

Feeling Useless? How to Work for God

Part 2: Boldly Sharing With Unbelievers

(2/9/25)

Please turn to *Matthew 5:14-16*.

LAST WEEK:

- Do you sometimes feel useless in God's Kingdom?
- That you could and should be doing more but lack the boldness, skillset, or opportunity?
- Truth if you're Saved, alive, and breathing today then God has already chosen YOU "for such a time as this."
- Yes, He does raise up "Biblical Celebrities" like Esther and Elijah who make a big splash in this pond called the world.
- Yet He also raises us lesser-known folk like Mordecai and Obadiah to be lights that shine in a time of darkness.
- We may never be called upon to call fire down from heaven like Elijah or speak hard truth to the most powerful man in the world like Esther.
- Yet we may be called upon to bring food and water to the needy like Obadiah did, or to have supernatural discernment and a big heart like Mordecai.
- God meets and works through us right where we're at to be part of His plan.
- We all have the Light of Christ within us that can shine anywhere we are!

TODAY's sermon is divided into 2 parts.

- PART 1 is reviewing ***God's multiple commands to share Him with unbelievers.***
- PART 2 is ***how to be BOLD about it.***

Sing song with me: ***"This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine."***

"I won't let Satan blow it out, I'm gonna let it shine."

Statement #1: **THERE ARE NO "SECRET AGENT" CHRISTIANS. OUR FAITH IN JESUS IS NOT PRIVATE, IT'S MEANT TO PUBLIC—ON DISPLAY FOR EVERYONE TO SEE.**

- This applies whether you have great social skills or none.
- It applies whether you love being with people or just want to be left alone.
- It applies to Christians with titles like "pastor" or "teacher" and those with no titles.
- It applies to Christians with a large platform and those with a small one.
- It applies to Christians with a steel-trap mind who can quote verses like a machine gun and those who can barely paraphrase *John 3:16*.

You do know there are different levels of light bulbs, yes? Next time you're at the store go the light bulb section and you'll see a big variety and nowadays they're divided up by the amount of lumens they put out.

Lumens are the measurement of how BRIGHT each bulb is.

- Lower lumen bulbs put out around 250 lumens—like a night light.
- Mid-level bulbs are the ones we tend to have in our lamps at home—around 450-650 lumens.
- Bigger bulbs like the ones on your porch have around 650-1000 lumens.
- Streetlights are several thousand lumens.

All these bulbs have one thing in common: they all emit light that shines into darkness and drives it back!

I used to love staying overnight at my grandmother's house

with one exception: it was really dark there at night. Even though my room had a window, it was shrouded in trees. After tucking me in grandma would turn on this little nightlight on the wall, the mini lampshade of which was some puppy. The bulb inside was this dinky thing that you would never have noticed in the daylight, even if you were looking.

Yet at night when it seemed like the darkness was closing in on me and making my fears come true, that little puppy light was a beacon!

My wife installed a plug-in night light in the bathroom that's probably around 10 lumens tops. I stumbler in there every night around 2 AM and, after my eyes have adjusted to the dark, that thing is like the sun!

We need to stop comparing ourselves to brighter lights—aka Christians who have a larger platform, greater influence, and highly gifted.

EVERY LIGHT SERVES THE PURPOSE GOD INTENDED AND IS APPROPRIATE FOR SAID PURPOSE.

Ever had your pupils dilated? First time I did I was almost run over by cars. I had to cross 4th avenue in Brooklyn—a very busy street!—in broad daylight. I didn't bring sunglasses like the Optometrist had told me to ahead of time. When I went outdoors, I hissed and raised my coat over my eyes like Dracula and tried crossing 4th Avenue like that. I could barely make out shapes but heard tires screeching, horns honking, and people yelling at me angrily.

Point: the sun was too much and while I still needed light, it needed to be dimmer.

When I stumble into the bathroom at 2 AM I don't need a bright halogen light at 800 lumens, I need the little puppy nightlight at 10.

There are people and situations in this world who are dwelling in darkness. Some need to show up to revival meeting headed up by a famous highly gifted speaker with a massive platform who shines like the sun. Others need a nightlight to guide them, a one-on-one interaction to lead them to Christ.

Both the bright lights and nightlights are needed: and everything in between. You are I might only be nightlights behind a puppy lampshade. Maybe we're the ones that get turned on first when you walk into a dark house. Truth is we're still lights, still needed, and *have the same purpose as the super bright street ones: we shine into the darkness and drive it back.*

The purpose of ANY source of light from campfires to Hollywood spotlights is the same:

[Mat 5:14-16 ESV] 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill **cannot be hidden.** 15 **Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.** 16 In the same way, **let your light shine before others,** so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

- The Light that you are, God placed in you.
- The Light that you are, God has purpose for.
- Its purpose is to shine into the darkness of where you are at right now.

Brandy is Gateway's missionary in overseas right now. She just sent a message that she's been called into the mountains to preach the Gospel. She's heading into one of the most unreached places on earth consisting of a 2-day hike with no civilized amenities! God has called her to this. She's right where she needs to be.

YOU AND I DON'T NEED TO COMPARE OURSELVES TO HER. If God hasn't called you to missions in a 3rd world country then don't go. If He has, then go. If God has kept you in Addison, Lindley, Woodhull, Corning, Rathbone, or Tuscarora then stay there and shine.

There's darkness everywhere on this planet because Satan still rules over it. Paul said the devil was 1) the god of this world and 2) that he's blinded the minds of unbelievers.

[2Co 4:4 ESV] 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- There are unbelievers in Addison NY and Kathmandu, Nepal.
- There's darkness in both Woodhull and NYC.
- The unbelievers in America are just as blind as the ones in Iran.

Unbelievers need to be told about Jesus...with WORDS. They need to HEAR about Him. And God commands for believers to do this. God has spoken many commandments that go beyond restraining ourselves from sin. Maybe we're used to the "thou shalt nots" but there are also commandments to TAKE action...to DO:

[Psa 96:1-4 ESV] 1 Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth! 2 Sing to the LORD, bless his name; **tell of his salvation** from day to day. 3 **Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!** 4 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.

Context is king. **Whenever you see the word "nations" and "peoples" in the Bible, it means Gentiles, unbelievers**, those who don't have covenant with God.

With that in mind, look back at the verses: ***we're commanded to TELL of God's salvation***, declare His glory, and talk about the great things He's done.

And we're supposed to use WORDS and that people HEAR.

[Rom 10:14, 17 NKJV] 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? **And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?** And **how shall they hear without a preacher?** ... 17 So then **faith [comes] by hearing**, and hearing by the word of God.

"Preacher" here is not a profession and isn't limited to the pulpit or streetcorner. The word could have been translated "publisher, proclaimer" and requires no title, seminary, or Bible College degree.

***“But I’m too shy”** some of you are saying. “I have a hard time talking to people as it is, much less telling them about Jesus.”*

I have great news for all of us. While God works with us right where we’re at, **He also enables & empowers us to obey His commands.** W/o the Holy Spirit we can’t obey anything He tells us to do. God lists many sins in the Bible and tell us to not do them. **The only way we succeed in this restraint is with His supernatural help: do you agree?**

If you agreed to that then you must also **ASSENT TO THE TRUTH HE HELPS US TO OBEY HIS “DO THIS” COMMANDS TOO.**

Maybe we just need to ask Him. For those of you who claim to be too shy, when was the last time you asked God for greater boldness to share the Gospel?

I’ve been “schooled” by some introverts telling me they’re better at one-on-one interactions and not with crowds of people. Excellent! When was the last time you sat down one-on-one with someone and told them about Jesus?

I’ve had other shy people give me pushback and **tell me their faith is private** and something they only keep to themselves and my response is this:

- Imagine the power goes off and you only have 1 flashlight. Saying your faith is only for yourself is like sitting in a closet with a flashlight on while everyone else in the house sits in the dark.
- It’s like having a campfire on a dark night and not allowing anyone else to approach or throwing water on it as soon as someone does approach.

I’m not trying to shame you, I’m trying to get you to realize God gives us His power to obey His commands and He has absolutely told us to tell others about Him.

Let me start you off. Give you something you can do today or tomorrow: **talk about God with unbelievers like you do with believers.**

When you're here in church or in a group of believers, do you talk about God?

- Do you testify to one another about the good things God has done in your life?
- Do you talk about reading devotions or the Bible?
- Do you talk about praying and answered prayers?
- Do you speak His name? Not just generic "God" but do you speak the name of Jesus Christ in a non-cursing way?

I ASSUME YOU DO THIS BECAUSE, AFTER ALL, JESUS IS PART OF YOUR LIFE, YES? Just like a spouse, a kid, a friend, a coworker, or anyone else He plays some role and has some influence with you. In any social interaction, don't we tend to casually mention a person in our lives? Talk about what they said and did?

Do the same thing around unbelievers.

Suppose an unbeliever is going through a hard time and is talking to you about it.

- You can respond by casually mentioning the devotional you read that helped you through a bad time.
- You can say that in your last rough patch you prayed and here's how God answered.
- You can refer to a sermon or teaching you heard that gave you much needed wisdom.
- You can offer to pray for them, right then and right there.
- NOTE: in all my years making this offer, I can count on 1 hand the amount of people who've turned me down. 2) all those people were those caught up in their own religion or the occult. The vast majority have allowed me to, even if they're just doing me a "courtesy."

A word of advice: **don't replace talking about God with talking about Church** and here's why. There are plenty of people who believe in God's existence and have "personalized" Him in some way. The same people separate all that from "church" and may have hostile feelings toward it, real or imagined. Lead someone to Jesus first, and the Church second.

Talk about Jesus and how amazing He is just like you would to another Christian. Talk about how involved He is in your life, what He says to you, and what He's done. You don't have to preach a sermon. Don't go on and on. Speak conversationally and casually about Him just like you already do when you're

[Psa 96:10 KJV] 10 **Say** among the **heathen** [that] the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.

[Psa 98:2 KJV] 2 The LORD hath **made known his salvation**: his righteousness hath he **openly shewed in the sight of the heathen**.

Do you know the verse after that one is the famous ***“make a joyful noise unto the Lord”***? In other words, it’s not just relegated to Sunday worship service among believers, but also amongst “the heathen.”

God has set His Light upon us, and His Light is mean to shine:

[Isa 60:1 ESV] 1 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

[Mat 10:27 ESV] 27 What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.

[Jhn 1:5 ESV] 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Next week we’re going to talk about how this can and will bring persecution, hostility, and make people really uncomfortable.

For today, though, let’s leave with increased faith that we can ask the Lord for greater boldness!

COMMUNION