



Sharing the Gospel

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A few years ago, I attended the homegoing service of a young child. Emotions were high as that situation really made everyone begin to think about life. The consensus was that it was a life gone too soon. The minister who delivered the eulogy really put life into perspective. He talked about how God loaned this child to us only for a time; he talked about life as a vapor, and emphasized the need for everyone to think in terms of our days being numbered. The Holy Spirit was moving through that church!

Outside, following the service, I ran into one of my former students. He was a jokester in class, and nothing seemed to have changed. After an embrace and a few pleasantries, I said, "Wow, that message...it really made me think and put life into perspective. When God says it's time, it's time, you know...?" He responded, "Do you still have that old blue car you used to drive?" I was rather stunned at how he changed the subject so abruptly, but responded, "I, actually do!"

This experience bothered me for weeks! I thought this young man, based on the message we had all just heard, might be ready to make the decision to believe in God, to have his sins forgiven, to confess Jesus as Lord and Savior. I was going to share the Gospel, or at least initiate a discussion in regards to the the message that had just been shared, but he was not ready to hear it. I felt as if this failure was a reflection on me. I have come to realize that his rejection was not my failure. I did what I was supposed to do. As Christians, it is our responsibility to share the Gospel, it is not our responsibility to force anyone to accept it. As I think on that day, I had no idea what else I was going to say, I suppose I was just going to go with the flow of the conversation and say what the Lord led me to say. Since that time, however, in feeling the need to be better prepared, there are a few key Scriptures that can really add to the conversation.

Genesis 1:1 *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

God is our Creator. He is the One whose grand idea it was to create the sun, moon, and earth, and to have them rotate and revolve in the fashion we learned in elementary school. He created everything we see, from nothing. He created man and woman and breathed life into them. He did

all of this in His order and He has a plan for every life that lives. He loves each of us and desires to have a relationship with each of us, but He doesn't push, it is purely our own decision to have Him as a part of our life.

Romans 3:23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

Everyone does things that are not pleasing to God in our words, thoughts and actions. These things destroy the relationship between ourselves and God. Our sin separates us from God.

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

Because of our sin, and the separation it causes, God gave His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross so that we could be forgiven of our sins. Without the blood of Jesus there is no forgiveness.

John 14:6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.* These are the words of Jesus, and His words are true. Because of Jesus, our belief in Jesus, when we physically die, we don't have to suffer separation from God, we can live in heaven with Him forever. Our belief in Jesus is the only way to be forgiven of our sins and restore the relationship between ourselves and God that was previously broken by sin.

As I close out this post, I wonder if anyone reading actually needs the Gospel for themselves. I wonder if anyone, since reading those verses, has now decided that they desire a relationship with God or would like to discuss it further. Life can be short. If you watch the news, you know that it is a violent world in which we live, our lives can change without warning. For many people, this is the time of year that we evaluate our life insurance benefits and beneficiaries forcing us to think about final preparations. Salvation is a final preparation that needs our attention. It is a decision that must be made while we are living - we cannot change our minds once we feel the heat of the "blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 13:50) It's a decision we must make before the stray bullet strikes. Once we make the decision, we can live in peace - we won't have to wonder how we will spend eternity. We will spend eternity in heaven.

Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.*

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

Ephesians 2:8 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-*

AMEN!

Share this with someone who needs to hear the Gospel!

Kim

