

October 7, 2018

“Growing 101”

“Introduction to Foundational Principles”

“Finding a New Opportunity: Sharing Your Faith”

“But if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness”

1 John 1:9

A. God calls each of us to be His witnesses...

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses, telling people about Me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

1. God commands us to be witnesses. “...*you will be...*”
2. God empowers us to be witnesses. “...*you will receive power...*”
3. God directs us to be witnesses. “...*everywhere...*”
4. God instructs us how to be witnesses. “...*telling people about me...*”

“The way you store up treasure in heaven is by investing in getting people there.” –Rick Warren

“If you had the cure to cancer wouldn’t you share it? You have the cure to death...get out there and share it.” –Kirk Cameron

“Let others report bad news; we’ll share the good news.”

–Woodrow Kroll

B. What happens if we pass on the opportunities before us?

“But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them?” Romans 10:14

1. Each of us has the responsibility to share our faith. 25 years ago, only 10% of Christians believed it was the church’s responsibility; today 30% believe it is the church’s responsibility. – Barna Report
2. It is our personal responsibility to share our faith. 25 years ago, 89% of Christians believed it was their personal responsibility; today 63% believe it was their personal responsibility to share their faith.
3. 1 in 5 Christians never pray for non-Christians in their lives.

4. 61% of Christians fail to share their faith; 50% have not invited a non-Christian to church.

“But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them?” Romans 10:14

C. What keeps us from sharing?

“These were his instructions to them: ‘The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask Him to send more workers into His fields.’” Luke 10:2

If the harvest is great...what holds us back?

1. Some hold back because they believe they have a lack of knowledge. They fear they don’t know enough about the Bible or how to share.
2. Some hold back because they just don’t care enough about lost people to share their faith. We have stopped praying for lost people and we make no time to interact.
3. Some hold back because they fear what others will think of them. Some just don’t want to be disliked, mocked, or laughed at.
4. Some hold back because they lack compassion for lost people. Some have forgotten what it was like to live without hope, apart from Christ, and have become spiritually lazy.
5. Some hold back because they want to be politically correct and don’t want to push their beliefs on others.

“Always remember that Jesus Christ, a descendant of King David, was raised from the dead. This is the Good News I preach. And because I preach this Good News, I am suffering and have been chained like a criminal. But the word of God cannot be chained. So I am willing to endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory in Christ Jesus to those God has chosen.” 2 Timothy 2:8-10

D. How should I share?

“But we continue to preach because we have the same kind of faith the psalmist had when he said, ‘I believed in God, so I spoke.’” 2 Corinthians 4:13

“We’re not keeping this quiet, not on your life. Just like the psalmist who wrote, ‘I believed it, so I said it,’ we say what we believe. And what we believe is that the One who raised up the Master Jesus will just as certainly raise us up with you, alive. Every detail works to your advantage and to God’s glory: more and more grace, more and more people, more and more praise!” 2 Corinthians 4:13-15
The Message

1. Identify your mission field. Where is God drawing your focus? Who in your world needs to know Jesus?
2. Focus on the gospel!
 - a. Live a consistent life.
 - b. Be a friend and good listener.
 - c. The Holy Spirit will give you power.
 - d. Don’t be “preachy.”
3. Share true stories of God’s power in your life.
 - a. Remember your life before Christ.
 - b. How did you receive Christ? How did you hear about Christ? How did you respond?
 - c. How has life changed since accepting Christ?
4. Begin praying for those in your world who do not know Christ!
5. Prepare your testimony. Keep it short and personal.
6. Have a plan to share the gospel.
7. Look for opportunities... *“the harvest is great!”*

“So...when is it going to happen?”

Next Week: “Discovering a New Freedom: Forgiveness”

“But if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.” 1 John 1:9

A NEW OPPORTUNITY: HOW TO SHARE YOUR FAITH

One of the first reactions a person has when he receives Christ is the desire to tell others about his newly found joy. Even though the urge to witness is quite natural, new believers are often fearful to share with others.

HOW DOES A NEW BELIEVER OVERCOME FEAR WHEN SHARING HIS PERSONAL TESTIMONY WITH OTHERS?

COMPARE THE OLD LIFE WITH THE NEW LIFE:

The Old Life:

1. Embarrassed to talk about Christ
2. No concern for others' salvation
- 3.
- 4.

The New Life:

1. Excited to talk about Christ
2. Great concern for the salvation of others
- 3.
- 4.

Sharing the good news about salvation is not left to choice. It is the result of a caring attitude. It is the response to Christ's command in Acts 1:8, "you shall be my witnesses". In this lesson, we will study what the Bible says about witnessing. Discover how to be a successful witness and soul-winner so you can experience the joy of leading others to Christ.

I. WHY SHOULD THE BELIEVER SHARE HIS FAITH WITH OTHERS?

1. What does Christ tell us to do in Mark 16:15?

2. According to Romans 10:13, 14, before a person can call upon the Lord to be saved, what is necessary?

3. Does failing to witness have any consequences for the believer according to Ezekiel 3:18-19?

4. What value does Matthew 16:26 place on one soul?

5. From what does heaven derive its greatest reason for celebration according to Luke 15:10?

II. HOW SHOULD THE BELIEVER SHARE HIS FAITH WITH OTHERS?

1. According to Matthew 5:16, what is the basis of an effective witness for Christ?

2. According to Acts 1:4, how do I get the power to witness for Christ?

3. An effective witness for Christ should contain at least three things:
 - a) The Person: Why must our witness center on Christ? John 14:6
 - b) The Personal Testimony:
 1. A testimony should not...
 - a. Contain meaningless statements, facts, etc.
 - b. Contain too much personal trivia.
 - c. Give a "holier-than-thou" impression.
 - d. Use technical or religious terms that are not properly defined.
 - e. Be too lengthy.
 2. A testimony should...
 - a. Identify with the listener by discussing mutual interests.
 - b. Contain honest statements.
 - c. Give clear account of how you were saved.
 - d. Be a personal expression of what Christ has done for you.
 - e. Keep Christ and the gospel central.
 - f. Be an illustration of Christ's faithfulness.
 - g. Base assurance of salvation on Scripture.

- h. Refrain from negative comments about persons, other churches or denominations.

- c) The Plan

What is the reason for learning a definite plan as taught in 1 Peter 3:15?

III. WHEN SHOULD THE BELIEVER SHARE HIS FAITH WITH OTHERS?

1. In John 4:5-7, where was Christ when He talked with the Samaritan woman?

2. In Acts 11:11-14, who spoke to Peter about the men who were seeking him?

3. Where did Paul meet people in order to present Christ to them? Acts 17:17; 20:20

4. How long did Andrew wait until he shared Christ with his brother? John 1:41

5. What were the Christians doing in Acts 5:42?

CHALLENGE: FOLLOW PHILIP'S EXAMPLE ACTS 8:26-40

1. Responsive to the Holy Spirit. Vs 26
2. Obedient to the Lord's command. Vs 27
3. Sensitive to the Ethiopian's need. Vs 30
4. Skilled in the Word. Vs 35
5. Sought for a decision. Vs 37

QUESTION: WHAT IS OUR SOURCE OF POWER AS REVEALED IN OUR MEMORY VERSE, ACTS 1:8?

APPLICATION:

1. Mark your Bible with a soul-winning plan which contains at least these key verses:
 - a) Knowing where you are going. John 3:3
 - b) Repent. Acts 3:19
 - c) Believe. John 3:16
 - d) Confess. I John 1:9
 - e) Receive. John 1:12
 - f) Open the door. Revelation 3:20
2. List the names of three people you know who need Christ, and for whom you will pray, and to whom you will witness when there is opportunity

3. On a sheet of paper, write out your personal testimony.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

1. What direction to “witness” does Christ give in Luke 8:39?

2. Based on John 3:32, what is the believer to tell about?

3. What did Jesus say was God’s supreme work? John 6:29

4. What is the work Christ tells us to do in John 15:16?

5. What did the Samaritan woman do in John 4:28, 29?

6. What did John say He would do if we follow Him according to Matthew 4:19?

7. Who shared the good news with you?

CONCLUSION:

Everyone is not expected to be a great “soul-winner” but all are expected to be great “witnesses”.

“Successful witnessing is sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.” - Bill Bright

**Material from John Maxwell*