

“TWO BY TWO”

Bryan Matthew Dockens

When Jesus first dispatched the twelve to preach the gospel in Israel, He *“began to send them two by two”* (Mark 6:7). Afterward, *“He appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two”* (Luke 10:1). Working in pairs remained normal for preachers thereafter, as exemplified with Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:25-30; 13:2), and even when that pair decided to part, each kept to the habit, with Barnabas and Mark working together and Paul and Silas working together (Acts 15:39-40). There is great value in laboring side by side for the cause of the gospel.

Two are more effective than one. *“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken”* (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). When a preacher has company as he goes forth with the word of God, there is someone who can remember a verse he may have forgotten. If he is canvassing a neighborhood, there is a companion to record which homes were visited and to gather contact information for follow-up visits, so he can focus on presenting the gospel. It can be helpful to have another set of eyes when treading into dangerous neighborhoods simply for safety’s sake.

It is good to have witnesses. Inspiration is emphatic on the point that *“By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established”* (Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:16; 2nd Corinthians 13:1). One who goes alone is less protected against false accusations which sometimes arise (Matthew 26:60; Acts 6:13). Sometimes, the issue is not dishonesty, but confusion; for instance, when a student learns that baptism really is for remission of sins, not merely an outward sign of an inward grace, they can attempt to apply that new knowledge retroactively to make a previous baptism somehow relevant, but having two witnesses remind them of what they said about baptism earlier in the discussion can confirm the facts of the situation.

Preachers are not required to work in pairs, but whenever possible, it is prudent to do so.

“WE PERSUADE MEN”

Bryan Matthew Dockens

As the brethren and I go through Belén, knocking on doors to offer Bible studies with our neighbors, we mostly face rejection, which is to be anticipated. One of the more common declinations we hear is, “No thanks; I’m Catholic.” This response implies the person at the door is aware that we are not Catholic. We are not wearing any conspicuous attire that could be considered a uniform. We don’t have badges on our shirts, identifying who are. We haven’t offered any cards or literature. All we’ve said is our first names and that we are looking for people who want to understand the Bible better, and that is enough information for Catholics to know we aren’t Catholic.

We who go door to door, carrying nothing but Bibles, and offering to study with whomever may be interested are in the business of persuasion. Paul declared, *“We persuade men”* (2nd Corinthians 5:11). Indeed, that is what he was consistently portrayed doing (Acts 18:4; 19:8, 26; 26:28; 28:23).

There is a certain denomination, though, that does not rely on persuasion. Rather, in times past, they relied on conquest, forcibly converting people who were subjugated at the point of a sword. Contrariwise, Jesus asserted, *“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here”* (John 18:36). And Paul expounded, *“We do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ”* (2nd Corinthians 10:3-5). The armed imposition of faith is no faith at all.

Since proselytizing by violence has fallen out of public favor, they have relied on tradition to retain membership. The idea is that what they’ve always done is good enough and ought not be questioned, but Jesus asked, *“Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?”* (Matthew 15:3). Likewise, Paul warned about being cheated through tradition (Colossians 2:8).

Neither force of might nor unquestioning tradition come close to persuasion and persuasion is the fulfillment of the great commission. *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned”* (Mark 16:15-16).

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

**Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.**

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"Being taken for granted is one of the highest compliments you could ever receive. It means you do your job well with consistency, dependability, and no fanfare. The fact that no one seems to notice or praise you for it is a testimony to your steadfastness. When no one notices your hard work, rather than becoming bitter, be thankful that God has granted you health and strength to serve Him by serving others. God has noticed and will reward you in due time, even if humans don't."

– Israel Wayne

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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NOAH'S GRANDSON GOMER WAS A REAL PERSON

"Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood. The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras" (Genesis 10:1-2). The first of Noah's grandsons mentioned is Gomer. Ezekiel locates the early descendants of Gomer, along with Togarmah (a son of Gomer), in the north quarters (Ezekiel 38:6). In modern Turkey is an area which in New Testament times was called Galatia. The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus records that the people who were called Galatians or Gauls in his day (c. AD 93) were previously called Gomerites (Antiquities 1:6:1). They migrated westward to what are now called France and Spain. For many centuries, France was called Gaul, after the descendants of Gomer. Northwest Spain is called Galicia to this day. Some of the Gomerites migrated further to what is now called Wales. The Welsh historian Davis records a traditional Welsh belief that the descendants of Gomer "landed on the Isle of Britain from France, about three hundred years after the flood." He also records that the Welsh language is called Gomeraeg (after their ancestor Gomer). Other members of their clan settled along the way, including in Armenia. The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah (Genesis 10:3). Encyclopedia Britannica says that the Armenians traditionally claim to be descended from Togarmah and Ashkenaz. Ancient Armenia reached into Turkey. The name Turkey probably comes from Togarmah. Others of them migrated to Germany. Ashkenaz is the Hebrew word for Germany.

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