

## Throw Out The Lifeline (C.C. Johns)

Intro. There is one person on the bank of a river who is observing a drowning drifter who is headed for the falls of the river. He would be wrong not to try to help the other person who is being carried swiftly toward a certain death. It would be so terrible for him if he failed to throw a lifeline to the one who is about to lose his life.

As Christians we have the “Lifeline of the Gospel.” We are in a similar position as the one who is observing the one who is about to lose their life. Only the need is for us to rescue someone who is about to lose their soul. The Gospel – Lifeline for the soul of man has been “entrusted to earthen vessels.” It is in our hands. It is in your hands. What are we doing with it? What are you going to do with it?

One thing we fail to stop and consider is that the Christian himself (or herself) is a Lifeline to those who are lost in sin. Lost in the world. We are a lifeline by reason of our faith, ---our works, --our example in our daily life. For us to fail to use the lifeline that is in our hands, and at our disposal, to save someone is wrong. It is terrible. It is to ignore the Biblical Fact that we are saved in order that we might save others. It ignores the fact that our responsibility as a Christian is to do our works before men, not that we may boast, but that those who are lost might see our works. And in seeing how we live and conduct ourselves, be inspired to know more about the hope that lies within us. In this manner we become a lifeline to those who are lost and outside of Christ. Each and everyone of us as Christians, has a responsibility to lead others to Salvation. If we don't do that, how can we “hide a multitude of sins?”

**I. We Need to be ready with the Lifeline.** Just like a lifeguard has been charged to be on the lookout for those are about to drown, so we should be on the lookout for those who are about to lose their soul.

**A. One reason that most Christians don't engage themselves** in the work to try to save souls, is because they are **“TOO BUSY!”**

**1. They are oblivious to the fact that God usually chooses “Busy Men” and “Busy Women” to serve Him.**

- a. **Moses—He was busy watching the flocks. Yet, God chose Him to be His spokesman for God's people. He chose Moses to be a Lifeline to those who were seemingly lost in the bondage of slavery. He chooses us to be a Lifeline to those who are “LOST.” We cannot afford to be “too busy” to follow and do God's Will!**
- b. **Paul on the road to Damascus – He was “too busy” to do anything but persecute those who were Christians, and throw them into Prison. But God called him to be a witness –a lifeline to the Gentile world. He calls you and me to be a lifeline to those who are lost. We cannot afford to be “too busy” to be a lifeline and “DO GOD'S WILL.”**

2. **According to Titus 3:1—“we are to be ready to every good work.”**
  - a. That includes being a Lifeline to those who are lost.
  - b. If we are not willing to be that, there we are opposed to God and His will.
  - c. His Will should be our will. We should want to be a lifeline, because that is God's will for each of us.
3. **According to 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:15—“To be ready always to give to every man that asketh you, a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.”**
  - a. We cannot do that if we are not willing to be a lifeline to others.
  - b. God wants each of us to be a lifeguard to those who are lost. We cannot do God's Will if we are not will to be a lifeline, or at least be willing to “throw out the lifeline” of the Gospel!
4. **Rev. 3:2—“Strengthen the things which remain.”**
  - a. What things? Souls that are lost.
  - b. That includes us becoming a lifeline for others.
5. **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:6—“For I am ready to be offered...”**
  - a. Paul was ready, he wanted to be a lifeline to others.
  - b. He wanted to save as many souls as he could, even if it meant losing his life for the sake of the Gospel.
  - c. And remember—**“be an imitator of me, even as I am an imitator of Christ.”** Cannot be imitator if we're not a lifeline to others.

## II. We Have Responsibility to be a lifeline to the Sick.

- A. Jesus and the Apostles were a lifeline to the Sick
  - 1. Jesus healed the sick.
  - 2. The Apostles healed the sick.
  - 3. They were a lifeline to those who were sick and afflicted.
- B. Even James says that we are to **"pray for the sick." (James 5:14-15)**
  - 1. If we are righteous and doing just that, then we become a lifeline to those who are sick.
  - 2. Jesus said that those who are well are not in need of a Physician, but the Sick are those who need a Physician.
    - a. Why can't we get it into our "minds" that we are a lifeline to those who are "Spiritually Sick?"
    - b. We are saved in order that we might save others.
    - c. **THINK**: If we're "too busy" to do that and be a lifeline, what if God were "TOO BUSY" to "SAVE" us?
- C. **Matthew 25:36---** **"We will be Judged on that Basis."**
  - 1. Sometimes we use "Sickness" as an excuse to be a lifeline.
  - 2. We can't go everywhere else but we can't come to church.
  - 3. We're "Too Busy" in our job or worldly affairs to stop and think that God expects us to be a lifeline to those who're sick, ---> **THOSE LOST!**

## III. Be a Lifeline to the hungry (See **Matthew 25:36**).

- A. **May be something as simple as helping a deceased brother's family get relief (Welfare). Throw them a lifeline.**
  - 1. **Be hospitable – Commanded (Rom. 12:13)—"Distributing to the necessity of the saints, given to hospitality."**
  - 2. **James 1:27—"Visit the fatherless and the widows..."**
  - 3. The Church of Christ gained official status in Poland by sending truckloads of food to the hungry.
  - 4. CC Johns—"Surplus in church treasuries, if not ear-marked for building expansion, etc., should be put to use for benevolence, evangelism, local exhortation, not to just draw interest, but also to "enrich" our Preaching and Teaching." It must be used to enable us to be a lifeline to those who are hungry spiritually—those lost!

## IV. Be a Lifeline to our Children.

- A. Set a proper example.
  - 1. "Train up a child in the way..."
  - 2. Such training is a lifeline to our kids.
- B. **Eph. 6:1-4—"Bring them up in the nurture and admonition..."**
  - 1. Take them to S.S and worship—don't just send them.
  - 2. If we don't go to church because we have "company" how can we be a lifeline to our children?
- C. Give them the right aim in life. Be for them a moral compass.
  - 1. "And when they are old, they will not depart from it..."
  - 2. **Psalm 127:4—"As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth..."**
    - a. The target is heaven.
    - b. Not just their "career" in life.
- D. Eunice and Lois were a lifeline to Timothy (See 2 Tim. 1)
  - 1. Parents giving children right direction in life.
  - 2. Have given them that which is worth far more than anything of a material nature.

## V. Be a Lifeline to our Brother.

- A. Don't be a mote hunter.
  - 1. Don't look for just the bad in them. We are guilty too!
  - 2. Encourage, Exhort, Set the right example.
- B. Responsibility to pray for brother who is in sin. (**1 John 5:16**)
  - 1. We can be a lifeline when we pray for them.
- C. We can be a lifeline by forgiving them 7 X 7 (**Lk 17:3; Mat 18:15-17**)
- D. Love the brotherhood—**1 Peter 2:17.**
- E. **2 Peter 1:7—"...add godliness to brotherly kindness.."**
- F. After withdrawal of fellowship...admonish him as a brother(**2 Th 3:15**)

## VI. Be a Lifeline to the Lost.

### A. Go or send—Matthew 28:19.

1. The how is left up to man-just do it!(CC Johns)
2. Walk, car, boat, plane, etc...

### B. Personal work—Evangelism.

1. Knock on doors.
2. Hand out tracts.
3. Talk over backyard fence—neighbor.
4. Contacts made in everyday workplace, or in public place.

### C. Be a missionary or send one.

1. Many more are willing to go than have support.
2. Make an honest effort to reach the lost.

### D. Cannot be a lifeline to the lost if:

1. We're "too busy" to do some of these things.
2. We prefer to "sit back" and let the elders or the preacher do it!
3. We are "afraid" to use money in treasury to reach the lost.

## VII. Be a Lifeline to All.

### A. Warn all—Colossians 1:28.

1. "Whom we preach, warning every man, teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."
2. Persuade all that we can—2 Cor. 5:11. "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..."

### B. Encourage—1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 5:14.

1. "Now we exhort you brethren, 'warn them that are unruly,' comfort the feeble-minded (faint-hearted) support the weak, be patient toward all men.
2. Be that lifeline that reaches out to every man in every way.