

# HOW TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.* (Romans 1:16)

I recently heard an inmate in prison testify that, although he has been involved in almost every mean and vile activity a man could do, including killing, nothing ever caused him as much fear as trying to share the gospel with another person. It was only after taking a course called Evangelism Explosion there in prison did he face that fear and deal appropriately with it!

In fact, as he spoke to other inmates, encouraging them to take the same course, I was so impressed with what God can do with a man who yields to His working in his life. I was witnessing a man who has been transformed by the power of God and who has a genuine concern for sharing the gospel with others.

I was reminded of how timid and shy I was back in the summer of 1970, when I first learned of God's forgiveness for my sins and the fact that eternal life is a gift. It took me a few days before I could tell someone that I had become a believer in Jesus, meaning I had received him as my savior and knew I was going to heaven when I die. I now laugh when I think back to how difficult it was for me to get the words out of my mouth that first time.

Soon thereafter, I purchased a book that gave me numerous ideas on how to share the good news. Wow! Did that ever make a difference! The author asked whether it made sense, that since God had such a great plan of salvation, that we have a plan as to how to tell others about His plan. That made sense to me!

Obviously, since there are books written on this topic, and in fact, I now have at least 100 of them, this pamphlet will not do the subject justice. What I do hope to do, however, is provide you with some practical ideas that have greatly assisted me.

## GENUINELY CARE

Others don't care how much you know until after they know how much you care. Notice what the apostle Paul said of himself regarding his fellow Israelites.

*I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh.* (Romans 9:1-3)

*Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*

(Romans 10:1-4)

Those to whom we attempt to share the gospel can see in our eyes whether we are attempting to share the gospel message with them for their sake, or ours. Is it because we genuinely care or because we wish to fulfill what we sense to be our Christian obligation, or worse, to gain some sort of imaginary notch in our belt?

*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.*

*And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*

(Philippians 2:3-8)

Yes, we must have God's heart for the lost –God who is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9). How do we do this? We simply yield to Him and allow the Holy Spirit, who resides inside every believer, to be in control as we share the gospel message. I cannot imagine any better feeling than to experience God loving another person *through* me, and that is something I experience every time I share the gospel.

## BE CLEAR AND PRECISE

One of my teachers once said that he believes that most people who are not saved remain that way simply because they have never understood the offer. Oh, they may think they have heard the gospel before but what they have heard is a religious message of "turn or burn," "make Jesus Lord of your life," or some other phrase that says, "quit sinning and live for God." Perhaps they have even tried this and found that it didn't work for them. That is not the gospel.

Others have simply been confused by being told they must, "Let Jesus into your heart," "Be born again," or "Give your life to Jesus." Of all those phrases, only the term "born again" is a biblical one, and even that one is one that needs to be clarified. Why not instead simply say what the Bible says, clearly and precisely?

*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.* (John 6:47)

The condition for receiving eternal life is to "believe." This means to "trust," "rely upon," or "place confidence in" the person of Jesus Christ. Why make it more complicated than that?

*For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle? So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken?*

(1 Corinthians 14:8,9)

## USE THE BIBLE

Someone once told me, “Opinions are like armpits; everyone has them and they all stink!” What is important isn’t what we think but what the Bible says. We should at least quote the Bible but it is much better to actually show others the Bible verse(s), so they can recall reading it themselves. The Bible is powerful and contains the words of life, so use it!

## USE WORD STORIES & ILLUSTRATIONS

There are literally dozens of word pictures that are useful when explaining the gospel message. A couple that quickly come to mind are:

The judge who, after giving the maximum fine to his son, gets up out of his chair, removes his robe, and walks down and pays the fine himself.

The person who is sincere but sincerely wrong and makes a decision with drastic consequences.

Illustrations, such as taking a dirty napkin and letting it represent our own righteousness, which is as filthy rags according to Isaiah 64:6 and then inserting it inside of a Bible, which we have representing the righteousness of Jesus, to show how that once we believe in Jesus, we are then “in Christ” and God sees us as having his righteousness, rather than our own, according to Philippians 3:9 and 2 Corinthians 5:21 is a good one to use.

## SHARE YOUR OWN TESTIMONY

When you tell others about God’s love and what He wants to do for them, share your own testimony and let them know how you learned this truth. Like the words in the song, Amazing Grace, “I once was lost but now I’m found, was blind but now I see.” Never underestimate the power of your own personal testimony. God wants to use it to reach others for His glory.

## ASK QUESTIONS

Far too often, we seem to want to impress others with how much we know. When we “tell” our

message, we can more easily push others away. When we “ask” questions, we can more easily draw them to us.

Some of my favorite questions are:

- Can you say with honesty that you know for sure you are going to heaven when you die?
- If you were to die today and stand before God and He were to ask you, “Why should I let you into heaven, what would you say?”
- Why do you think that? What are you basing your belief on?
- If Jesus paid for all of your sin, (past, present, and future), for how many sins must you pay?

## USE GOSPEL TRACTS

*The palest ink is more enduring than the strongest memory.* Leaving a tract will allow someone to read it later, without feeling confronted and feeling the pressure to respond to what you are telling him.

Gospel tracts allow you to leave something that will continue to keep the message in focus after you are gone. They can be referred to later when the person is more ready to receive the message.

## SUMMARY

These are some ideas that have helped me through the years. Obviously, nothing works if you don’t. It is your faithfulness and burden for souls that will be your greatest asset. Trust in God, the Holy Spirit, to guide you and help you to be sensitive to what you should say, and refrain from saying. Pray for His guidance even while you are sharing. Always remember, God is even more concerned about another’s soul than you are and He will give you what you need to share His message.

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

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# HOW TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

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***“Here are some pointers that can assist you as you attempt to reach others with the gospel message of God’s love.”***