



gracefellowship

Share Weeks
November 10, 2019
Gospel Proclamation

:: Luke 9:1-6, 10-11

1 When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases,

2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

3 He told them: “Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt.

4 Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town.

5 If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”

6 So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

10 When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida,

11 but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.

For the next two weeks we are going to be talking about the high privilege every follower of Jesus is asked to engage in, but very few actually do: sharing our faith publicly. We are going to talk about this from two angles...

1. Gospel proclamation
2. Gospel demonstration

Ed Stetzer recently released research in the publication Christianity Today that revealed 79% of unchurched people would engage in faith conversations if asked. Unfortunately, his research indicated that only 39% of Christians have shared how to know Jesus in the past 6 months. Somewhere along the way, by and large, Christians have lost a sense of responsibility and urgency to share the gospel. Today in the Western church we hear a lot about social justice and meeting needs and “lifestyle evangelism,” which is just a fancy way of saying we live out our faith, but don’t feel a need to speak about it. The hope of engaging

with culture in this way is that our actions will show we are followers of Jesus and people will be drawn to Him through our actions alone. Next week we are going to talk about the gospel as an act of demonstration, but we cannot separate gospel demonstration from gospel proclamation.

There is a popular quote that is usually attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi, although there is no record of Francis ever saying anything like this. The quote goes like this: "Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary, use words."

On it's face, that sounds like a great statement- and I get the sentiment of what is being expressed: our lives should reflect the fact that we are followers of God and our actions should speak for themselves that we are Christians.

Gospel proclamation and gospel demonstration are two sides of the same coin; they are in partnership, not at odds, with one another.

When we look back at what Jesus told His disciples in Luke 9 you see multiple times there is supposed to be both verbal communication of the gospel and spirit-filled demonstration of the gospel.

Jesus instructed:

2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

The disciples obeyed:

6 So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

Jesus modeled what He taught:

11 but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.

Sharing the gospel verbally and demonstrating the power of the gospel physically go hand in hand.

Today we are going to primarily focus on proclaiming the gospel and next week Andy is going to share with us what gospel demonstration looks like. The first question we need to ask is:

What is the gospel?

The root word for gospel is *euangelion*, which simply means good news.

Telling people the good news means telling people about the source of the news- Jesus! Jesus Christ is the good news because He is God's answer to our sinfulness. Each of us is in need of a Savior because each of us is guilty of sinning against God, which results in separation from Him. Jesus came to pay the penalty for our sin so we could be brought back into fellowship with God

forever.

To fully understand why the gospel is good news and why we need Jesus to be our Savior, I want to take a few minutes to go over the story of the gospel. There are five components of the gospel message I want you to hear today and learn how to share for yourself.

The Five Elements of the Gospel Story:

Creation

In the beginning, God spoke and everything came into existence including Earth with perfect garden of paradise called Eden. God made Adam and Eve in His image to reflect Him. They were created with the grand purpose of worshipping Him by loving Him, serving Him, and enjoying perfect relationship with Him. Everything in God's creation, including the relationship He had with Adam and Eve, was perfect.

Genesis 1:1, Ps 90:2

Fall

God gave Adam and Eve the freedom to make decisions and govern the earth with one rule: not to eat fruit from a specific tree. One day, God's enemy, a fallen angel named Satan, wanted to overthrow God so he took the form of a serpent and lied to Adam and Eve. He deceived them into thinking God was not good and did not have their best interest in mind. So in rebellion, Adam and Eve ate the fruit, deciding that they, not God, would determine right and wrong.

Sin entered into all of creation and into the hearts of Adam and Eve and has been passed down from generation to generation. All of creation was distorted from its original design. Everyone has inherited a sin nature from our original parents and everyone has sinned personally against God, and the ultimate consequence, even worse than physical death, is an eternal separation from a loving God called hell. Because of all this, we need to consider the questions: Can anything be done? Is there any hope?

Romans 3:19, 23

Rescue

God removed Adam and Eve from Eden as a result of their sin but left them with a promise of rescue and hope. He promised them one of their descendants would someday rescue mankind from sin. The promised Savior, simply, was God. God became human in the person of Jesus Christ almost 2,000 years ago. He perfectly enjoyed and obeyed God without sin. This ultimately led to His agonizing death on a cross as He willingly, obediently, and sufficiently died to pay for the sins of mankind, according to God's plan. In the greatest display of mercy and grace the world has ever known, Jesus' life and death became a substitute for all who would trust in Him and His resurrection on the third day showed that He had defeated death.

1 Peter 3:18, Galations 1:4

Restoration

For all those who trust in Jesus alone, God has also promised He will make all things new. The new heaven and new earth will be completely free of sin and selfishness, pain or sickness or death. God's original purpose will flourish, as those who trust in His rescue will enter into the grand purpose of worshipping Him by loving Him, serving Him, and enjoying relationship with Him forever.

John 3:16, Revelation 21:4

Respond

God is writing an amazing story from creation to restoration. He created you to be a part of that story. Faith is simple trust in Jesus Christ alone to save you. It means instead of believing you can rescue yourself from the consequences of sin, you transfer your trust to the rescue He purchased for you by His death and He gives you eternal life in Heaven forever. Your allegiance is now to Jesus, The King.

God is inviting you to be part of the story He is writing throughout the ages to come. He is offering salvation to you today and you can embrace the rescue of God by simply:

- ADMITTING YOUR NEED TO GOD
- ASKING HIM TO FORGIVE YOU
- TRUSTING IN JESUS ALONE TO RESCUE YOU
- FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST, THE KING OF YOUR LIFE, IN FAITH FROM THIS DAY FORWARD

For those of us who have heard this story and responded to the power of the gospel to change our lives, we now have the privilege of sharing the story with others. The question is: Will we share the gospel?

On some level I feel like the church in America has become apathetic to the power of the gospel. I hear and read all the time that Christians don't share their faith because they believe no one wants to hear about Jesus in our culture. Too many of us have the wrong view of the world. We think people don't want to hear the gospel and that people won't respond positively to the gospel. But that goes completely against what Jesus taught!

:: Matthew 9:37-38

37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

What is available? A plentiful harvest.

What is needed? Workers to go out into His field.

Jesus makes this so personal: these are God's fields. I think sometime we have this idea or view that Satan has so much control in this world that we are just barely holding on and the gospel is nearly powerless and Christians are desperately treading water while the world is

going to hell in a handbasket! Jesus says, nothing could be further from the truth. . .if we will do one thing: Pray for God to send workers into His harvest fields.

Sometimes, even with the best of intentions, we don't always do things in a biblical way. This past week Andy and I were talking about the names written on the cross in the corner of our room. We have made it a point of emphasis over the past month to pray for these people to come to faith in Jesus. That's not wrong! But a more biblical approach would be to pray for one another, that God would send us out intentionally into the harvest fields. We've challenged one another to share our faith this month with at least one person who we would hope would come to faith in Jesus. But we should also be praying for one another to go to school each day as if we are workers in the harvest field; to go to work each day as if we are workers in the harvest field; to build relationships in our neighborhoods as if we are workers in the harvest field; to coach our kid's teams as if we are workers in the harvest field.

We should be praying in our Life Groups that each person in the group would go out feeling sent to work the fields expecting a harvest. The reason we need to think and pray this way is because it is not one person's responsibility to bring your "One" to faith in Christ.

Paul thought about it this way in 1 Corinthians 3:

:: 1 Corinthians 3:6-9

6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.

7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

8 The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor.

9 For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

There are those who plant seeds of the gospel; someone else comes along and waters it; God is responsible for making faith grow in the life of a person; then someone else gets to see the harvest take place. I have no idea what your role will be in God's harvest, but all of us have the responsibility of proclaiming the truth to others.

I want us to close this morning with a time of prayer and I'm going to ask us to do something we don't do that often; if you are physically capable I want to ask you to come forward this morning and kneel at the front of the stage, praying for God to send out workers to His fields. Pray for one another to take seriously the role we have as disciples of Jesus to share the gospel with people we come into contact with. But also know that churches all over our city and all over our country are participating in this "Who's Your One" campaign. So pray for harvesters to be sent into schools, work places, neighborhoods, prisons, government buildings, military installations, and whatever else you can think of! The promise of the gospel is that Jesus has come into this world to bring light and the darkness cannot overcome it. Jesus told us we are the light of the world! He also told us we are harvesters! So let's pray for His light to spread and for the harvest to come.

- Pray

