

Faith Exported

Most of us have heard the Gospel countless times. The issue is: “Have we proclaimed it countless times?” The greatest need in the world today isn’t food and clothing, it isn’t houses. It isn’t more and better education and more religion and more morality. Though these are all needs in today’s world the greatest need is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ who said: “What good is it if a man gains the whole world yet forfeits (loses) his soul?” (Matthew 16: 26)

Romans 1: 8 – 17

1) Recognition of what God is doing through others

- The first thing that we ought to do is look out into the world and see what God is doing through others.
- Once we’ve seen God at work through the lives of others we ought to thank God for what He is doing through them
- Sometimes we think that we are the only ones who are working in God’s Vineyard and can easily become judgmental thinking that others aren’t doing anything to extend the kingdom of God.
 - Elijah was like that when he said “I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too” (1 Kings 19: 14)
 - 1 Kings 19: 18 “The Lord said to Elijah: “Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel--all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him.”
 - There were seven thousand in Israel who were faithful to God who Elijah did not know about!
 - We need to be careful of making judgments about others before we know all the facts
- God has given different people, churches and ministries different gifts to minister to the world. Just because others aren’t preaching the Gospel the way we do, or others are doing more social work or less social work doesn’t mean that they are wrong. It just means that they minister to the world within their area of gifts.
 - Let us look at what other churches and ministries are doing and let us thank God through Jesus Christ that the Gospel is going out into the world through them.
- What we are to do is serve God with our whole heart in preaching the Gospel of Jesus, His Son
 - When we truly believe the Gospel it will take hold of us completely that we will give our all to the preaching of it
 - If someone was sick and about to die and he is suddenly miraculously healed what would he do? He will wholeheartedly tell everyone he knows what has happened to him
 - So it is with the Gospel when we know that we should have died for our sins and God forgave us in Jesus.

2) The need for mutual encouragement

- We should not only thank God for what others are doing but see if we can join with them to be mutually encouraged in the Gospel
- The work of the Gospel is often tiring and wears us down and we need to get together to encourage one another in the work of the Gospel
 - Our nature is to criticise but it does not benefit the Gospel at all.
 - If we have some gift that we can impart to others to build them up and enable them to become more fruitful in the Gospel then we need to share it.
 - Also if others have a gift that they want to share with us to enable us to become more fruitful then we ought to humble ourselves and admit that we don’t know it all and that we can learn from others.
 - I impart my knowledge of reaching Hindus and Muslims with the Gospel with other missionary organisations and churches.
 - I also attend conferences or other training sessions on other topics that I’m not good at e.g. counselling
- We are mutually benefited for our work of the Gospel in this way.
- However, merely imparting gifts to one another does not necessarily encourage us. We need to give praise where praise is due and offer encouragement to someone who has been working hard in the Gospel even if – or rather especially if – he hasn’t seen much fruit.

➤ I think about David Livingstone when he climbed into the pulpit of a little church in Scotland. He'd honed his sermon. He'd prepared it so very well. He wanted to be a great preacher. He wanted to go give his life on the mission field. And when he got up to preach that night, he flapped his wings, but he couldn't get off the runway. He tried, but finally he forgot his sermon altogether; so he apologized to the people and left in great shame.

But Robert Moffat, the famous missionary, was there. And Moffat came up to him after the service and said, "You can be a great and wonderful servant of God. Why don't you go to medical school?" Today you can't mention Africa without thinking about David Livingstone. But what would have happened to David Livingstone without Robert Moffat?

William Hinson

- Hebrews 10: 24 – 25 "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

3) Being unashamed of the Gospel

- Paul spoke about having a harvest amongst the Roman church just as he had amongst the other Gentiles.
 - We should desire to see the harvest of souls wherever we go.
 - We shouldn't be content in just preaching the Gospel but we should expect to see a harvest – expect to see people believe and come to faith in Christ
 - What farmer goes out into his land every year and sows his seeds not expecting to see a harvest at the end of the season. Such a farmer would be foolish.
- We are to preach the Gospel to all people
 - In Paul's case it was to the Greeks and non-Greeks, to the wise and the foolish.
 - The Gospel is for all people not for an elect race or social group.
 - Christ died for the sins of all people
 - 1 John 2: 2 "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."
- We should not be ashamed of the Gospel because it is the power of God for salvation of everyone who believes
 - Shame is something that comes from doing something wrong or telling someone something that is not true.
 - The Gospel is good news. There is no shame in proclaiming the Gospel
- What is the Gospel?
 - 1 Corinthians 15: 1 – 4 "Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance": that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures"
 - What are we saved from?
 - Sin
 - The world
 - Our pride
 - Slavery to the devil
 - The wrath of God to come
 - In the Gospel a righteousness is revealed
 - 2 Corinthians 5: 21 "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."
 - Christ took our sin and him being righteous, died a sinner so that we, sinners would become righteous before God.'
 - The good news about this is that we become righteous just by believing in the fact that Christ died on the cross and took our sins on himself and has forgiven us all our sins that we are now declared righteous before God.
- All other religions have a righteousness that comes through works but the Gospel that we unashamedly proclaim is a righteousness that comes by faith in the work of Jesus and not our own works of righteousness.