

Something Better Than Gold

Acts 3:1-4:31

THE SPIRIT USES PEOPLE WHO ARE:

▶ **Focused on the things of God.**

Acts 3:1 / Joshua 1:7-9 / John 14:23 / Exodus 19:5

It is easier to steer a moving car, than a parked car.

▶ **Paying attention to the needs of others.**

Acts 3:2-4 / Matthew 9:36-38 / John 4:34-35 / John 13:35

Ministry is an opportunity, not a destination.

▶ **Willing to share what they have.**

Acts 3:5-6 / James 2:15-17 / Matthew 25:37-40 / Acts 20:35

▶ **Willing to give God the credit.**

Acts 3:12 / Acts 4:13-14 / Mark 10:17-18 / 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 / Matthew 5:16

A changed life is the best proof of God's work.

THE RESULT ISN'T ALWAYS WHAT WE EXPECT:

Acts 4:1-13 / Ecclesiastes 5:1-3

Food for Thought

For the week of August 24, 2008

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. Chris mentioned that ministry often happens in the interruptions of life. Jesus gave his followers clear instruction and a great example of what it looks like to be interruptible and to meet the needs of others. Read Mark 10:46-52 and Matthew 25:31-46 and then answer the following questions.

Mark 10:46-52

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. [47] When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

[48] Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

[49] Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."

So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." [50] Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

[51] "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

[52] "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road. [NIV]

Matthew 25:31-46

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. [32] All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. [33] He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

[34] "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. [35] For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, [36] I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

[37] "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? [38] When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? [39] When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

[40] "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

[41] "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. [42] For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I

was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, [43] I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

[44] "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

[45] "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

[46] "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." [NIV]

What helps you pay attention and take notice of the needs of others?

What can distract you from taking notice of these needs?

How could you become more interruptible to be used by God?

2. Jesus told a story about a Samaritan man whose offer to help someone in need was far more than a kind gesture. Read the story in Luke 10:25-37 and notice what getting involved cost this guy. Can you think of anyone in your life that may need some help from you? What's at risk for you to step in and offer to help? How can we follow the Samaritan's example and see our helping role through to the end?

Luke 10:25-37

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

[26] "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

[27] He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

[28] "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

[29] But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

[30] In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. [31] A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. [32] So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. [33] But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. [34] He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. [35] The next day he took out two silver coins and gave

them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

[36] "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

[37] The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." [NIV]

3. Sometimes we get confused about what it takes or feel inadequate to make a difference in the world around us. What do the following verses reveal about what it really takes to make an impact and how it happens?

Matthew 5:16

In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. [NIV]

Matthew 20:26

Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, [NIV]

Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. [NIV]

Ephesians 3:20

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, [NIV]

1 Timothy 6:17-18

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. [18] Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. [NIV]

Titus 3:8

This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone. [NIV]