

Ambassadors for Christ *Ephesians 6:13-20*

Topic: Evangelism

Aim: To show that we are God's ambassadors to a lost world and what that means.

1. One political appointment that many seek is as an ambassador to a foreign country.
 2. On two occasions Paul used that word to describe one of his, and the Christian's, responsibilities.
 3. Those passages are: Ephesians 6:13-20 and 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.
 4. Let us give some thought to what an ambassador for Christ is and what he does.
- I. An ambassador is a foreigner, in a foreign land. He is not a citizen of that land. His home is in another.
- A. Paul knew his citizenship was in God's kingdom, now and forever, Philippians 3:17-21.
 1. Compare 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:8.
 2. He looked for and longed for the time when he could "go home," Philippians 1:21-26, 2 Timothy 4:6-8.
 - B. We likewise are sojourners in the flesh, looking for a new heavens and a new earth.
 1. We are challenged to live in light of this truth, Hebrews 11:13-16, 1 Peter 2:11-12.
 2. But the ambassador always has the interest of his homeland in mind:

George Shultz, Secretary of State during the Reagan administration, kept a large globe in his office. When newly appointed ambassadors had an interview with him and when ambassadors returning from their posts for their first visit with him were leaving his office, Shultz would test them. He would say, "You have to go over the globe and prove to me that you can identify your country." They would go over, spin the globe, and put their finger on the country to which sent--unerringly.

When Shultz's old friend and former Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield was appointed ambassador to Japan, even he was put to the test. This time, however, Ambassador Mansfield spun the globe and put his hand on the United States. He said: "That's my country."

On June 27, 1993, Shultz related this to Brian Lamb on C-Span's "Booknotes." Said the secretary: "I've told that story, subsequently, to all the ambassadors going out. 'Never forget you're over there in that country, but your country is the United States. You're there to represent us. Take care of our interests and never forget it, and you're representing the best country in the world.'"-- Wallace Alcorn, *Leadership*, Vol. 19, no. 4.
- II. An ambassador speaks for his home country.
- A. Notice again 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.
 1. Paul is discussing the need of reconciliation. With whom? For whom?
 2. For us, with God. What does that mean?
 3. To be brought back together. What separated us? Sin, Isaiah 59:1-2.
 4. Reconciliation is a great need of the world today.
 - B. Note again Ephesians 6:20 and its context.
 1. It is in a context of confrontation with the world on behalf of the lost.
 2. Note Paul's request of the brethren.

C. We are given the assignment of being ambassadors for God in our world.

1. How are we doing?

2. Charles Malik, Lebanese ambassador to the United Nations, asked in a speech: "What has been the greatest American contribution to the rest of the world? Has it been money? Has it been food? Has it been medical skill? Has it been military might? Has it been industrial know-how?" Then he answered, "The greatest thing to come out of America has been the American missionary effort: the quiet, selfless men and women who have left the comfort and security of their homeland to bring the gospel of Christianity to less favored nations. --James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1988), p. 358.

3. Someone once asked the question concerning the sharing of faith with a lost and dying world, "If not us, who? If not now, when?"

III. An ambassador carries the honor of his country with him and presents a picture of his homeland to his host country.

A. What picture of our faith do we present to others?

1. Matthew 5:13-16.

2. Does our life bring glory and honor to God's kingdom and name?

B. How sad it would be if one soul is lost because of our actions.

1. The story is told of a preacher who moved to a large city to preach for a large congregation. The day after his first sermon at his new congregation, he went into a fast food restaurant to get a bite to eat. He paid for his food and left the restaurant. When he got to his car and drove out of the parking lot, he glanced down and counted his change and found the man had given him \$1.00 too much. He thought for a moment about what to do. At first he said, "Well, I am in a hurry, I'll just wait until I come to this restaurant again and pay back the \$1.00." But then he decided to return immediately and give back the dollar.

When he walked up to the man who had given him the extra dollar, he simply gave it back with a very brief explanation. He turned to leave the establishment. Suddenly the man behind the counter called to him and said "Aren't you the new preacher?" "Why, yes, I am." The preacher replied. "I was at services yesterday and heard your fine sermon. I gave you a dollar too much just to see if you lived what you preach."

As he left the restaurant for the second time it suddenly dawned on him that he had almost sold his influence for good for \$1.00.

2. Again, as ambassadors of Jesus, what picture do we give to others? Are we holding Him up in our everyday lives?

1. Let us carry the message of reconciliation as good ambassadors for Jesus.

2. And let us open our mouths boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.

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