

Dangerously Declaring The Gospel

"Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong."

"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong."

1 Corinthians 16:13

I. Acts 20:17-24 - *"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me-the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."*

- **He would rather lose his life than not finish the task of testifying.**
- He would rather face the beatings and bonds that awaited him than face his Master not having completed his mission.

A. The Gospel Is Powerful.

- Colossians 1:6 - *"This is the Gospel, which has reached you as it spreads all over the world. Wherever that Gospel goes it produces Christian Character and develops it."*

1. **The Greek word for the "Gospel" is "Euangelion" which means Glad tidings or a good message.**

- a. It's not only a message that sounds good but it also produces good.
- b. It has the power to do in the hearer what has been done in the teller.**
- c. If it is good news you want to tell it and you want to be the first to tell it.
- d. My wife Diane is terrible at keeping good news to herself**

2. The greek word for power is "Dudemis" which we get our english word dynamite.

a. Dynamite blows things up - the Gospel puts things back together

b. Dynamite destroys - the Gospel restores

c. Like Dynamite it will get those who are near and far.

- 1) The dynamite of the Gospel exploded at the Day of Pentecost, the shockwaves are still being felt today.
- 2) The power of the Gospel needs a carrier (you), it will only go as far as the people who have been affected by it will carry it.**
- 3) An electric charge needs a conductor, if it is released into the atmosphere it will dissipate.
- 4) The power of the Gospel needs a conductor (you), if it is released into the atmosphere of your indifference and fear it too will dissipate.**

B. Personalizing the Gospel is what releases its power. The more you personalize it the more power is released.

1. The Gospel is not fully the Gospel until it is clothed in Human experience.

2. Lets look at three phrases in:

Romans 1:15-16 - "So, as much as is in me, I am willing and eagerly ready to preach the Gospel (that is in me) to you at Rome as I have to others. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the instrument of God's power, that brings salvation to all who believe it." (Knox)

a. "as much as is in me." = "Kata" = "as much" according to what is through out me.

1) God only wants to speak through us what He has done in us. No more and no less.

2) It's only when the written word to you, becomes the living word in you, can it then become the proclaimed word from you.

3) The messenger must be the first convert of his message.

4) It won't do more to them then it has done to you.

5) The word needs to minister to you before you minister the word.

6) The Lord can't use you in the word to change someone's life until it's first

7) When God touches us we are then equipped to touch others.

b. The second phrase is "*I am willing and eagerly ready.*"

1) What strikes me about this phrase is that he is saying it in connection with the city of Rome. Rome was the capital of a mostly pagan world and in Rome a war had been declared on Christianity.

2) It was a death sentence to declare anyone but Caesar as Lord.

3) But here Paul is writing in eager anticipation of what the Gospel was going to do to the forces of evil there.

4) He was eager because he saw what the Gospel did at Jerusalem;

5) The Gospel did perform at Rome, it changed that evil empire.

6) The part that God has done in you, is what will produce the willingness, eagerness, and readiness.

7) **In July of 1972, I came to know the Lord because a girl shared with me Matthew 11:28, which states, "Come to Me, all who are weary and**

8) I simply told them what God had done for me.

- **I wasn't willing, eager or ready to share the "Roman Road" with them, because I didn't know it.**
- I wasn't willing, eager, or ready to share "Eschatology" with them, because I didn't know any.
- **However, I was willing, eager and ready to tell them about a God who can lift the burdens off your life and give rest to your soul.**
- That truth combined with my experience, released power to redeem 29 other souls.

c. The third and final phrase is "preach the Gospel."

- 1) Using the word "*preach*" is not a good translation of that word, because you immediately associate this with a trained minister, speaking publicly using good theology.
- 2) **By doing this, most people eliminate themselves from the responsibility to share the gospel with others.**
- 3) The Greek word for this phrase is not "*kerusso*" which means "*to proclaim publicly,*" but "*euaggelizo,*" which means "*to bring, bear or share good news.*"
- 4) **It's not theology that God wants us to give to others, but testimony.**
- 5) It's not just scripture but also story.
- 6) **All God wants from you is to tell the story of what the scriptures have done for you.**

C. Paul so personalized the Gospel that he started referring to it as "my gospel."

- **Romans 2:16 - "According to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men."**
- Romans 16:2 - "Now to him that is able to establish you according to my gospel."
- **2 Tim 2:8 - "According to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship"**
- Paul's Gospel always led people to "Thee Gospel" of the Cross.

1. **The Bible is not only the Word of God, it is the word of God through Paul, through John, through Jeremiah or Job.**
2. **Paul freely acknowledged that an element of human perspective entered into the revelation he received.**
3. At the same time he insisted that his peculiar slant did not in any way alter the essential nature of the gospel itself.
 - a. **Depending where you are on the mountain determines how you see the valley.**
 - b. Same mountain - different perspective.
 - c. **That's why some of the same stories in the Gospels are different.**

D. Paul preached the same message as Jesus. And yet, he inevitably drew upon his own experience, his own thought patterns, his own vocabulary, all of which were different than the Master's.

1. **Paul had his own way of putting things. James, Peter, John, and Luke had their own way of putting things.**
 - a. The blind man in John 9:25 has his own way of putting things.
 - **This story tells us that Jesus healed a man that was born blind.**
 - Because Jesus performs this healing on the Sabbath the religious leaders are trying to discredit both the healing and Jesus.
 - **They try and engage this man who was healed into a theological debate.**
 - Not knowing any theology he decides to share what he does know, he says, *"one thing I do know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."*
 - **As a result of this man's story or if you will allow me, "his Gospel," he made a city wide impact and earned a place in scripture.**
 - b. In John 4:1-42, we have the story of promiscuous Samaritan woman who meets Jesus, is ministered to by Him, and then goes back to her city and impacts it with the one thing she knows.
 - **She says in verse 39, "And from that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, He told me all the things that I have done."**
 - All she did was share her Gospel, her good news, her "one thing," and it released power to change a whole city.

c. In John 12:10-11 we see this dynamic in the life of Lazarus.

- Lazarus doesn't know a lot of theology, but he does know that what Jesus did for him.
- **And he is out telling the story and as a result he is becoming as much of a threat as Jesus.**
- Because every time he tells his Gospel, his good news, his "one thing", power is released and lives are changed.

2. I have my own way of putting things, I have a Gospel, I have some good news, there is "one thing that I know" and when I share it power is released and lives are changed.

a. My Gospel consists of Matthew 11:28, I can tell people that there is a God in heaven that will take *"the burdens off your life and give rest to your soul."*

b. My Gospel is a result of what God has reconciled me from and through.

c. Isaiah 51:1 - The principle here is if you can see how you were dug by God it will teach you how to dig for God.

3. You too have your own way of putting things.

a. You too have a Gospel, you too have a story, you too know one thing, that will release power and change the lives of those who you share it with.

b. The question you need to answer is:

- What is your Gospel - What is your story?
- **What is the "one thing that you know?"**
- For the blind man it was, *"I was blind but now I see."*
- **For the Samaritan woman it was "there is a God who knows everything I have ever done and He still loves me."**
- For Lazarus it was, *"I was dead and now I am alive."*
- **For me it was "There is a God in heaven who will unburden your soul.**
- For you it is Fill in the blank