

How to Share Your Faith Pt.2

Evangelisms Greatest Enemy

Last week we began our series and looked at the attitude of evangelism. We looked at the example of Samson, an arrogant man full of pride, and we gathered lessons in regards to his actions and saw that if we were to approach evangelism the same way that Samson would have approached it, we would all be in trouble. Samson's pride eventually was his downfall, yet at the end of his life – after being humbled by life's circumstances and God, he eventually turned his eyes back to God and cried out for help.

One of the greatest evils in the church however is this same attitude of pride. Many Christians walk out into the world with a spiritual chip on their shoulder, thinking to themselves “let me show you what is wrong with your life.” And instead of letting the Word and Spirit of God to do the work, we take God's Word, which is commonly referred to as the Sword of the Spirit and use it to maim, cripple and even turn away people who continue to search in life.

God forbid that we think that our efforts are the determining factor in one's salvation. The miracle of one's salvation is one orchestrated by God – God brings emphasis to our lives, he brings emphasis to our words, yet it is his Spirit at work within a person's soul that eventually allows a person to consciously accept the work of Jesus, or outright reject the truth that can save their soul. We are to be people of humility who haven't forgot where we were saved from, and even who we currently are as struggling sinful people. God told the Israelites in **2 Chronicles 7:14**:

¹⁴ Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and heal their land.

Our part is to remain humble and loving, serving others with the same sacrificial love that he showed us. But, why is it that not everyone responds positively to the act of evangelism? Why doesn't everyone accept the work of Christ on the cross? Outside of human pride there are unfortunate reasons that have been brought on by the Church as a whole.

The challenge that non-believing people face is that they all too often fail to look at the truth of Christianity, and have made their decisions based on what they see in the life of Christians. We have become our greatest obstacle simply because we try to enforce and judge people for things that we can't even keep ourselves. We have done well to enforce truth but at the same time there is need for grace. John tells us in **John 1:14**:

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. NIV

Full of grace and truth – that is what we are to exercise. Truth without grace is legalism while grace without truth is a free for all. You and I need to be people who understand and speak truth yet at the same time exercising grace and allowing people the same consideration that we have been shown by Christ and various believers in Christ. Grace with truth speaks the truth in love, yet takes into consideration that we are by no means a perfect people. What are some of the challenges that non-believers face when it comes to evangelism? And what does God’s word say about it?

1. Many don’t want a religion that is unrealistic, untouchable or unobtainable.

The truths of Christianity have been under attack for a long time. In fact, often in our media it is presented as a fairy tale, or simply one interpretation of God. With the rise of eastern religions the notion that there are now many paths to the same God has now come and tried to discredit the work of Jesus Christ. If all religions led to the same God, then God is a schizophrenic contradicting himself, or even being unsure of what is right and wrong. It doesn’t take long for one to understand that not all religions are the same and offer the same hope and grace given by the God of Scripture.

Because the church, for so long, has been on the forefront of judgment and condemnation, we have given off the idea that Christianity demands too much and that salvation is obtained only by perfection – a long way off from how human society functions today. Many Christians have gone to the extreme of legalism, presenting their lives as a bunch of rules and regulations instead of a loving relationship that draws them unto righteousness.

No matter what excuse the unbeliever may have this morning, it doesn’t negate the facts of scripture. Every person must admit that there is a God. The whole notion that the world was created out of a chaotic collision takes more faith than to simply look out at nature and see the order and detail that is sustained by a supreme being. **Romans 1:18-20** tells us:

¹⁸ But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who push the truth away from themselves. ¹⁹For the truth about God is known to them instinctively. God has put this knowledge in their hearts. ²⁰ From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God.

If that weren’t enough, each of us possesses a spirit that is waiting for spiritual awakening. Think about your life before you asked Jesus to come and live in you. Your spirit was dead – God didn’t matter to you, what he wanted from you wasn’t even a consideration. Yet, when Jesus came to live in your heart it was as if a light bulb went on and things in life began to make sense and you found purpose in your life.

The Holy Spirit of God comes and lives in each of us and is there to comfort and guide, to enlighten and develop us. **1 John 2:27** tells us:

²⁷ *But you have received the Holy Spirit, and he lives within you, so you don't need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you all things, and what he teaches is true—it is not a lie. So continue in what he has taught you, and continue to live in Christ.*

Think of your own life. The reality of God and the presence of his Spirit in your heart is proof of the reality of our faith. Yet, what did you do to receive this revelation? You simply stepped out in faith. **Romans 10:9-11** tells us:

⁹*For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.* ¹⁰*For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.* ¹¹*As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who believes in him will not be disappointed."*

Christianity is obtainable, it is doable because all it involves is what I call the simple ABC's of the Christian faith – Admit you need God and the work of Jesus Christ, Believe in the work of forgiveness, and then Commit yourself to the one who saved your soul. And if you blow it, God's grace is sufficient to put you back into right standing with God. These benefits and the simplicity of our faith should be what we share with others, not the things that are wrong in their lives – let God deal with those things. Eventually, he will bring those things to light and will lovingly guide them through it.

2. Christianity isn't very attractive to me. It is too limiting to how I want to live.

Even as Christians, we all have to admit the temptations of things we want, but we know isn't God's plan for us. Not being able to do what we want isn't attractive to us. I have heard people tell others, "Do what you want. Don't let anyone else limit you. It's your life to live, so play as hard as you want." But we all know that what we may want isn't always what is best for us. Sin is so attractive at times. But Jesus said in **Mark 8:36-37**:

³⁶*And how do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul in the process?* ³⁷*Is anything worth more than your soul?*

What good does it do to do all I want in life and yet, at the same time, put my eternal soul and relationship with God in jeopardy? Sin is great, yet only for a time, and then where does that leave us? What makes Christianity so attractive when you look at the perspective of eternity is that there is hope for us. **Romans 3:22-24** tells us:

²²*We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done.* ²³*For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard.* ²⁴*Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed us by taking away our sins.*

Because of our trust and faith in Jesus Christ, our sins will be wiped away and will reunite us with the God of the Universe. We are not lost in our sin but find hope in our future. **Romans 5:2** tells us:

² Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

Our faith in God is what is key in sharing Jesus with others – not the does and don't – but the mercy and grace that can be theirs. As you look at life in contrast to eternity what is more important? Finally, the last challenge of unbelievers is the whole notion of hypocrisy.

3. There are too many hypocrites in the Christian faith.

You won't find an argument from me on this complaint because they are right. There are far too many people labeling themselves Christians yet living no different from their past. Even in the days of Jesus' earthly existence, the hypocrites were the religious leaders in the day. The reality is that God doesn't like hypocrites either. John the Baptist told people in **Luke 3:8**:

⁸ Prove by the way you live that you have really turned from your sins and turned to God.

Jesus said in **Mark 7:6-7**:

⁶ Jesus replied, "You hypocrites! Isaiah was prophesying about you when he said, ⁷These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far away. Their worship is a farce, for they replace God's commands with their own man-made teachings."

There is a difference between a hypocrite and a human follow of Christ. A hypocrite purposefully pursues things out of impure motive while at the same time judging other on things they are guilty of themselves. A human follower of Christ has pure motives yet may be lacking in personal self-control to follow through with what God wants from them. They remember where they came from and leave the conviction up to God to deal with. We are human beings after all. We all have our own challenges. Yet, never should we stand in the position as judge because that doesn't belong to us. Only God is a righteous judge. Paul tells us in **Romans 7:15-20**:

¹⁵ I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶I know perfectly well that what I am doing is wrong, and my bad conscience shows that I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ But I can't help myself, because it is sin inside me that makes me do these evil things. ¹⁸I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn, I can't make myself do right. I want to,

but I can't. ¹⁹When I want to do good, I don't. And when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway. ²⁰But if I am doing what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing it; the sin within me is doing it.

Hypocrites are people who enforce one thing but do something completely different. We need to allow grace and truth to rule in our lives. The act of sharing our faith is not about pointing out what is wrong in each others lives, but it is sharing the reality of God and His Son Jesus Christ, it is quickening of one's spirit, it is the sharing of hope that one can have through forgiveness of their sins, it is the benefits of trusting God, and it is the eternal salvation by faith and not by works.

Non-believing people have many reasons why they refuse to follow Jesus Christ. My prayer is that we don't become one of them.