

# THE CHURCH HAS A MESSAGE

## *The Gospel Is The Power And Purpose Of God*

- 1) **The church has a message, the message is the greatest news the world will ever hear. It is the news that God has saved his people through Jesus - that's the Gospel.**
  - Tim Keller; *"Every form of ministry (everything the church does) is empowered by the gospel, based on the gospel and a result of the gospel. In the life of the church, the gospel changes everything we do."*
  - The Gospel is not just words but Power. Romans 1:16
  - Ephesians 2:8-9
  
- 2) **The church is entrusted with the message of salvation (the Gospel) and are ambassadors of the Good news.**
  - 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*
  - Matthew 5:14-16
  
- 3) **The church has a message, to which we are ambassadors to fulfill the purposes of God in restoring the world back to himself.**
  - Romans 10:14-17; *How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*
  - The Church Is God's Demonstration Community: As the body of Christ, we are helping people see God, by our words and by our lives. They should be able to look at us and glimpse—however faintly— aspects of God's character, grace and indescribable love through the Gospel.

## SOME THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER FOR FURTHER THIS WEEK:

### 7 Reasons Why We Don't Share Our Faith (by Josh Daffern)

Let's be honest: most Christians don't share their faith. We say it's important, we feel it's important, but we don't do it. Here are seven reasons why:

1. We feel unqualified. Many of us feel like we don't know enough Bible to share our faith. What if they ask us a question that we don't know the answer to? We're still trying to figure Christianity out, so there's no way we can explain it to someone else. Maybe it's not our lack of knowledge that we feel disqualifies us; it's our lifestyle. We made so many mistakes in our life, we don't feel like we can ever be an example to someone. Sometimes we feel our past disqualifies us from sharing our faith.

2. We wait for them to come to us. Maybe you've convinced yourself that you're more than happy to share your faith, as long as a sinner comes to you on hand and knee, knocking down your door and begging you to be saved. Then you'd be more than happy to share with them. But actually going out and taking the initiative yourself? That's a lot of work.

3. We forget what's at stake. This gets a lot of us. We forget. We forget what's at stake. Maybe we delude ourselves into thinking that God will let everyone into heaven at the end, that if we don't share our faith that all people will be missing out on is some church activities and a couple of potlucks. Most of us fail to really grasp that according to the Scriptures that we follow, what's at stake is someone's eternal destiny. Forever. If that ever truly sunk in, there would be no stopping us.

4. We don't really know any non-believers. This is a problem for a lot of Christians. This has happened to me before. Sometimes we can become so insulated in our church bubble that we fail to create any meaningful relationships with those that don't believe in Jesus. We're so afraid of being contaminated by the world that we cut ourselves off from it. So now, when some of us hear the challenge to share our faith, we look around and think, "I don't really know any non-Christians."

5. We don't care. This is something we'll never admit, but this stops some of us from sharing our faith. We don't care. We got ours. We've got our free ticket to heaven, and that's all we really care about. We're selfish. Our entire lives have been about us, and we've never really cared about anyone else. If they can't find their way to God, that's their problem. For some of us, when a preacher talks about heaven and hell and lost and dying people, it does nothing for us. That in itself is a much bigger problem.

6. We assume someone else will do it. This is where many of us trip up. Most of us know that sharing our faith is important. Jesus talks about it a lot. Preachers like me talk about it a lot. We get that it's important. We are also painfully aware that we ourselves haven't shared our faith in years. Faithful to church, yes, sharing our faith, no. And we know it's important, so we delude ourselves into thinking our disobedience is okay because surely everyone else around us is picking up the slack.

And that's where we've never been more wrong. A recent study showed that 80% of Christians surveyed agreed that sharing your faith is important. But over 60% hadn't shared their faith with someone in the past six months. We think other people are picking up the slack. The majority of American Christians don't share their faith. And we wonder why (for instance) our denomination is on a slow but steady decline in attendance and baptisms? We think someone else is picking up the slack, and they're not.

7. We're scared. And last, and this is perhaps the biggest reason. We're scared. That's natural. What if I forget what to say? What if they reject me? What if they ask me a question I can't answer? What if it messes up our relationship and it becomes weird?

QUESTION: What are other reasons that we don't share our faith?