

Make Disciples

No More Excuses: How to Fear less when you witness

1. The Fear of Rejection: *Are we more worried about what people think about us or about pleasing God?*

- "We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts."- 1 Thess 2:4

- "Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ." – Galatians 1:10

How do these verses apply to our lives when we are sharing our faith? Who cares most about them hearing the gospel?

- "If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you." – 1 Peter 4:14

- "Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets." – Luke 6:22-23

What is the worst thing that could happen to you when you share your faith? According to these verses what are the two blessings you get when you are rejected for standing up for Christ?

- "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow."- 1 Cor 3:6

- "Success in witnessing is taking the initiative in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results up to God." – Bill Bright

What three things can happen when we share our faith? Why is it so important for us to remember that it is not our job to convert people? What is our role in witnessing? (For a great example listen to the Sermon Jam about one Man on George Street)

2. The Fear of Losing a Friend: That should be the very reason that you do share with them! If they don't accept Christ you will lose a friend for all of eternity. What kind of a friendship would that be! You don't have to be pushy just lovingly taking the initiative and sharing. They will respect your love for them.

- "My friend, I stand in judgment now - And feel that you're to blame somehow - While on this earth I walked with you day by day - And never did you point the way - You knew the Lord in truth and glory - But never did you tell the story - My knowledge then was very dim - You could have lead me safe to him - Though we lived together here on earth - You never told me of your second birth - And now I stand this day condemned - Because you failed to mention him - You taught me many things, that's true - I called you friend and trusted you - But now I learned, now its too late -You could have kept me from this fate - We walked by day and talked by night - And yet you showed me not the light You let me live, love and die - You knew I'd never live on high- Yes I called you friend in life - And trusted you in joy and strife -Yet coming to this dreadful end- I see you really weren't my friend" – My Friend by D.J. Higgins

How would it make you feel thinking about one of your friends writing this poem? What friends of yours do you want to see in heaven the most? What could be the best way to share Jesus them?

3. They Have already Heard It: The average person needs to hear the gospel at least 7 times before they decide to commit to Christ. We have talked with hundreds of people who did not fully understand it! Repetition is very important when someone is considering the gospel. Some people who have heard it only understand certain parts. Your conversation will likely help make it more clear. Also this time may just be their time to respond! *How does that fact that people need to hear the gospel multiple times influence your decision to share with others?*

- "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Gal 6:9

- "Sow your seed in the morning, and at evening let not your hands be idle, for you do not know which will succeed, whether this or that, or whether both will do equally well." – Ecc 11:6

- "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." – 1 Cor 15:58

- *According to these verses why is it so important to keep sharing with people even if they may have already heard it? Why do we so often assume it will not help them if we share?*

4. I Don't Know How: Then learn how! Something as important as sharing the gospel should be something you take time to learn. There are a lot of great books but the best way to learn how is just start practicing. For example if you want to learn how to swim you can't really learn until you jump in the water!

- "When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling." – 1 Cor 2:1-3

How does this verse encourage us with our inadequacies? According to this verse what do we have to know in order to share our faith?

- God does not promise to take away all of our fear when we share our faith. It may even be a little awkward. But awkward conversations change lives!

- When we start practicing by getting into real conversations with people we will get better and better at knowing what to say!

Also the Holy Spirit will help you! "For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say." – Luke 12:12

Do you think that your friends will be concerned about how smooth your presentation is when you share the gospel with them? What do you think will make the biggest impact on them when you share?

5. I am Just Lazy: What do you think Jesus would say to that excuse? Everyone has spare time. It is really a question of priorities, not time.

- He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son. – Proverbs 10:5
- I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. – Rev 3:16-17
-“Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” – Col 4:5-6

How do these verses explain our need to get more involved in using our time to reach the lost?

“The saving of souls, if a man has once gained love to perishing sinners and his blessed Master, will be an all-absorbing passion to him. It will so carry him away, that he will almost forget himself in the saving of others. He will be like the brave fireman, who cares not for the scorch or the heat, so that he may rescue the poor creature on whom true humanity has set his heart.” –Charles Spurgeon

- “Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.” – James 4:17

Why is not sharing the gospel one of the worst sins you can commit?

6. I am Just Going to Wait until People Ask: *How many times has some one asked you about your faith?*

- “Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.” – 2 Tim 4:2

According to this verse what are the two times we are supposed to preach the gospel?

-“Day after day, in the temple courts and house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.” –Acts 5:42

What can we learn from the early church about their active role in sharing Christ?

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?” – Romans 10:14

Why is it so important that we witness with our words and our actions? (True Story: You're the reason I didn't believe!)

7. I Don't Know Enough: If you had to know everything before sharing your faith no one would be able to share! Did someone lead you to Christ? Then you know more than the average non-Christian. But what if someone asks me a question I can't answer? You can always say “That is a good question, If you give me your email I will find the answer and get back to you.” This actually may be a blessing as it will open up further opportunity to talk more.

- I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. – Philemon 1:6

How does sharing our faith help us learn more about what we believe?

8. People Won't want to talk about it: Most people do want to talk about these things! Which is worse, making someone uncomfortable for a few minutes (during which time they can leave whenever they want) or knowing that they will be uncomfortable for eternity? Several times we have ran into people who have been thinking about eternity earlier that day! There are thousands of people who would love to talk with you about those things. Don't give that up just because a few may not be interested. If they are not interested they will let you know and you can just respectfully back off! Pray that God lead you to people who will want to talk. You will be surprised how often he does that.

-“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” – Col 4:2-6

What are the key principles in this passage that can help us in our sharing?

9. They Will Probably Come to Christ Later in Life: You never know this may be their last chance.

“Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.” –James 4:13-14

-How many people do you know of who died at Chico State in the last few years?

-If a person has not accepted Christ by the time he or she is 25 years old, there is a 90% chance they never will! About two people die every second, 150,000 every day!

What do these verses and statistics mean for us when we are tempted to use that excuse?

Discipleship Challenge: Look for opportunities to share your faith or invite someone to something. Do some “Nike Evangelism” just do it! **Memorize:** Luke 6:22-23