

THE GOSPEL IN ALL THINGS

IMITATION...FLATTERY OR REFLECTION?

When you were a kid who did you pretend to be?

What did you do to be like them? (the way you talked, walked, the clothes you wore, the way you sang, your attitude, etc.)

Who in your family are you most like?

What are the characteristics you share with them?

Remember from last week, that Pastor Chris' sermon series is focusing on Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Let's look again at some Scripture we read last week:

1 Corinthians 1: 4-7 — I always thank my God for you because of the grace of God given to you in Christ Jesus, 5 that you were enriched in Him in every way, in all speech and all knowledge. 6 In this way, the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you,

In verse 5, Paul said their lives had been "enriched." That word means "to be made rich, filled with what is desirable."

What areas of their lives were "enriched?"

Have you ever caught your children or grandchildren imitating you?

Did you like what you heard / saw?

Did their imitation cause you to rethink how you come across to them or did it make you think that you might be doing something right?

Paul said...

1 Corinthians 11:1 — Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ.

As followers of Christ, our lives should reflect that of Christ to everyone who is watching us. Not only does this mean your family, but also total strangers who watch how we react to situations around us.

On a scale of 1 to 10, rate how well you maintain your Christian composure in the following situations. (1- not very Jesus; 10 - super child of God)

When the checkout lane is moving slow.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When you make a “quick” phone call that lasts an hour.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When the traffic is at a stand still.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When you’re wanting peace and quiet but the kids are loud and climbing on you.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When you watch the news.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When it’s time to do the one chore you hate the most.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When there’s been a death in the family.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When you think about the future.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When you don’t get your way.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When the boss wants something done his way, instead of your way.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How did you do? Are you imitating Christ to the world around you?

GOOD NEWS!

Luke 2: 10-11 — And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

We just came out of the Christmas season, so the account of the angels and the shepherds should be fresh on our minds. When the angels announced that they had GOOD NEWS, they were really saying, “Hey guys, here’s the message of the Gospel—our Savior has arrived!”

Paul had this to say about the Good News of the Gospel...

1 Corinthians 1:18, 21-24 — For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but it is the power of God to us who are being saved. 21 For since, in God’s wisdom, the world did not know God through wisdom, God was pleased to save those who believe through the foolishness of what is preached. 22 For the Jews ask for signs and the Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles. 24 Yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God,

Why would Paul say that the “word of the cross is foolishness” to some?

In verse 23, Paul uses the words “stumbling block” to describe how the Jews react to the message. This isn’t “stumbling block” as we might think. The original Greek words used here is “skandalon,” from which we get our word scandalous. Remember, in Paul’s day the cross was a form of capital punishment reserved for the worst offenders. To die publicly on a cross was shameful and disgraceful.

The Greeks responded to the message of the Gospel as being foolish. The word in the original language finds it’s root from the word “moria,” meaning moron. The Greeks prided themselves on their high intellect. So being called a “moron” was about the lowest insult you could receive.

So the people in Paul’s day called the message of the cross a scandalous, moronic concept. Has much changed?

How is being a Christian today looked at in our society?

How are Christians normally portrayed in secular movies?

How outlandish does the idea of the death of a man on a cross for salvation of the world seem to those who don't believe?

What are some things non-believers say?

What makes it real to you? Why do you believe?

Is the calling of a Christian to be one in distress or one who rescues the world?

RESCUING THE WORLD

The task of every believer is to spread the Good News of the Gospel to the world. In essence, we are like those angels who appeared to the shepherds proclaiming, "the Savior is here and I can show you where to find Him!"

Can you name one person that you would like to see give their heart to Christ this year?

Steps to Winning Others to Christ

1. _____

First, you need to prepare yourself through prayer. Ask God to make you brave, lead you to the person He wants you to share with, provide the perfect opportunity, and give you the right words to say.

If you have a particular person(s) that you want to share Jesus with, you might consider writing their name in a prayer journal, then pray these prayer points for them everyday.

10 PRAYER POINTS FOR THEM:

- Ask God to open their spiritual eyes (2 Cor. 4:4).
- Ask God to give them ears to hear (Matt. 13:15),
- Ask God to give them faith to believe (Acts 20:21).
- Ask God to give them the will to respond (Rom. 10:9).
- Ask God to send people into their lives to be a positive influence to them (Matt. 9:38).
- Ask God for ways to build a caring relationship with them (1 Cor. 9:22).

- Ask God for opportunities for you to witness to them (Col. 4:3).
- Ask God for boldness in your witness (Acts 4:29).
- Ask God for an opportunity to invite them to come to Him (Luke 14:23).
- Ask God to set them free from spiritual captivity (2 Tim. 2:25-26).

3 PRAYER POINTS FOR YOURSELF:

- Give me eyes to see their spiritual thirst.
- Give me opportunity to speak with them.
- What is my next move? (Phone call, cookout, coffee, invite to church or small group, etc.)

2. _____

Intentionally position yourself for interaction with the person. Build relationship by engaging in fellowship. Look for common ground between you. What do you like to do that they like to do? Schedule some time to spend together.

3. _____

Share your story. Relating your salvation experience may help them identify with you.

You story should answer these questions:

What were you like before Jesus came into your life?

How is your life different / better now?

What do you understand now about God that you didn't understand before?

Can He do this for anyone?

4. _____

Most of us remember the way someone presented the Gospel to us and led us through the steps of salvation to the sinner's prayer, but when asked to share that same message, we tend to draw a blank. We don't know what to say or even where to start because we have not practiced it.

Practice this five-step process over and over until you can feel comfortable sharing it with another person.

1. _____ that you have not allowed God to have the first place in your life. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins.
2. _____ that Jesus took your place, dying for your sins and that He rose from the dead and is alive today.
3. _____ Jesus to come into your life. Surrender control to Him.
4. _____ the free gift of salvation from Jesus. Give Him thanks for His gift of new life.
5. _____ Invite the person to pray to ask Jesus to take control of his/ her life.

PRAYER TIME

- Thank God for His salvation that has granted to your life.
- Ask God to show you someone who has a need/ desire to know Him.
- Ask God to help you have the courage, the words, and the opportunity to share your story with them.
- Ask God to place a desire within that person to want to hear the Gospel message.