

# THE SOUTHWESTERNER



Home of the Southwest School of Bible Studies

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## INTRODUCING A PERSONAL EVANGELISM SEMINAR ROB L. WHITACRE

**A**re you ready for an evangelism boot camp? There was a time in our not so distant past when these types of seminars were being held all over our nation. Christians carried film strips (Jewell Miller) in the back of their trunks and went house to house teaching anyone who would listen the Gospel of Christ. Now most of our training is inwardly focused and are geared towards keeping the saved, saved. Success is seen in how many sister congregations attend our events and rarely on how many non-Christians attend. A few years ago, a brother called and invited us to come do this seminar. He said, "Brother Rob, we have not had an evangelism seminar in central Texas in over 20 years." We are at a crisis stage for churches of Christ in America, but it is not too late.

What is a personal evangelism seminar? It is an effort to train the saved to teach the lost. We will spend time equipping Christians with a soul winning strategy. We will relay stories of real people who are coming to know their Savior and provide you the simple principles used to get them into a Bible study and help them obey the Gospel. We will spend time with elders and preachers and help them develop a winning strategy for the local congregation.

What can you do? First, please attend every session as each builds upon the other. Second, come ready to learn with Bible in hand, and ready to take notes. This is not just a lecture. It will be both principle and practice. Third, please be praying about souls to save. Since this focuses on training Christians how to reach the lost, it is not recommended that you invite your non-Christian friends and family. After being trained, you will have plenty of opportunity and a working method to reach them.

This seminar is having a great affect upon congregations. Hundreds of souls have been saved in just the past year, and if we all work together, and follow the Great Evangelist (Jesus), many more souls will be saved. The Lord is depending upon you for this evangelistic effort to be successful. The Gospel is not a passive process. It is an active process that will work when we are willing to work it. Below is a schedule of topics. I will be willing to answer any of your questions and materials will be available to help equip you with all the tools needed.

### Monday

**7:00 PM—Let's Get Motivated:** This session will relay several personal accounts of conversions. It has worked and is still working.

**8:00 PM—Let's Stay With The Message:** This session focuses on the power of the Word. We must put the Bible back into Personal Bible studies!

### Tuesday

**7:00 PM—Let's Talk About the Manner:** How do you get into a Bible Study? We will look at Jesus and how our Master Evangelist was able to develop such a large following.

**8:00 PM—Let's Not Argue About the Method:** It's time to introduce, "Back to the Bible" and demonstrate how to use it along with charts from my PE workbook

### Wednesday

**7:00 AM – Let's Apply The Model:** In this session we discuss difficult situations and take your

questions. How does this work in my world?

*8:00 PM—Let's Make the Application:* Rob presents a congregational plan to help elders and preachers implement this program.

**Every Saint on this of Heaven, must be concerned about every sinner on this side of Hell.**

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## THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IN THREE WORDS

Ronnie Scherffius

From one of the greatest chapters of inspiration is found one of the most well known passages of all Scripture: “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor. 13:13). Yet, this is not the only occasion in which Paul links together this timeless triplet of Christian virtues. To the churches in Galatia Paul wrote,

For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love (Gal. 5:5-6).

To the saints in Colosse Paul would write:

We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven (Col. 1:3-5).

So critical are these invaluable virtues to the Christian life that the Hebrews writer (Heb. 10:22-24) and the apostle Peter (1 Pt. 1:21-22) also highlighted their significance to an enduring Christian life.

But the letter to the Corinthians was not the first occasion in which Paul speaks of love, hope, and faith. Writing to the saints in Thessalonica, we find not only Paul's emphasis on faith, hope, and love but three words coupled together with these virtues which provide a deeper insight into the life of our first century brothers and sisters in Thessalonica and to a very real degree sums up the Christian life in three words: work, labor, and patience (i.e., endurance).

In the opening of what many scholars believe to be Paul's first inspired letter the apostle expresses his deep gratitude for the faithfulness and enduring life of his Thessalonian brethren:

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father (1 Thess. 1:2-3).

In these three short phrases the Christian life is both summed up and yet deeply discovered to be a life of working, laboring, and enduring. In order for us fully to comprehend how these illustrate our lives as Christians, let us note each of them in turn.

The Christian life is portrayed as a work of faith. The centuries old debate of the Christian's responsibility to work in order to obtain/maintain his salvation vs. salvation by faith only without any responsibility on the part of man is forever answered in this inspired expression. The life of a Christian is a life of working, which work is motivated by faith. James casts similar light on the debate writing,

What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith [alone (v 17) - RLS] save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone (James 2:14-17).

A faith that is without the works of obedience is nonexistent, and yet one who is working in the cause of King Jesus who has no faith is as one walking on a treadmill—much exertion with no progress!

The Greek term translated work in this passage is found in the New Testament nearly two-hundred times and is translated as work(s), deeds, doing, and labors. It is used in the the sense of secular employment (Mark 13:34) as well as working for the cause of Christ (Acts 13:2; 14:26; 1 Cor. 15:58; Eph. 4:12; 1 Thess. 5:13). The term is used of good works (Mt. 5:16; Acts 9:36; 2 Cor. 9:8; 1 Tim. 5:10; 2 Tim. 3:17; Heb. 10:24), evil/ungodly works (2 John 11; 2 Pt. 2:8; John 3:19ff.; Jude 15), works of darkness (Rom. 13:12; Eph. 5:11), works of the law (Rom. 9:32; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10;), miraculous of works (Matt. 11:2; Luke 24:19; John 5:20; 7:3), and the works of God in creation (Heb. 1:10; 4:3). Yet, on every

occasion the work refers to doing and is defined in Greek Lexicons as “anything done or to be done; a deed, work, action.” [MOUNCE GREEK- ENGLISH DICTIONARY]

The work of the Thessalonians is clearly demonstrated in Paul’s statement:

For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing (1 Thess. 1:8).

The Christian life is a life of work and a life of work that springs forth from faith in Jesus Christ!

The Christian life is characterized as a labor of love. The term labor used here is not simply repetitive to emphasize work or action in which the Christian is engaged for the kingdom, but rather carries the sense of pain. This is laboring with trouble—the Christian life filled with trials, tribulations, and persecution which one willingly accepts because of his deep love for Jesus Christ and His sacrifice. Luke records the tribulations the Thessalonian Christians endured:

But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people (Acts 17:5),

and Paul high lighted them in this epistle:

And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction... For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own country- men, even as they have of the Jews (1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14).

Christians in Judaea were stoned, beaten, and cast into prison. So great, in fact, was the persecution that the saints were scattered throughout land (Acts 8:1-4).

Nevertheless, the trouble endured by the people of God will be rewarded with peace and rest:

Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us (2 Thess. 1:6-7).

Consider also how John connects the work of faith and the labor of love of the Christian life:

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours [trials/tribulations endured for their faith]; and their works [obedient works/deeds motivated by faith] do follow them (Rev. 14:13).

The work of faith of the Christian life which brings about labors joyfully accepted by one’s love for Jesus will one day bring great reward for the people of God! Even as our Lord instructed:

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you (Mt. 5:11-12).

The Christian life is maintained by an enduring hope. How is it possible for one to endure the challenges, sacrifices, and even persecutions that may come as we strive faithfully to live the Christian life? How is it possible for one to endure being forsaken and cast off by their own family? (Mt. 10:34-37) What can serve as anchor for our faith when we are mocked and ridiculed for our beliefs and practices as a Christian? (Acts 17:32; 26:24) Where do we draw the strength to hold our heads up high when we are held in contempt and despised as fools by the world? (Psalm 123:4; Prov. 23:9) Is it not our enduring, steadfast hope of eternal life that we have in Christ?! Christians have been born again

unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you (1 Pt. 1:3-4).

And because this hope is sure and steadfast (Heb.6:19) founded upon the immutability of God, it serves as an anchor for our souls!

The summing up of the Christian life! It is working the works of God through faith in His Son; it is toiling while joyfully accepting the trials and tribulations because of the love we have for our Savior who first loved us; it is a life lived daily with an enduring hope of an eternal life in heaven that is our earnest expectation without doubting. Are you living the Christian life?

*Midtown Messenger, The Midtown Church of Christ Weekly Bulletin, March 25, 2018.*

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## Record for the Week of April 7, 2019

Bible Class .....	142
Morning Assembly .....	178
Evening Assembly .....	156
<b>Iglesia de Cristo</b>	
Morning Assembly .....	N/A
Contribution .....	\$N/A

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### PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

**Charlene Johnson** is now in Legacy Oaks Rehab in Kyle.

**Everette Clare**, father of **Elaine Hopkins**, has been moved to West Oaks Rehab Room 312 B.

**Jan Smith** is in West Oaks Rehab Room 311.

**Health Concerns:** Lois Ewald, Diana Rodriguez, Bud Wade, Clarence Whetstone, Angela Young.

**Shut-ins:** Jeannette Hansen, Rosemary Garrett, Jon Little, Bobby Johnson, Elvira Martinez, Ginny Oswald, Jan Smith.

**Others:** Sonny & Lee Barr, Bill Ellison, Bonnie Gomer, CK Holt, Nell McCown, Bill & Nancy Ponds, Cheri Sarten, Kay Westbrook, Gib Young.

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Charles Cauley  
Brett Gerhardt  
David Locke  
Bill Siebert

### Preachers:

Cody Westbrook

### SOUTHWEST SCHOOL OF BIBLE STUDIES

Interim Director: Steven Lloyd

**WORSHIP AND STUDY OPPORTUNITIES:** Sunday, Bible Classes 9:30 am, Worship 10:30 am and 6:00 pm  
Tuesday, 10:00 am (September-May), Men's and Ladies' Bible Classes | Wednesday, Bible Classes, 7:00 pm  
**RADIO PROGRAM** – *The Word of Life* | Sunday, 7:30 am | KLBJ, 590-AM and 99.7 FM | online at [swcofc.org/word-of-life](http://swcofc.org/word-of-life)