answered the critics of Christianity. They were firm believers that the "pen is mightier than the sword," and they utilized writing as a way to make public defense of their beliefs and practices. Among these writers were Aristides, Just Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras and the great 3rd century apologists, Tertullian and Origen (Ferguson 17).

The Apologists proclaimed their innocence of criminal, social and political charges. They wrote that Christians were law abiding and peaceful. They prayed for the well-being of the emperor so that he might govern the empire in peace. The Apologists also boldly asserted the universality of the Christian religion. They affirmed that Christianity supplied the answer to the searching of the pagan religions and philosophies (cf. Acts 17:27-28).

The Apologists recognized the importance of a life that matched their doctrine. "Let it be understood that those who are not found living as He taught are not Christians – even though they profess with the lips the teachings of Christ" (Martyr qtd. in Bercot 128). In fact, it was this manner of life, which included how Christians faced persecution and martyrdom that would eventually lead to the triumph of Christianity over the pagan world. Tertullian boldly affirmed, "The more often we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow. The blood of Christians is seed" (428).

As we live in a world that is becoming increasingly hostile to Christianity, the writings of the Apologists can serve to inspire and stimulate Christians today to a clear and cohesive defense of beliefs and practices, if we will prepare ourselves for the task.

### Works Cited

Bercot, David W. *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998.

Ferguson, Everett. *"Church History: Early and Medieval" Way of Life Series*. Abilene: Biblical Research, 1996.

Gamble, Harry Y. *"Apologetics," Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* 2nd ed. Everett Ferguson, ed. New York: Garland, 1998.

### Elders

Randy Hansen, Robert Moore, Kevin Ruiz, and Jerry Sutton

### Deacon

Lenwood Johnson (finance)

### Preacher

Kevin Ruiz