



TOP HAND

Teen Wranglers

Series of Four Lessons

Taking Care of Business

Good Ground

Well Done or Wasted Time

Top Hand Life



Top Hand: Taking Care of Business

Teen Wranglers/Lesson 1

Luke 2:41-52

Introduction:

What did Jesus mean *"I must be about my Father's business"*?

Jesus was only 12 years old, yet he understood exactly what he was to do here on earth. Do you know what God wants you to do with your life? You are not too young to be thinking and praying about it, as well as doing something about it. What business does God have planned for you? Are you in preparations for it? Why not?

You can imagine what you "think" God has in mind for you to do or you may already know something about what God would have you preparing for already.

For example, you may be born into a situation where your parents are missionaries to a foreign country. You may be able to speak two or more languages or dialects from an early age because your household speaks more than one language.

You may be born into a family with a cattle ranch or with horses. If so, then you are learning in your youth to care for or train animals.

You may be born into a family that must be extremely careful with money and resources because of circumstances that is beyond your control. You do not realize it, but you can be learning compassion and understanding for people in ways that teens that have families that get "everything that they want" may not learn as easily as you.

If you have to work a part-time job out of necessity, rather than for extra money, for example, then you can become a responsible adult knowing the worth of a hard earned dollar instead of someone that throws a credit card around until you are in trouble financially. If you have the luxury of being able to work for "extra" money instead of spending it on life necessities, then be thankful for your situation as well, saving towards college and life expenses.

Whatever situation you find yourself in, instead of being proud or being resentful, think about the skill sets you are uniquely positioned to learn so that you will be able to "be about the Father's business."

What exactly was the Father's Business?

Is it clear to you why Jesus left Heaven to come to earth?

[Ask several students to tell what "business" it was that Jesus came to do.]

Most people do not really know why Jesus came. People misunderstand the ministry of Jesus.

When Jesus was 12 years old, his parents did not understand. Think about it: Mary and Joseph both had been visited by an angel! Not just any angel, but by Gabriel, the archangel. He had told them that the Messiah, the Savior of the world, was to be their son and their responsibility.

Gabriel said that He would be the "Son of the Highest" and the "Son of God."

You would think that since Gabriel had told them personally, that they would "get it." Now they had raised Him for 12 years. Jesus was sinless, never talked back, never got angry, never told a lie, and never smarted off at the mouth. You would think his parents would notice that something was different about this Son.

You would think that they should have known that this was Emmanuel "God with us." But they still had much to learn.

He had come to "be about my Father's business."

Understanding the Father's Business

Luke 2:41-52 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Jesus was born on earth with a purpose! He had a mission! He had a job to accomplish. He had to be about His Father's business.

Jesus had the unique perspective of knowing about Heaven first hand; after all, He is God in the flesh, He is the Creator along with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. So even though, he is a child of 12 years old in this Bible passage, He also is God.

From his earthly parents' perspective it would have been easy to see Him day after day and lose sight of Who was living in their house. It is easy to look back at Luke 2:41-52 and think, why didn't they treat Him like Who He was, God the Son, when they "misplaced" Jesus coming home from Jerusalem? But do we not do the same thing today?

As a born again child of God, do we not get accustomed to the presence of the Holy Spirit within us and begin to misplace our understanding of **Who** lives inside of us? We take for granted that Jesus will be "Johnny on the spot" in a moment's notice **IF** we need Him to be in spite of our circumstances.

But is the communication line open? Has sin and disobedience put a barrier between us and God? Do we think that just because we have "liberty" in Christ that He is Santa Claus?

Joseph and Mary left Jerusalem without checking to see if Jesus was with them. Since He was never a problem, they got used to having things work smoothly. He was "expected" to be with them.

We "expect" a lot of things out of God! But do we even know how He thinks? We surmise and "assume" where we have no business doing so. The Word of God, the Bible, is true. We cannot go wrong with claiming the promises of God that are given to us in the Word. But we also must see that these promises have "conditions" many times. We cannot "bargain" with a perfect and Holy God. Who are we to tell God how things ought to be?

Thankfully, we have a gracious, longsuffering Father who does know us inside and out. He is not "out to get us" when we are mistaken, but rather He is "out to save us." He will never force us to accept Him, but will give us the choice.

Setting up the Father's Business

Joseph and Mary checked with their kinfolk and found no Jesus!

They did what most parents would do: Panic! Just imagine; the parents that God trusted to take care of the young Messiah have lost Him!

They had to travel all the next day back to Jerusalem to find Him. This must have been one of the most traumatic longest days of their lives.

Once they realized they did not have Jesus, then having to travel back to find the last place they had Him, and then on top of that they searched several days in Jerusalem looking for Him.

Many times we need to go back to the last place that we had fellowship with God, too. If things are not “close” in your relationship with God, then go back to the last place that it was! Figure out what happened that made you put distance between you and Him. You will NOT have to think long and hard on this if you are a born-again Christian. Just as soon as you begin to think in the direction of how to get back into a close relationship with God, then the Holy Spirit that lives within you will “convict” and “correct” and bring to mind what the problem is.

This may mean something easy enough to fix. You may have neglected your prayer life, your Bible reading, or something easily fixable. Or this may mean something harder to “fix.” You may be convicted by the Holy Spirit to break off a relationship that is not good for you or walk away from a circle of “friends” that have taken you down a path of sin.

Whatever you are convicted of; just fix it! You will have to sooner or later or you have the choice to keep the distance between you and God’s fellowship relationship. Your choice!

Jesus did not just “pop up” with a vision to tell Joseph and Mary where He was. God did not send them an audible voice mail or a text to tell them where to search either. And notice Jesus wasn’t out looking for them as He always already knew where they were. *[In John 1:48 Jesus tells Nathaniel that He had seen him under the fig tree so we know that even though in the earthly body, Jesus had properties of God.]*

As earthly parents they are understandably upset with Jesus; **they do not understand His actions!** When they do find Him, they scold Him.

As people on this earth, we will NOT always understand God’s actions! Get used to it; accept it; and learn to TRUST HIM.

Imagine, Joseph and Mary scold the God of the universe Who had come down in the flesh to secure eternal salvation. If they had truly understood, they would never have scolded Him at all.

Jesus immediately calms them both down and then He does something very God-like: He asks them a question. He asks them why they do not understand that He would be about God, His Father’s business.

Now instead of taking on the position of King of Kings, He instead subjects Himself to the earthly parents and goes with them. You do not see Him step out of that roll as a submissive child. If any of you feel that your parents don’t deserve your respect and obedience, you could learn from young Jesus! **GOD BECAME OBEDIENT TO IMPERFECT, SINFUL PARENTS!** And even into your teen years, this is still the case, you are subject unto your parents.

Mary made note of this incident. Later on you hear Jesus’ mother telling others “whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.” She had a better understanding by the time He was an adult when she said these words at a wedding feast they both were attending. She could see the power and perfection of God in Him.

Taking Care of the Father's Business

Just what was the Father's Business anyway? What was Jesus doing here on earth?

People throw all kinds of answers at that question. Most say He was here to live a good example for us. Many say He was here to change the world view. The Jews thought He had come to overthrow the Roman government. The Pharisees [established religious group of that time in history] were afraid that He had come to take away their power as a "religion." So what was His Father's Business?

In fact, Mary, His earthly mom, probably did not fully understand until after she saw Him willingly suffer and die on the cross, then rise from the dead on the third day.

Jesus' plan from before the foundation of the world was to provide a perfect sacrifice to free us from the result of our sin. He came to provide our ONLY way to Heaven, our ONLY way of payment for our sins.

Present Salvation Here.

Discussion Points & Questions to Consider:

What was the Father's business?

How can you be about the Father's business?

What can hinder you from being about the Father's business?

There are rabbit trails that folks call the Father's Business that are not. Can you think of a few?



Top Hand: Good Ground

Teen Wranglers/Lesson 2

Matthew 13: 3-8

Introduction:

Frequently Jesus used parables to illustrate a spiritual principle. He would use an ordinary event or simple illustration to get a point across.

When Jesus was telling His disciples or others about Heaven He was very careful in how he was using these illustrated stories. Heaven is so different from what the Jews had imagined. In fact, Heaven is very different from what movies or books say about it as well. We have a lot of wrong ideas about Heaven.

[Ask students to describe Heaven.]

Let's see what the Bible has to say about some of these ideas. You can't go wrong with reading the Word of God as the reliable resource for what Heaven is like. However, traditions can lead you into all kinds of ideas that are nothing at all like the real thing.

Matthew 13:3-8

And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

The seed that Jesus is talking about in these verses fell on four different kinds of ground. Let's put this in today's terms for a minute.

*Example of Misunderstood Fact
concerning Heaven & Angels:*

*1 Corinthians 6:3 Know ye not
that we shall judge angels?*

The Born-Again will NOT become angels in Heaven when they pass this life. In fact, we will be higher in position than the angels. So it is a misnomer to say that someone has become an angel once they pass away from this earth to Heaven.

Suppose I go down to the Feed and Seed and buy 50 or 100 pound bags of seed to plant in my field at the farm. The guys at the loading dock pitch these big bags over into the back of my pickup truck.

There is always some seed that is going to leak out of the sack it seems. So at the Co-op some of the seed ends up in the parking lot.

As I drive back towards the house, suppose there is a big tear in the bag. More seed ends up shaking out of the bags into the back of the truck, then on out the tailgate and ends up on the roadway. As the traffic comes along, that seed gets scattered to the side of the road and ends up just off the shoulder in shallow ground.

Then when I finally get to the farm I might get lazy. It's just too much trouble to cultivate and prepare the ground for planting this year and besides I just don't have time to get it all done. This year I will plant a field that is ready for planting and one that is not. The field that is all grown over in weeds and tangled up in vines with thorn bushes all over it, something will grow out there, so I will just take part of the seed and throw it out there in the wind and see what will come up.

Then there is the other field at my farm. This field has been plowed already; the ground had fertilizer put on it. The soil is ready to plant in. Then I seed it.

How does this apply to the parable Jesus told?

The Way Side:

Matthew 13:4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

So the seed that fell out of the sacks as it was thrown into the bed of my pickup is like this seed. This illustrates unsaved people that hear God's Word, but want nothing to do with God or Salvation.

This is very sad. I have known some very kind people. However, when I try to tell them about Jesus, they will change the subject or tell me they don't want to talk about it.

I have also known people that have problems and are miserable. When I tell them that Jesus is ready and willing to forgive them of their sins and to help them through their problems, they decide that they would rather live a miserable life than to accept Jesus.

These folks just do not "understand" who Jesus is or what He is offering them for eternity!

If you take a stand for Jesus, then you will meet the folks that receive the Word of God just like the parking lot pavement. It lands on the parking lot, but there is no place for it to germinate and take hold. They simply are not interested. You should not be surprised when this happens, nor discouraged. Jesus told you this would be the case.

These folks will not be an excuse for not "sowing" however, as you will not know which will prosper and which will not.

Ecclesiastes 11:6 In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

Matthew 13: 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

The Stony Place

Matthew 13: 5-6 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

Here we have a group of people; many of them will be much like your school friends or maybe even some of your relatives or neighbors. You will know many people like this in your life time.

These are people that are curious about church, religion, and “the God thing” so they might even attend church. These people might even make a “profession of faith” because in their social circles, it is expected of them. However, when God doesn’t do things to suit their wishes, they get mad and go home.

They are like the seed that falls out of the tailgate of the pickup on the way home. It lands on the side of the road and might even spring up in the shallow dirt and gravel area on the shoulders or just off of the shoulder of the roadway. But just as soon as it gets too hot, they dry up.

It is common to hear from these folks:

- God never did me any favors
- I prayed for this or that, and God didn’t answer my prayers.
- I don’t want anything to do with a God that let’s this or that happen!

Matthew 13: 20-21 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

The Thorny Place

Matthew 13:7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them

These are unfortunately the majority of Christians.

These people attend church, accept Jesus as Savior [are saved] because they believe the Gospel and they turn to Christ. However, they never get entirely away from the attractions of this old world.

They know they should read their Bible and pray faithfully. But that video game, the TV, the sports teams, the ranch rodeo competitions, the new “girlfriend” or “boyfriend” doesn’t go to church and a dozen other “things” are so much more fun to them.

If you give these folks a choice between going to church on Sunday or a Sunday vacation at Six Flags or the beach, they would make the wrong choice. Eventually they drop out of church or just go once in a while at best.

There is nothing at all amiss with taking time off. Jesus even went apart from His earthly ministry from time to time to refresh Himself while living in an earthly body. **But it was never so that He could get away from the Father or His will.** He was always about fellowship with the Father, not about distancing Himself from Him.

These folks are like that seed that is thrown out into the field that is not prepared to receive it. There are thorns, weeds, and no fertilizer out there to assist in the growth of the seed. There may be some plants spring up; but they are not going to be healthy and bear fruit and definitely not “much fruit.”

We have known young people that at your age are “on fire” to do the right things for God.

They get saved, they grow in grace while they are growing up in a controlled environment, but just as soon as they step out into the world and have the glitter of the world dangled in front of them, they are choked and bogged down in the allure of the secular things and God’s will goes on the back burner.

The allure of pleasing the “friends” takes precedence over pleasing God.

It becomes just “easier” to let the relationship with God slide along because you do not SEE Him every day.

This is a sad thing because this life is short at best. How much better is it to live for our eternal Home and to bring others to Christ than it is to accumulate pseudo friends and “stuff” in this temporary life.

The relationship with God is closer when YOU SEEK HIM daily, not when you seek the world daily.

You will become an “average” Christian if you decide to or you will become a Christian that thrives and brings forth much fruit if you decide to. It’s a choice YOU make.

Matthew 13:22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

Good Ground!

Matthew 13:8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

These people hear the Gospel, accept Jesus as Savior, and realize that their permanent address has changed from that place called Hell to the place called Heaven.

With that understanding, they want to tell all of their friends, family, and everyone else about Jesus and His gift of salvation.

Every place they go they want to tell people about Heaven. They want others to go to Heaven with them. They want to tell people how easy it is to turn to Christ and how wonderful it is to live each day knowing that, no matter what happens, you will go to Heaven, it's your final Home!

These seed are like the ones in my feed sack that get planted on good ground that has been turned, fertilized, prepared to receive the planting. These seed produced fruit!

Matthew 13: 23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

What's your landing spot?

You are one of these types of seed. Where do you want to land? Think about your life and how is it going for you? Are you bringing others to church with you so they can be saved and grow in the Lord/ Or are you like the other seeds?

It is so easy to put the thoughts of eternity in Heaven or that place called Hell out of our minds because it seems so far away, but we really don't know how long it will be. He may come back today. Or your time on earth may be finished sooner than you plan.

We should treat each day as the day Jesus will return so that it will remind us to tell others about Jesus.

Suggested Discussion Topics:

Is there a way for the "sower" to know which is fertile ground and which is more like a parking lot?

Is the "sower" to withhold the Gospel message just because he thinks he is sowing on unfertile soil?

Who gives the increase?

How can we be more effective "sowers?"



Top Hand: Well Done or Wasted Time

Teen Wranglers/Lesson 3

*Luke 15: 11-19; Ephesians 1:4;
1 Corinthians 12:1,4,8-10;
Romans 12: 6-8*

Purchase two inexpensive identical watches. Conceal them from the students. During the lesson you will need to pick a student to use in the illustration. You will use one watch to illustrate a point; then the second one you will give to the student you have chosen to use.

There is a Plan:

Every person here is included in God's eternal plan. In fact, you were in His plan over 6000 years ago.

Ephesians 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Before Adam and Eve, you and I were in God's plan. God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit laid the plan for the Son of God to be the Lamb. The salvation plan that gives you the choice and enables you to have the capacity of becoming a Child of God was put into motion. Not everyone will accept Jesus as the sacrificial lamb, but it is offered freely nonetheless.

Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

The opportunity was prepared in advance so that you would have the choice to be born-again into God's Family if you accept Him.

Additionally, provision was made and planned so that you can participate in this Family in reaching others to add to the Family. God equipped the Christian for whatever service He wants you to do.

Romans 12:6-8 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

Therefore, you can't tell God that you CANNOT be a soul-winning Christian or that you CANNOT live a godly life.

1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

He has given you all the will power to do just that. It's your choices that can get in the way from you becoming all that God has prepared and promised you.

Nothing in the scripture says that you have to finish high school or college before you are given a particular gift of service. God wants to start using you today and keep on using you in His service all of your life.

Proverbs 20:11 Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.

God makes a clear statement. He is interested in the details in your life! It sounds like each of us is supposed to put our talents and gifts to work early.

However, some of you see all of the "FUN" this world offers and say "I will go do my thing and have fun for now; then I will serve God later."

These may not be your exact thoughts, but nonetheless, that may be how you choose to live your life.

Here is one of Jesus' parables. It illustrates how God thinks about such a selfish attitude.

Luke 15:11-19 And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

The son wanted to have all of the great stuff he saw in the commercials and he did not want to wait. Then he discovered, the hard way, that all of the world's promises didn't make him happy.

Instead, this old world robbed him of everything. He went back to his father in shame with nothing to offer him, except a head hug low. Let me illustrate this.

There is a Purpose:

[Pick a Student that you know well enough that they can handle a little drama; someone that trusts you but will also “react” a little.]

[Have the student come forward and start to hand them a GIFT WATCH still in the packaging. But STOP short and tell them before you give it, you’d like to check out the warranty.]

Before I give you the watch, I want to check out the warranty on it. [Bring out a bowl of water.] Let’s see if it’s water proof. [Dip the watch in the water and soak it well.] [Take out the watch; then comment that it is still working.]

It looks like the time on it may be a “little fast.” [Throw it against the wall.] Nope, it flew at the right speed!

The warranty says it’s SHOCK resistant. [STOMP on it.]Oops! Looks like a few parts didn’t hold up, but, hey, it still runs.

The warranty says it’s IMPACT resistant. [Take out a hammer and beat it to pieces.] I have always wanted to do that and see if the package claims were right.

Well, now that I have checked this watch out; I am through, here you go, it’s yours now.

What’s the matter? It’s not worth much of anything anymore?! EXACTLY!

In the parable we read, God was telling us this very thing. Wasted time, a wasted used up life is somewhat like this used up watch. It is possible to fix it up, band aid it up, and it might run again; but it will never be like it was before when it was in brand new condition.

There is a Promise:

We have worked with Kids’ Ministry for 40 years. We have seen too many lives that have turned out just like this watch. When some of the grown up kids finally figure out that God’s Word really is True, they are so messed up. You can’t go back and undo what has been done.

Yes, you can get forgiveness, but wasted time cannot be reclaimed. Many results of sinful choices cannot be undone.

Kids that snuck Dad’s booze out and wound up alcoholics as well as young girls that confused a boy’s physical attentions with love and ended up raising a child when she was alone are just two examples.

Wasted years! Wasted Time!

The son in the parable stands before his dad and says “ I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” I took the inheritance you gave me and wasted it.

Now all I have to offer you is what’s left; broken pieces.

Be assured that God will patch up our broken lives and use what is left. But you will be limited by the damage that you caused.

If I patch up this watch and got it working again, you could still tell it was a mess. You would prefer the new watch.

[Bring out the second identical watch. Offer the two watches to the student and let him choose which watch to accept.]

Why not start serving God with all your heart while you are young and still like the new watch? If you will take this advice, you not only will please the Lord, you will also not have to go through the misery of a broken life.

God is looking for you to say: Here am I. At your age, you are the most pliable; you have fewer scars to deal with than the adults do.

This lesson/message has been to people that are already saved [born-again.] Heaven is your eternal home as promised by God.

But if you have never accepted Jesus as Savior, then you can't even begin to live your life until you have life.

Present Salvation Here.



Top Hand: A Top Hand Life

Teen Wranglers/Lesson 4

1 Samuel 17:29; James 5:20; Proverbs 11:30

There is a Cause:

Most every person here wants to live a TOP HAND LIFE.

You want to be successful at whatever you do. If you take a test at school, you'd like to make a good grade. If you compete at sports or you play a musical instrument or if you can draw beautiful pictures, you would like to do well. If you are into roping then you want a great roping horse that you have control over.

It's a natural thing to want to excel or do well. There was a young cowboy in our Cowboy Church in Texas that was an unusually good roper while still in elementary school. He won saddles on a regular basis. He signed everything "The Champ." His goals were clear.

Adults like to feel like they have accomplished something in life as well. A good paying job or a nice car or home are typical goals that your parents may have in mind when they think of excelling.

While these are all good things and good goals there is actually something that is far more lasting and in fact, is eternal, lasts forever, that is more urgent than anything I have just mentioned.

King David summed up that thought in this Bible passage: *1 Samuel 17:29 And David said, ...Is there not a cause?*

Ask yourself this question: Is there not a cause?

People can get excited about all kinds of causes. Some are very good ones: Relay for Life; Feeding the Homeless; Fund Raisers for someone with a serious illness. Humanitarian needs abound! Jesus took out time to heal the sick, raise the dead, and sometimes just stopped and said a kind word of encouragement.

All of these things are good. But in the big picture, in the timeline of forever, they really are just a dot on the timeline. The bigger picture is not did you "lend a hand" for the temporal, although that is very important, but did you "lend a hand" in pointing someone to the Eternal.

While Jesus took care of humanitarian needs, He did not shy away from His bigger purpose for being on the earth. He did not come to simply live a good example! He came to be the Lamb of God and give His life a ransom so the payment, the way to Heaven is paid for and available for the asking.

You and I have a bigger purpose as well.

There is a Call:

Do we really believe God's Word? Or does God's Word seem like a book of comic strip type heroes? Or maybe like action hero movies? Are the Bible characters real to you? Or just stories? Do you know the facts and details of Bible Stories that you have heard for so long, but you do not get that they are TRUE stories?

We are supposed to draw from the experiences of the people God took the time to make sure we knew about! God expects more out of His people than for them to accept Him as Savior then sit down and wait for the Rapture of the Church. What does He expect?

James 5:20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

Proverbs 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

Mark 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

He expects us to share the Good News that He is the way, the truth, and the life. He expects us to live a life that is a light in a dark world. He expects us to be His Kids and to act like His Kids.

For example, you are at a ball park. You talk to other people about "ball stuff." The conversation is generally about the ball games and so forth. So when one of your buddies has a good day and hits a homer, then he says it's the best day of his life. There you go, opportunity to tell him that there is a day coming that will be greater than this one, the day that your Jesus comes back to earth. Whoa! Is that scary? Will he think you are a nut?

Maybe, he will. So what? Maybe it was your opportunity to tell him about Jesus if he is open to listen. You don't know until you try.

When your church has a special event going on like a weekend retreat, for example, do you invite others to come with you? Have you thought about having a sleep-over at your house for a bunch of your friends on a Saturday night, and then you all come to church together on Sunday? What are you doing to bring others to hear the Gospel of Jesus?

There is a Cure:

The "Woman at the Well" got saved. Did she have to go to Bible College before she brought others to Jesus?

Did she go to a Workshop or Seminar or Special Classes before she brought others to Jesus? Did she go through 14 weeks or 12 steps of training? Did she memorize 35 verses of the Bible?

No, not at all, she ran to people she knew and said: Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?

She wasn't ashamed to talk about her change! She didn't worry about her past, she didn't care that she didn't know all the answers.

Helping the Student to Understand the Gospel:

Prepare in advance smaller versions of the Salvation Flip-Cards/Pages that we promote using each time you have presented Salvation in our materials. The suggested pages are available on our website for free download or you can make your own. Card prep is as follows using the verses indicated in their entirety.

Make four Flip pages; then staple together at the upper left-hand corner for easy page changes.

#1. Rom 3:23 For all have sinned.....

#2. Rom 6:23 The wages of sin

#3. Luke 13: 3 I tell you.....except ye repent....

#4. Rom 10: 13 For whosoever shall call....

Distribute the miniature flip-book to students. Then show them how to tell others about Jesus with the cards.

An alternative: Choose a clear presentation "salvation tract"; distribute and explain how to use it one on one.

Encourage the students to prayer about ONE person this week that they can share the tract or the Gospel with. Then have them come back and share the experience.

Talk about ways they can accomplish this task.

She was so excited that Jesus would forgive her sins that she wanted to tell everyone that theirs could be forgiven also!

Daniel 12:3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.