

Now is Your Time to Make a Difference!
by Bob Chism,CAM

In **Mathew (NIV)**, God gave both His Great Commandment and Commission:

Great Commandment (22:37-40)

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind...Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

Great Commission (28:19-20)

Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Stewardship

The Bible contains 2,300 verses about money and possessions, including

Luke 16:11 "So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"

Proverbs 13:22"A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children" indicating that God wants us to make a difference, financially, in our family tree.

Proverbs 21:20"In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has"

Proverbs 22:7 states that "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."

Luke 14:28 "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it."

Matthew 6:24"You cannot serve both God and money".

Lifetime-God owns all things, we are His stewards. It is important that we use our assets to their fullest potential during our lifetime for self, family, business, and charitable interests.

Eternity-And at death, we must have arranged for the transfer of our assets in the most efficient and effective manner to individuals or charitable interests who will continue to use them for the Kingdom.

In **James (NIV)**, God gave basic instructions for living a disciple's lifestyle and leaving a Christian legacy:

1:1 Lead with a servant's heart

1:12 Persevere under trial

1:22 Study and obey God's word

1:26 Control our tongue

1:27 Care for those in need

1:27 Guard against worldliness

2:8 Love others as yourself

- 2:14 Match your faith with deeds
- 4:1-3 Pray with faith and pure motives
- 4:6 Maintain a humble attitude
- 4:8 Draw near to God
- 4:15 Make God's will our will
- 5:9 Complain about nothing
- 5:12 Preserve our integrity

Evangelism

Our best potential areas for Christian influence are unchurched family and friends as well as those with similar touch points, life transitions, or sweet spots.

Increase “Word of Mouth” activity: Invite at least one unchurched person per quarter (or even one person per month) to a VCG worship service, or some other church activity;

Worship service arrival and seating: Arrive early before worship service begins; sit in the middle of the row, except in situations where a person's physical limitations may require an aisle seat. This will leave aisle seats open and allows ushers to seat newcomers more easily, thus helping contribute to a more welcoming environment for guests;

Practice the “10 foot rule”: Greet any person within 10 feet in a worship service. A simple, brief introduction of yourself goes a long ways toward creating a warm, inviting atmosphere within the congregation – and makes a very positive first impression on first time guests; and

Focus on the positive: Proactively identify opportunities to celebrate how God is at work in and through the Church and focus on those things in your conversations

Keep Smiling: It's one of the best advertisements for the existence of God... it makes people wonder what you've got.

Earthly Benefits of Religious Affiliation

Jeffrey Levin postulated on the bases of his research that religion affiliations benefits health by promoting healthy behavior and lifestyles; buffering the effects of stress and isolation; strengthening the physiological effects of positive emotions; reinforcing health promoting personality styles; nurturing hope, optimism and positive expectations; activating an altered state of consciousness; and invoking paranormal means of healing others. (Levin, 2001, 13-14)

Daily Habits You Can Do

1. Study the Bible (Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth)
2. Talk to God in Pray
3. Practice Stewardship
4. Evangelize Unchurched Family and Friends

5. Make your life a Witness for Christ