

## Show and Tell – Talking the Walk

3/26/23

Matthew 25:

Sunday AM

**Good AM class** – last Sunday for show/tell I brought a chunk of the Berlin Wall, (5) smooth stones from the creek bed in the Valley of Elah where David likely chose his (5) stones that slayed Goliath – and I brought a Cheeto – to remind us that we're to be more than a bunch of puffed up religionist who are all volume and no substance but instead, we're to have a faith w/ substance that walks the talk.

For those of you who showered me w/ bags of Cheetos – thank you! I will enjoy them. You almost inspired me to bring a shrimp/lobster for Show/Tell today.

**Instead**, today I've brought a few more items I hope will impress you. The first one was a gift from my daughter – a few yrs ago, she went on an archeological dig in Nazareth where she recovered this piece of pottery that dates back to 800 yrs before Christ likely during the reign of King Joash or King Jeroboam II.

Next, I brought a leaf from a Geneva Bible that dates back to 1560 and contains my life verse. The GB preceded the KJV and was the Bible of Shakespeare, John Calvin, John Knox, and Oliver Cromwell.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> item I've brought w/ me today is this bracelet. Have you ever seen a bracelet like this? Does anyone have an idea of what this bracelet is made of?

It's made of pieces of torn paper – to share a message of hope, peace, and grace to people whose lives have been torn to pieces by life. So, it serves as a discussion starter to help you to engage in spiritual conversations w/ others to share about the love/grace of Jesus.

Last week, we began a 2-week series on the topic of walking/talking our faith. Last week, we discussed the importance of *walking the talk* before *talking the walk* – b/c our actions always speak louder than our words. So, rather than having a CPF, God wants us to have a practicing faith w/ substance.

**Idea** is – *Your walk talks but your talk don't walk.*

**Or** – *Share Jesus always; when possible – use words!*

Now, this doesn't mean we're never to *talk our faith* – nor does it exclude our responsibility to be a witness for the things of God – WE ARE! It simply means that *our words should never contradict our actions*.

In fact, all thru the N.T., beyond the G.C. in Matthew 28, we find passages calling us to share w/ others about the love of God displayed thru the life of Jesus.

In **2 Corinthians 5:14-21**, we learn that God's love in us should compel us to become ambassadors of Christ who engage in the ministry of reconciliation.

An *ambassador* represents their homeland in a foreign land. Meaning – as Jesus' followers, we're called to represent heaven here on earth thru our words/actions.

My favorite bible story about witnessing is in **John 9** where Jesus heals a blind man by spitting in the dirt and making a mud pie. Later, the man was asked what had happened. The man testified – *All I know is, I was blind and now I see and Jesus is the reason.*

**Point** – God expects us to verbally testify/bear witness of His wonder-working power in our lives.

This brings us to our text today in **Matthew 25**.

In what is known as the *Olivet Discourse*, Jesus offers a series of prophetic teachings to His disciples that includes the Parable of the 10 Virgins, the Parable of the Talents, and the Parable of the Sheep/Goat.

The gist of the Parable of the 10 Virgins is that we should live each day in **preparation** for Jesus' return.

The gist of the Parable of the Sheep/Goat is that we should live in the expectation of the reality of Jesus' return b/c of what is at stake – eternity!

Sandwiched in b/w these (2) parables is the familiar **Parable of the Talents** – that's often taught for its secondary lesson of stewardship rather than its primary lesson of **priority** living.

*“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. To one he gave (5) talents, to another (2), and to another (1), to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the (5) talents went and traded w/ them, and made another (5) talents. Likewise, he who had received (2) gained (2) more. But he who had received (1) went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time, the lord of those servants came and settled accounts w/ them. So, he who had received (5) talents came and brought (5) other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me (5) talents; look, I have gained (5) more talents besides them.' His lord said, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received (2) talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me (2) talents; look, I have gained (2) more talents besides them.' His lord said, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' Then he who had received the (1) talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So, b/c I was afraid and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' But his lord said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed So, you ought to have deposited my money w/ the bankers, and at my coming, I would've received back my own w/ interest. So, take the talent from him, and give it to him who has (10) talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away – and cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'”*

The primary message of this parable is how believers are to **prioritize** living for God's kingdom instead of for themselves by investing Jesus in us into them.

**So, whether we've been given a little** or a lot, as believers, we're to live each day thinking about how we can use our **time, talents, treasures, tongue, temple**, and **testimony** to influence others to God – **while to w/hold or misuse these blessings b/c we're living for ourselves is inexcusable.**

This parable underscores the **priority** purpose of the Christian life. We're to live every min. of every day on mission for God burdened by the lostness around us and concerned about the eternity of every person our lives intersect w/ on a daily basis. It's about living as a witness by setting aside and dying to ourselves so that Christ in us might live thru us to introduce others to the truth that God so loves them that He gave His life so they too might experience God's grace/mercy.

Yet for this to occur, we have to **live in anticipation** of His return and we have to have His heart that no one would perish, but all would come to repentance.

It requires we take His G.C. seriously and participate under the leading of the H.S. to implement His strategy. Look w/ me at **Acts 1:8**:

*You will receive power when the H.S. has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8*

**I'm going to take this verse in reverse order.**

I **WHERE** We Are to Go

*Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth*

**Jerusalem** is where we *live, work, and play* – meaning we're to awake every AM, ready to live on mission and to be His witness in our everyday life.

**Judea** is a broader circle, like our state or region, but the real emphasis is on going into our world to engage people who are like us and that we identify w/. People who have a similar culture or worldview.

Whereas, going to **Samaria** is going to people who are different from us – who may have a different view of life, a different language or cultural worldview, but still live in close proximity to us.

Finally, **to the ends of the earth**, refers to being willing to engage anyone, anywhere for the purpose of loving them to the love of God. It's a willingness to leave the comforts/conveniences of home whether short-term or long-term, to meet people at the point of the need in Jesus' name to influence them to God's grace/mercy.

**Bottomline** – As Jesus-followers, we're to have a love and concern for *everyone, everywhere, in every way* – as we *give, go, and pray* to share His love w/ others.

II **WHO** We Are to Be

**witness** (*marturia*) It's the word from which we get our English word – *martyr*. This isn't a tame word as in go put on your "Sunday best" and run off to S.S. – *this is a call to lay down your life for what you believe*.

A witness is someone who testifies or offers an accounting of what they have seen or experienced no matter the cost to them.

**IOW** – we're God's *evidence*. His *credentials*. His *publicity, commercials, and recommendations*. We're His *argument/apologetic* – witnesses to his love/grace.

**BUT** – too often we misunderstand this. Yes, a witness is one who testifies, but not every witness gets to the (4) spiritual laws or Roman's Road. Not every witness ends w/ a baptism. Most end w/ a kind prayer, a word of encouragement, or an offer to meet again soon.

Witnessing is the deep-seated conviction that the greatest favor I can do for others is to introduce them to Jesus – no matter the cost to me. *P. Little*

A witness simply engages in conversation w/ others in the hope of testifying and talking about spiritual things to enable the H.S. to do what only the H.S. can do.

III **WHAT** is God's Role

**God's role is to do what only God can do**. When the H.S. comes upon us (at salvation) we become His witnesses. Yet our job is never to do the job of the H.S.

The H.S.'s job is to *convict, convince, coax,* and *convert.* Our job is to *convey* the message under the leading of the H.S. as doors open for us to engage in spiritual conversations w/ other people.

**As we close today,** I want you to take out the card you should've received when you entered today. This card is for you to write down the names of people your life currently intersects w/ that you'd be willing to ask God to help you to engage in spiritual conversation to plant a seed and share the hope that's w/in you.

Also, this AM, I have 50 Torn Pages bracelets if you would like to have one – and then we have a table in the Gathering Room for anyone who'd like to purchase 1 or 2 – all of the proceeds go to **Torn Pages**