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Making Disciples and Sharing Your Faith

It is obvious from Scriptures like Matthew 28:18-20 and John 15:16 that we, as disciples of Christ, need to be preaching the Gospel and, more importantly, bearing fruit that will last. Yes, the Scriptures do teach that there are different types of fruit, as illustrated in Galatians 5:22,23. In this article, I would like to encourage you in the preaching of the Gospel and therefore producing the fruit of souls being saved for Jesus.

Have you ever walked into a store with your heart set on preaching the Gospel and hopefully leaving with a Bible study? But, instead, you end up walking out empty handed. In other words, for one reason or another, you failed to preach the Gospel and share your faith. How many days/weeks/months/years does it take for you to share your faith at work? This weakness in ourselves once again confirms our God's power and love for us. God demonstrates His love for us in many ways. In John 14:26, Jesus states that God has given us the Holy Spirit to be our Helper and Counselor. Furthermore, in 2 Corinthians 12:9, we are taught that through our weakness, God's power is made perfect.

Now, ask yourself the following question: "With God being so ready to help, why am I still not preaching the Gospel like I should?"

After the lack of motivation, the major reason why disciples do not preach the Gospel is due to the fear of rejection. The fear of being turned down, laughed at, mocked, or looked upon as a "religious fanatic" has hindered many disciples in their efforts to preach the Gospel. How does one overcome the fear of rejection? I would like to share with you three points to keep in mind when preparing to preach the Gospel.

I. Please God, Not Men

If we are serious in our desire to be disciples of Christ, then we must make sure that it is God we are trying to please and not man (Galatians 1:10). We need to be more concerned with what God thinks, rather than what people think.

II. Pray For Boldness

Many of us, when we pray, only pray for hearts to be open, which is very good. However, I will encourage you to go one step further in your prayers. In 1 Corinthians 2:1-3, Paul shares with us that he too had fears when it came to preaching the Gospel. Paul believed in the power of prayer to provide boldness and he asked for prayers from others as well (Ephesians 6:18-19). In Acts 4:29-31, Peter and John also prayed for boldness when it came to preaching the Gospel.

III. Keep Preaching

Galatians 6:9 says, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." As the saying goes, "You must be in it, to win it." If we are going to win the lost, we must never give up. Through Paul's example, you would never know that at one time he was timid in preaching the Gospel. However, by perseverance and simply relying on God for His strength, he was able to overcome this fear.

Conclusion:

We, as disciples of Christ, know that the battle has already been won and because of that, we are all winners. 2 Corinthians 4:1-3 teaches us that it is through God's mercy that we have this ministry and it is our job to set forth the Truth. Therefore, I would like to encourage you to take the "One-A-Day" challenge. Make a commitment to preach the Gospel to at least one person each day.

By Derek Peterson

“Let your Light so shine...”

Matthew 5:16

Sowing for Jesus or Self?

Deception could well be viewed as Satan’s greatest weapon. A study of God’s Word clearly reveals the relentless nature of the devil, in respect to his pursuit to deceive God’s people. Jesus Himself calls Satan “*the father of lies*” (John 8:44). Right from his success in deceiving Eve in the garden (Genesis 3:4), to his attempt to deceive our Lord Himself in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11), Satan’s tactics are deeply cunning and can easily lure the most faithful follower of God. The title here, “Sowing for Jesus or Self?” depicts a scenario of people sowing, i.e. this case, one who “appears” to be working for or serving the Lord. On the outside, the disciple appears to be giving his/her all for the Kingdom, totally committed and faithful to the Lord’s commands and would never miss a Lord’s Supper. Yet, the question becomes, who is it all for? I often ask myself this question, while examining my faith: “Do I do what I do truly to please my Lord, or is it more for drawing attention to myself?”

Galatians 6:7-8 (NIV) draws a powerful line, “*Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature (flesh), from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*”

As a disciples of Jesus, you must “...set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed” (1 Peter 1:13). This comes through relentless discipline on reflecting and meditating on God’s promises in His Word. This will help us not fall into the trap of seeking earthly praise, which is bait that comes from the devil. We must go through the often-painful process of allowing God’s Word to expose our true motives (Hebrews 4:12) and then to come to our God with a broken heart in true repentance (1 John 1:9). I have come to learn that this should not be taken lightly. There are many on the casualty list of those who fell into the trap of “Sowing for Self” (read 3 John:9-10, 2 Timothy 4:9-10, Philippians 1:15). They “appeared” to be disciples and indeed were sowing...yet, their motives appear to have had selfish interests and not the interest of pleasing Jesus. Brethren, let us take heed to this encouragement and be, from the “inside out,” those who “*make it our goal to please HIM!*” (2 Corinthians 5:9) Amen!

Your fellow servant,

Ladipo Davies

“The Lord added to their number...”

Acts 2:47

Baptisms

DATE	NAME	TOWN
04/02/03	Chris Wood.....	Pittsburgh
04/02/03	Angela Alvarado.....	Riverhead
04/09/03	Christopher Munna.....	Smithtown
04/13/03	Ryan Senn.....	Centereach
04/16/03	Jeffrey Asselta	Rocky Point

“They first gave themselves to the Lord...”

2 Corinthians 8:5

Weekly Budget: \$ 6,000

DATE	ATTENDANCE	CONTRIBUTION
05/04/03	336	\$ 5,803
05/11/03	332	\$ 7,155
05/18/03	309	\$ 7,850
05/25/03	343	\$ 5,324

“Whatever Is True”

Caprice Brown

Do you ever struggle with negative thoughts? I do. At times, my mind dwells on the worst of a situation. You know, those “what if” thoughts. These are thoughts that produce no positive action, just fear and anxiety. “What if this thing happens?” “What if that plan doesn’t work?” “What if someone says this to me?” “What if they are thinking that?” 2 Corinthians 10:5 encourages us to “...*take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*” **Negative thoughts must not be allowed to reign free in our minds. They must be captured, seized, and changed.** I have fought long and hard to put this Scripture into practice in my life, praying for God’s strength, while thanking Him for the wisdom that I have gained through my struggles.

Once I became aware of this tendency to dwell on the worst, I decided to memorize Philippians 4:8: “*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things.*”

When my thoughts go amuck, I recite this verse over and over again; sometimes ten times a day! Through my meditations, God revealed something interesting to me in this verse. “*Whatever is true.*” God wants me to replace negative thoughts with “*whatever is true.*” What is true? God’s Word is true - John 17:17. I definitely needed to focus on the Truth of His Word! But, then it dawned on me that I also needed to stop spending my energies on falsehood. None of those “what if” thoughts were Truth! Proverbs 30:8 starts out by saying, “*Keep falsehood and lies far from me...*” I don’t want to entertain my mind with lies. True, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy are God’s Words, His thoughts, His promises, His plan, and His will. My negative thoughts were lies!

I then began to examine my life. I sought to identify any sign that a negative thought had taken root. I checked my expressions and attitudes, my responses to advice and council, and my relationships outside and within my household. We often aren’t aware that some of our reactions are the product of negative thoughts. It isn’t an easy task to recognize one’s own negativity.

For example, have you ever found yourself sullen, moody, and even rude when someone tries to correct or advise you? Attitudes! Where do they come from? Don’t they arise when we assume, misunderstand, or even doubt what we are told? “What if this happens?” “What if that doesn’t work?” “What if someone says this?” “What if they are thinking that?” The Lord has taught me to focus on the Truth of what’s being shared and not on what my heart tells me. Jeremiah 17:9 reminds us of the deceitfulness of the heart; it cannot be trusted. Since the counsel is coming from one who loves me, no matter how the Truth is delivered, I need to humbly accept it and be thankful.

I want to run my race for the Lord with confidence! I don’t want to be bound by the uncertainties of my heart. That’s why Paul encouraged the Colossian Church to “*Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God*” (Colossians 3:2-3). I died twelve years ago when I said, “I do” to Christ as my Savior. I cannot continue to resurrect my old self with its doubts, fears, and faithlessness.

So, let us:

1. Pray and be thankful! (Philippians 4:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18, Colossians 4:2)

Prayer releases us of fear and worry; thankfulness changes the attitude and focus.

2. Be alert (Ephesians 6:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:6)

Satan desires to have us back and he attacks us first in our minds. He wants us to think the worst of ourselves, others, and our circumstances. He wants us to dwell on the “what ifs.” He knows such thoughts destroy our self esteem, our relationships, and our faith in God. So, be alert, which means “vigilantly aware” (The Random House College Dictionary) of his schemes and put on the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18).

3. Train our minds (Romans 12:2, 1 Timothy 4:7)

Renew your mind with God’s Holy Scriptures. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*” Meditate on them, memorize them, and watch what happens (Joshua 1:8)! Train yourself to think the best of everything and everyone. “*Whatever is true...think about such things.*” If you think goodness, you’ll get goodness. Sisters, there is so much freedom in focusing on the Truth of God!

“*Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*” 2 Corinthians 3:17-18

“For the building up of the Body...”

Ephesians 4:12

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 📖 We will not meet for Wednesday night class on June 11th (Long Island) and June 25th & July 2nd (City).
- 📖 If you would like to order a cassette tape of a past sermon or seminar, please see Rob Dixon.
- 📖 If you would like to send a Church bulletin or a Bible study to an interested relative/friend on a regular basis, please contact our brother Jack Peisel.
- 📖 All announcements and address/telephone changes should be submitted to Derek Peterson.

MISSIONARY SUPPORT

- ✠ Good News Stand.....Sayville, New York
- ✠ Paolo Di Luca.....Italy
- ✠ Apologetics PressInternational
- ✠ We Care Ministries.....West Monroe, Louisiana
- ✠ Ron Clayton.....India

“Your faith toward God has gone forth...”

1 Thessalonians 1:8

COMMUNITY BIBLE CLASS MINISTRIES

Long Island Ministry.....(Wednesday 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.).....Robert Carr.....(631) 348-7322
New York Institute of Technology Chapel, Carleton Avenue, Central Islip, NY

City Ministry.....(Wednesday 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.).....Pedro Gelabert(646) 226-2361
Plattdeutsche Restaurant, 1132 Hempstead Turnpike, Franklin Square, NY

UPCOMING KINGDOM EVENTS

For anyone wanting to use his/her vacation in a fruitful way, take a vacation to help bring souls to Jesus. :) Join a “We Care Ministry” soul winning team and help bring people to the Lord. Learn the techniques of the “We Care Ministry” team leaders: Larry West, Bob Danklefsen, and Joe Barker. Room and board will be provided. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Bob Carr.

We Care Campaign Itinerary

2003	Location
June 19 - 29	Laurel, MD
July 24 - Aug 3	Houston, TX
September 4 - 14	Wenatchee, WA