

TELL THEM THE STORY OF JESUS PART 2

INTRO: Being a “preacher’s kid” can be difficult for a young child. I read once of a preacher’s little boy who was told by his mother that he should wash his hands because there were germs living in the dirt where he’d been playing. He looked up at his mother and got this really disgusted look on his face. “Germs? Germs?” He said. “Germs and Jesus! Germs and Jesus! That’s all I ever hear around this house! And I’ve never seen either one!” LOL! At his age, that little boy wasn’t sure he was comfortable believing in something that he couldn’t see. - A lot of people are like that...

Remember how Thomas reacted to the news that Jesus had risen from the dead? John 20:25 tells us: *“...he said to (the other disciples), ‘Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.’”* - Thomas had difficulty believing in something he could not see or touch.

Now, notice our text. John says, “YES... I have seen. YES... I have heard. YES... I have touched Jesus, AND that’s exactly what I’m preaching about.” John believed so strongly in Jesus he wanted to tell everyone. I John 1:3 *“that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us...”*

Now, you’d think that it would be easier for us if we, like the Apostle John here, could claim to have seen and touched and heard Jesus. You’d think that it would be easier for us to convince people about Jesus if we ourselves had actually seen and touched and heard Jesus. - But the Gospels repeatedly point out that even when people PERSONALLY SAW the miraculous power of Jesus, they still rejected Him. Even when they heard from the lips of those who had personally seen Jesus they still would not believe. Being an eye-witness to Jesus did NOT make it easier to convince people to become Christians.

ILLUS: Lee Strobe, in his book, “Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary”, wrote that the unchurched aren’t necessarily looking for miracles and appearances of Christ. They’re looking for changed lives.

- The unchurched haven’t necessarily rejected God - they’ve rejected “church.”
- Many of them are morally adrift, but they secretly want an anchor.
- They often don’t understand Christianity, but they’re also ignorant about what they claim to believe in.
- Often they’re not so much concerned with the question of “Is Christianity true?” Instead, they’re more concerned with “Does Christianity work and how can I experience it?”

In other words, just like the people in John’s day... the unchurched today don’t want to hear about what YOU’VE seen... what YOU’VE heard... what YOU’VE touched. They want to know if it works for you.

ILLUS: A woman put an ad in the local paper: “Lost 50 pounds! Selling my fat clothes – they’re in good condition, sizes 18-20.” She was bombarded with phone calls, but nobody wanted to buy the clothes – they all wanted to know how she had lost the 50 pounds. - You see, the callers wanted to know about something that had changed her life hoping that this something could change their lives too!!! That’s what the unchurched are really looking for. They want to know if Jesus really works in your life.

Read with me from 1 John 1:1-4 *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have gazed upon and touched with our own hands—this is the Word of life. 2 And this is the life that was revealed; we have seen it and testified to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us. 3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And this fellowship of ours is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. 4 We write these things so that our joy may be complete.”*

Ok, so John is talking about “the Word of life”, “the life”. He said, “I have seen life, I’ve heard life’s voice, and I’ve touched life.” Then he says, I want you to know life, so I’m telling you all I know about it. And if we are going to TELL THEM (PEOPLE) THE STORY OF JESUS, there are two things we must do. We must...

I) SHARE THE WORD WITH YOUR LIPS: **vv 1-3a** *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have gazed upon and touched with our own hands—this is the Word of life. 2 And this is the life that was revealed; we have seen it and testified to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us. 3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard...”*

People need to hear your story! John knew this, that’s why he was so passionate about telling people. What is your story? 1) Why did you become a Christian? 2) What difference has Christ made in your life? **THE BIBLE CAN HELP US FIGURE THIS OUT.**

I Peter 3:15 *“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”*

In **Acts 4:20** Peter said, *“for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.”*

II) SHARE THE WORD WITH YOUR LIFE: **v 3** *“...so that you also may have fellowship with us...”* John had confidence enough to say, “the life you see me live and I know you must want as well...you too can have it.” John was living his life in such a way that he knew people would want what he had. **HOW AWESOME!**

ILLUS: On the way home from church a little girl said, “Mom, I’ve been thinking.” The mother said, “Oh! About what?” The girl replied, “Well, my teacher this morning said God is bigger than we are. Is that true?” “Yes, that’s true,” the mother replied. “He also said that God lives within us. Is that true too?” Again the mother replied, “Yes.” “Well,” said the girl. “If God is bigger than us and He lives in us, shouldn’t He stick out?”

You and I need to ask ourselves – does Jesus stick out in our lives? How can we know if Jesus is sticking out? **Galatians 5:22-23** *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”* That’s how you know. Are those fruits of the Spirit evident in your life?

Jesus should stick out, and when he does, people will take note of us and want what we have. **NOW HERE’S THE HARD PART.** At some point you will need to engage people with your story. - Have you noticed that when we talk to people about spiritual things, that it’s easier to invite them to church than it is to share your faith and introduce them to Jesus?

I) SHARE THE WORD WITH YOUR LIPS: vv 1-3a

II) SHARE THE WORD WITH YOUR LIFE: v 3 CONTINUED Have you ever wondered why that is? It's easier for us to do that, because we forget that our main goal SHOULD BE to bring these friends of ours into a "fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ." v 3b

If we're not careful, we can get into the mindset that our goal is to bring people into this building so that we can pay the bills. So that we can fill the seats. So that we can make Wayne feel really good (bringing a lot of people to church with you WILL make me feel really good). Having people come in the door is a great thing. Having them join in fellowship with us is a wonderful thing. But let us never be deceived into thinking that church can be a substitute for a relationship with God.

And so, not only should you invite people to church, you should also try to find ways to invite them to know Jesus.

CONCLUSION: A Hindu trader in India once asked a missionary, "What do you put on your face to make it shine?" With surprise the man of God answered, "I don't put anything on it!" His questioner began to lose patience and said emphatically, "Yes, you do! All of you who believe in Jesus seem to have it. I've seen it in the towns of Agra and Surat, and even in the city of Bombay." Suddenly the Christian understood, and his face glowed even more as he said, "Now I know what you mean, and I will tell you the secret. It's not something we put on from the outside but something that comes from within. It's the reflection of the light of God in our hearts."

And the missionary succeeded in leading the trader out of Hinduism into Christ because Jesus showed through. He stuck out!