

LESSON 18: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN SHARING THEIR FAITH

One of the hardest things to do as Christians is to share our faith. We're often reluctant to share our faith for fear of having a person reject us and our message; yet God has given us clear marching orders to go out into the world and preach the gospel "making disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19-20)

God has given us some sound principles that will enable us to effectively lead others to Christ. God will never ask us to do anything He will not give us the power to do. The calling of God is the enabling of God (see 2 Cor. 3:4-6).

Effective sharing must be _____. Jesus said, "No one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." (John 6:65) Conversion must be the work of the Holy Spirit, and it must be in God's timing. That's why the Scripture tells us to be prepared to share the gospel message "in season and out of season." (2 Tim 4:2)

Effective sharing _____ in a knowledge of God's word. Although our message may begin with a personal testimony or illustration, the thrust of it must be the Word of God! We must not neglect this powerful witnessing tool, for God promises, "My Word...shall not return to Me void, but shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11)

Effective sharing _____. Some of the most profound things Jesus ever said were found in His one-on-one conversations. He took time with these individuals (see John 3 & 4). We must remember that we are not called to make converts, but disciples.

Effective sharing is _____. For evangelism to be effective, it must begin with a genuine concern for the lost.

Effective sharing is _____. In 1 Corinthians, Paul encourages us to tailor our approach, though not our message to those we are trying to reach for Christ. Evangelism is meeting someone at his or her level in order to bring that individual to Christ's level without compromising the truth of the gospel.

Effective sharing is discerning. We need to be discerning so that we will not "cast our pearls before swine," offering the truths of God to someone who is not genuinely interested. Rather than anger someone who's uninterested, it is best to simply present the truth and move on.

Effective sharing _____ . A good example of tact is found in the story of Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8). As Philip heard the Ethiopian reading from Isaiah, he simply said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" A number of more judgmental Christians might have shouted, "Did you know you're going to burn in hell unless you repent?" A fruitful witness is a tactful witness.

Effective sharing is _____. This final principle is the most important one we need to employ. Whenever Jesus came into contact with people, He genuinely loved them. Such love and concern will speak volumes before we even utter a word. The world today is flooded with religious cults, which are Satan's way of flooding the market with imitations. Those imitations ought to motivate us to make the truth known. Our edge over these spiritual counterfeits is the love in our hearts that Jesus had when He walked this earth, combined with the Word of God, which shall not return void.

Why not ask God for His holy boldness right now? Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to someone who needs Christ. Love him with the love of God, and then share the truth of the gospel. Then you'll see how "the goodness of God leads you to repentance" (Rom 2:4)

