

A barber who wanted to learn how to share the gospel, faithfully attended his classes and learned to ask some important questions like, “If you died tonight, where would you spend eternity?” On his first day back at the shop, he prayed for courage to share with his first customer, but the customer was a biker with tattoos up and down his arms, so he decided to wait for another. But he procrastinated, making excuse after excuse with each subsequent customer until finally his last appointment, a very congenial man, comes in late. He prays a quick prayer, committing to share the gospel with this customer and then begins to perspire. While sharpening his razor on the strap, his mind goes blank and he cannot remember what to say. Then he puts the razor to the man’s throat and yells out, “You’re going to die....”

That is what it feels like to share the gospel for the first time! Your hands go clammy, you wonder if you will forget everything you learned...and then you mess up!

1. This past week, a mission team of 10 people, 3 adults, and a mixture of teens and college students came to our church and helped us reach out into our community.
  - a. They distributed flyers to our vbs and sports camps.
  - b. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, their team and some of our members walked around the Mentor fireworks area before dark and shared the good news of Jesus...and led 4 people to Christ!
    - i. I wish you could have seen the look of amazement on these young people’s faces as they returned to tell us what happened!
  - c. On July 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> we went to Geneva on the Lake and shared the gospel with the workers and patrons of the strip...and led 3 more people to Christ!
    - i. I want to share some of the impressions of the team after they shared the good news as well as some of the actual conversations with the folks they were talking to. .
    - ii. Video(s)**
2. Just as we went out, so must we all go out.
  - a. John 4:35 says, “*Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.*”
    - i. There are people all around us who are looking for answers to their lives, answers to such questions as...
      1. Why am I here?
      2. Where is God when I need Him?
      3. Do I matter?
      4. Is this all there is?
      5. Is God really interested in me?
    - ii. These people have not found the answers in religion, in alcohol, in materialism, and are still searching!
    - iii. We ran across people who were like a ripe piece of fruit just waiting for someone to tell them how they can experience God’s forgiveness and have a genuine relationship with Him.

- iv. If we only knew how ready people are to hear the good news...I believe we would share it more often.
  - b. **But...You cannot catch fish in a bathtub or raise corn in your living room**
    - i. We must go where people are.
    - ii. We must go where they live, where they play.
    - iii. Trailer Park: As we went to Western Reserve Mobile Home Park, we had between 20-25 children come for our backyard bible club! They were aching for something meaningful and wholesome for their lives, they ate up the attention we gave them and the soaked up the love of Christ that we shared.
      - 1. It was there that I came to the realization that many children, like these who came to the club, would never darken the doors of our church because their parents couldn't or wouldn't bring them.
      - 2. But if we did something on their location, we couldn't keep them away.
    - 3. Show short video!**
    - iv. Even when they come to us, we must still go to them.
      - 1. When the children come to us, we must go to their parents and share the good news with them!
3. Romans 1:16 " [For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes....](#)"
- a. Several people in our congregation joined us to try to share their faith or be a part of the process. Several came and simply watched and learned, and they got to see transformational power of the gospel at work.
  - b. Let me share with you the power of the gospel and what actually happens when the good news touches a person's life.
    - i. They are confronted with their need for a Savior.**
      - 1. We share with them Romans 3:23 which says, "*all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*"
      - 2. Very simply, this says that every one of us has sinned. We all have fallen short of God's perfect standard of righteousness.
      - 3. When we share this scripture, they see the reality that they are a sinner, on their way to hell.
        - a. Psalm 5:4 "*For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; no evil dwells with You.*"
        - b. God's standard is holiness, and none of us can by our own selves achieve it!
      - 4. Romans 6:23 reads, "*the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"
        - a. Our sins deserve death. That is the sentence pronounced upon every human being.

- b. Not just death physically, but spiritual separation from God. We cannot bridge the gap between us and Him. Our sin has separated us from Him.
    - c. This passage hints that there is an answer...*“eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
  - 5. Now there is a contrast between the death and life mentioned in this verse.
    - a. Do you see it? Wages of sin...free gift of God.
    - b. Ephesians 2:8-9 says it plainly: *“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”*
    - c. Again, the key word is a GIFT.
    - d. God offers the gift of eternal life to anyone who will place their faith in Jesus Christ His Son.
    - e. We cannot work for it, we cannot earn it, we cannot balance out our sins with our good works. It is a gift. We cannot add to it and we cannot subtract from it.
      - i. Imagine a piece of fine cabinetry given to you as a gift. The cabinet maker spends years making this beautiful china cabinet for you out of mahogany. Do you take a piece of sandpaper to it? Of course not! Because it is finished! You cannot make it better!
- 4. Let me share a few of the statements we heard from folks before we shared the scriptures with them:
  - a. There are many ways to God.**
    - i. John 14:6 *Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Me.”*
  - b. I have done too many bad things.**
    - i. Romans 10:13 *“all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”*
    - ii. I wanted to say, “what part of ALL don’t you understand?”
  - c. I need to get my life cleaned up.**
    - i. Romans 5:8 *“But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.”*
    - ii. He didn’t wait for us to clean our lives up before offering us forgiveness in Christ!
- 5. It is this verse and the passage in John 3:16 which says, *“For God so loved \_\_\_\_\_ (the world) that He gave His only begotten Son so that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life”* that the lights seem to come on.
  - a. They begin to recognize that God is seeking them.
    - 1. This is revolutionary. It is life changing. It is powerful because it is liberating.
    - 2. They begin to see the graciousness of God, His unconditional love.
    - 3. It transforms them.
  - ii. Jesus death was for all time...this was a question we ran across several times.
    - 1. He lives outside of time, because He is God.
    - 2. His death was for everyone, past, present and future.
    - 3. His sacrifice was for your sins, past, present and future.

4. He has given himself for you.
- iii. Jesus comes to live inside believer's hearts. He wants to live inside your heart. He wants to allow you to experience Him, not just in church but in the daily moment by moment of every day life.
  1. We hear His voice
  2. He transforms us from the inside out.
  3. He gives purpose, direction and eternal significance to our lives.

Would you like to experience this incredible transformation?

You can. He says in Revelation 3:20, "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears and listens to and heeds My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him.*"

While we were at Geneva on the Lake, you might have seen the two young women that Kristin, myself and Richard were talking to. One of them replied after I shared how God spoke to me personally, "Oh He would never do that for me!" As we walked away, Kristin remarked, "she didn't realize God was speaking to her at that very moment!"

Today, perhaps God is speaking to you.

To come have a relationship with Him? *You can this morning by simply closing your eyes and praying this prayer with me. "O God. I have tried so many things but I haven't found You. Today I want to stop running from You. I want to stop playing God and let you be God in my life. I need forgiveness. I need a savior. I choose to place my faith in Jesus Christ as my savior and receive eternal life. I believe He died for ME personally and rose again. In Jesus Name, amen.*

*With no one looking around, If you prayed that prayer, I ask you to slip your hand up this morning and just let me know it.*

Or to be a part of helping others enter into a relationship with Him

There are many ways to do that. On your seats is a card ....