

Lesson 11

The Excitement of Sharing Our Hope

Subtitle Here

Read: Titus 2:5-10; 3:1-8.

Pray for help sharing the gospel and for God to find you someone to talk to about Him. Pray for courage and for the right words. Pray for help in leading the kind of life that will attractively demonstrate the life-changing power of the gospel.

Set Your Intentions: What do you hope to achieve from this lesson?

Journal Your Thoughts. Journaling can be a valuable tool for spiritual reflection and growth.

Introduction

Now that you're in God's family, you have been given a tremendous opportunity to share the gospel with others you meet. These might be your spouse, children, parents, and extended family. There are friends in your life who are outside Christ. You may have business acquaintances or people at work who need to hear the good news. Potential prospects are everywhere!

Sharing Jesus is not a program sponsored by the local congregation. It is the natural expression of the life of a Christian. We have been given hope through the gift of salvation – now, our transformed heart yearns to share what we have with others. God's plan for sharing the gospel is not complicated. It simply comes down to each person talking to one other person who talks to one other person, and the growth begins to take on exponential proportions. And it's all driven by personal, warm relationships we build over time with lost people. They witness the impact of our transformation, see how we make our lives around something eternal and are moved by how we handle the challenges life presents. Your hope, joy, and rock-solid perseverance through life's circumstances is a fantastic testimony for Jesus.

Every Christian can do this. *You can do this.* As you reflect on your own spiritual adoption story, you can describe the incredible delivering power of Jesus. You can talk about where they were headed in your life, where they are now, and *who* is responsible for that. You can reassure others that as you've gone through life, there was One who got you through by His sustaining power. There are no lines you have to remember. There are no sets of bullet points. It's just you being relatable about what you know best – your adoption story filled with hope, amazement, and joy. This makes the gospel attractive in any era, especially in our own, as we see so many people hurting and looking for lasting hope.

In this lesson, we'll look at Titus's mission as he ministered on the island of Crete. He had a very challenging situation. Paul described the Cretans as rebellious, *full of empty talk and deception* (Titus 1:10). He even cited one of their own who described them as *liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons* (Titus 1:12). Can you imagine going into this type of place trying to preach or plant a church? The societal conditions in Crete were similar to the entire Greco-Roman world. The call of Christianity was the ultimate in what it means to be counter-cultural. Remember, Christians were operating without a Bible,

no underlying cultural influence of Christian morality, and hardly any voices loud enough to sway a world empire. Paganism and all its allures were the mainstream.

So, how did the early church respond?

How they responded is how we must respond in our own time, i.e., reaching one unsaved person at a time with the power of the gospel. For them, there was no other agenda.

Titus' Mission is Our Mission

Titus' mission was to get the gospel into the public so people could hear it. The most effective way that could be carried out was demonstrating redemption through redeemed lives. The entire thrust of Paul's letter to Titus is the need to convert the lost. The theme of the book is salvation. Paul emphasizes:

- God is our Savior (1:3; 2:10; 3:4).
- Jesus is our Savior (1:4; 2:13; 3:6).
- The Spirit performs the action of salvation in baptism (3:5b-6).

This is the message. As we deliver the message, what must we keep in mind? We must live and conduct ourselves in a way that:

1. God's word will not be slandered (2:5).
2. Our opponents will have nothing bad to say about us (2:8).
3. We adorn the teaching of God our Savior in everything (2:10).

The mission is to get the gospel into the public's ears. We do this primarily by demonstrating redemption through our redeemed lives. Everything we do in life becomes an opportunity to share Jesus and talk about how He is directing our new life.

Three Things We Need to Remember About Our Mission

If we are going to be successful in sharing the gospel, we must keep three essential things in mind:

Remember Your Responsibility to Society

In our age of self-expression, independence, and selfishness, we may not concentrate on these virtues as we should. Check out Titus 3:1-2:

Remind them to submit to rulers and authorities, obey, be ready for every good work, slander no one, avoid fighting, and be kind, always showing gentleness to all people.

Let's talk about each of the things Paul lists:

- Be submissive to rulers and authorities. We may not always agree, but we pray for them and follow their lead when they do what is right.
- Be obedient. (A parallel passage is found in 2 Timothy 2:21, where we are called vessels of honor ready for every good work.)
- Ready for every good work.
- Slander no one. i.e., *speak evil of no one*.

- Avoid fighting. i.e., *quarreling*.
- Be kind.
- Show gentleness to all people.

These are fundamental principles of citizenship—good behavior in everyday life. Christians should not be known for being contentious, fighting, or protesting. We trust in God to make things right when wrong is suffered. Why is this so important? The world is watching now more than ever. How are you responding during times of crisis? What do others see in your social media feeds?

Remember Your Former Condition

For we too were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved by various passions and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, detesting one another (Titus 3:3).

Before we attack the world with its problems and view ourselves as a cultural warrior, we need to remember who we once were. The contrast is between our former status (dead) vs. our present regenerated condition.

We were:

- rebellious to God's law
- resistant to His truth
- open to mindless passion
- fed on the bad treatment of others

These types of passive and active things characterize the rest of humanity. What Paul describes here once described us, and that should humble us all.

Remember Your Salvation

But when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. He poured out his Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior so that, having been justified by his grace, we may become heirs with the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:4-7).

God has saved you. Jesus is the basis of your salvation. Your salvation wasn't by your work. It was by the mercy of God. What makes this even more amazing is that God took the initiative to save us while we were still aligned against him, i.e., an enemy (Romans 5:8-10). God saved us when we surrendered our will to Him in baptism. Before that, we were wretched and hopelessly lost. It was God who renewed you by the Holy Spirit. Think of how this hits the heart of human pride. There is no reason ever to exalt ourselves. The emphasis is on God. His grace, power, mercy, and activity in saving us are all in complete focus.

This will change how we look at the world. Evangelism will become a natural expression of a humble, saved heart that trusts God. We've all been inside the pit. Thank God he pulled us out. Let's tell everyone that He can do the same for them.

What's In This for Us?

Authenticity in Evangelism: Sharing Jesus isn't a scripted program but a natural expression of a changed life. In modern times, where authenticity is valued, our personal stories of transformation can resonate deeply with others. We can share the hope and joy we've found in Christ through genuine, warm relationships built over time.

Cultural Relevance: Just as Titus faced a challenging cultural backdrop, we encounter diverse societal norms and values today. Our mission remains counter-cultural, emphasizing redemption through transformed lives. In today's world filled with distractions and competing ideologies, our commitment to living out the gospel becomes a powerful testimony that draws others to Christ.

Principles of Citizenship: Our responsibility to society extends beyond the walls of our churches. We're called to embody daily virtues such as submission, obedience, kindness, and gentleness. In an age marked by division and conflict, our conduct as Christians speaks volumes about our faith. By upholding these principles, we demonstrate the gospel's power in action.

Humility and Gratitude: Reflecting on our former condition reminds us of God's grace and mercy. We were once lost and hopeless, but God intervened and saved us through His kindness and love. This humbling realization should fuel our evangelistic efforts, prompting us to share the hope of salvation with others. Our salvation story becomes a powerful tool for reaching those hurting and searching for lasting hope in a world of uncertainty.

Conclusion

This saying is trustworthy. I want you to insist on these things so that those who believe in God might be careful to devote themselves to good works. These are good and profitable for everyone (Titus 3:8).

What we've explored in this lesson is a firm foundation of truth. As someone our heavenly Father has adopted, we can confidently proclaim the gospel, knowing its power remains unchanged.

Let us continually uphold the three foundational principles: living in a manner that honors God's word, speaking in a manner that reflects Christ's character, and adorning the doctrine of Christ through our actions. May we always remember our responsibility to society, our former condition before salvation, and the miraculous gift of our salvation. In doing so, we embody the powerful message of the gospel and invite others to experience the same hope and redemption we've found in Jesus Christ.

For Discussion

1. How does the unchanging power of the gospel inspire your confidence in sharing your faith with others?
2. In what ways can you actively live out the foundational principles of honoring God's word, reflecting Christ's character, and adorning Christ's doctrine in your daily life?
3. Reflecting on your transformation, how has remembering your former condition before salvation impacted your understanding of God's grace and mercy?
4. What steps can you take as a Christian to fulfill your responsibility to society, especially in today's cultural context?
5. Consider a time when someone's changed life or testimony profoundly impacted you. How did it influence your perception of Christianity?
6. How does the gift of salvation motivate you to share the gospel with others, searching for hope and redemption?
7. How can you ensure that your words and actions consistently reflect the character of Christ, especially when faced with challenges or opposition?
8. Reflect on a specific instance in which you experienced the power of the gospel in your life. How does that experience inform your approach to evangelism?
9. What practical steps can you take to maintain a humble attitude as you share the gospel, recognizing that salvation is a gift from God?
10. How does the timeless truth of the gospel encourage you to persevere in sharing your faith, even while changing cultural norms and societal pressures?