

WHY DON'T MOST CHRISTIANS SHARE THE GOSPEL?

While many professing Christian believers might not readily admit it, it is true that most never attempt to share the gospel with others. A conservative estimate is that less than five percent have actually tried to lead another person to Jesus. Perhaps, soon after becoming a believer, some did but since then they have refrained from doing so. And other than by their church attendance, very few would know of their faith in Christ.

This is astounding, especially given the gravity of the fact that one's eternal destiny is in view and without Jesus a person is doomed! There are no more important words that could escape a person's mouth than those contained in the gospel message. Few would argue against this point and yet few ever explain the saving message to others. Why is this?

I believe there are three reasons. These are:

- 1) They are not prepared.
- 2) They are not prepared because they don't have a burden for souls.
- 3) They don't have a burden for souls because the intensity of their belief, while sufficient to save them, is insufficient to motivate them.

Let's examine these three reasons in detail.

They are not prepared.

I've heard it said there are five P's to success:

<p>Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance.</p>

Let's face it, preparation takes work. Don't most things that are worthwhile in life take work? Of all the things we can prepare ourselves to do, is there anything more valuable?

Preparation to share the gospel message can be in many forms. Obviously, first, one must study the gospel message and be sure he understands what it is and what it is not. Many are confused about this.

The reason for this is simple. Satan has produced multiple counterfeit gospels, hoping to prevent millions from learning the truth. There are really only two messages but one of them comes in many colors.

The two messages are "grace" and "works." Jesus came to die for us because we could not do anything to deserve eternal life. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23) and nothing we can do can change that. He took our penalty on Himself and paid that price. He paid it all.

Satan, through religion, is continually founding groups that will present a "works" gospel. He is also continually working to corrupt ministries that began with a sound message.

While his methods are subtle, they can be identified by anyone who carefully studies his "gospels." The Bible teaches us that it is by grace through faith that we are saved and not of works. But Satan so subtly inserts works in one form or another to make man think he is partly responsible for his salvation.

Notice the following verses:

What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. (Romans 4:1-5)

And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. (Romans 11:6)

*Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him **everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified** by the law of Moses.* (Acts 13:38-39)

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8 & 9)

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. (Titus 3:5)

This is good news indeed but the gospel that many understand is a "works-based gospel." This fact, in itself, could be a reason many don't share the gospel as they don't want to have to tell others they need to "turn or burn." Many false gospels include things that are not found in the Bible, things such as:

"Repent of your sins to be saved."

"Commit your life to Jesus."

"Make Jesus Lord of your life!"

"Give your heart to Jesus."

"Confess your sins."

"Make a public profession – confess Christ."

Obviously, having a message like this can make one timid. Nothing in that message is consistent with delivering the good news of a much needed gift. How anyone can think those things are consistent with the phrase, "not of works?"

Once a person clearly understands the message, he can memorize Bible verses that will help him to share it. He can also type them and keep a written record of them on his person at all times, or carry a small Bible in his pocket with the verses he wishes to use clearly marked.

One thing the Bible is clear about, however, is that we have a responsibility to be prepared.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. (1 Peter 3:15)

The reason they are not prepared is that they don't have a burden for souls.

This is an issue of the heart. People will sacrifice almost everything, including their life for those they love. When Christians don't sacrifice their time, money, energy, and perhaps even their reputation in order to share the gospel, it seems obvious to this writer that they don't have a great enough burden.

I recently heard a message in which the speaker said that those who are not leading souls to Christ are not saved! The word "hogwash!" immediately came to mind. It always amazes me how self-righteous professing believers consider the standard test to determine another's faith to be their own lifestyle. They take an area in which they have a victory and demand that everyone else meet that requirement or be considered an unbeliever. How sad. This, however, brings me to my next point.

The reason they don't have a burden for souls is that the intensity of their belief, while sufficient to save them, isn't sufficient to motivate them.

Faith is something that is difficult for us to measure. Like the wind, we cannot see it but we can see its effects. Fortunately, it is not the

intensity of our faith that God looks for to save us. He tells us that we are to come to Him as a little child, with a childlike faith.

The degree or intensity of our faith, however, will determine how we live our life. If it is a weak faith, we find it difficult to trust God over man and circumstances. The person with little or weak faith worries and doesn't "count it all joy when he falls into various trials." He has difficulty giving thanks to God in all things. He places his security in his bank balances rather than in God. His eyes are on the things of this world rather than on the promises of God.

The person who regularly exercises his faith finds that his faith grows, and as it grows, he worries less, places less value on possessions, and becomes more of a giver than a taker or hoarder. He becomes more heavenly-minded and focuses on "laying up treasure in heaven."

This is also the person who learns to look to God's grace for the power to do what he ought to do. He realizes God's grace provides him with power, provision, protection, and peace as it is needed. As his faith grows, so does his obedience.

He believes God's Word is true and therefore lives with the daily understanding that people all around him need the Lord—need to be saved! It is this increased faith that increases his burden and drives him to be prepared and to look for opportunities to share the gospel.

**(NOTE: All quoted scripture is from the New King James Version of the Bible, published by Thomas Nelson Publishers) Scripture emphasis mine.*

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By Gene Greeson
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"This occurs even though they would never consider not warning a friend about a terrible storm headed their way!"