

Keep It Simple!

A HISTORY LESSON MOST PEOPLE SEEM TO FORGET

Acts 17:16 – 18:1

- ✓ Maybe Mars Hill wasn't so **marvelous** after all.

HOW TO SHARE YOUR FAITH LIKE AN APOSTLE

1 Corinthians 1:17 – 2:5

✓ **What To *EMPHASIZE***

1 Corinthians 1:17 & Acts 10:44-48/ 1 Corinthians 2:1-2 & Galatians 2:21/ Mark 8:36 & Micah 6:8

- The good news – not **rituals**
- The cross – not **morality**
- Jesus – not **justice**

✓ **What To *EXPECT***

1 Corinthians 1:18-24 & Matthew 13:1-23/ 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, Matthew 7:13-14 & Psalm 10:4

- A **mixed** reaction

The listener's **heart** is always more important
than the speaker's **message**

- Many will be **interested** – few will **follow**

The biggest obstacle is always **pride**, not **logic**

✓ **What To *REMEMBER***

1 Corinthians 2:1-5/ 1 Peter 3:15-16

- Our **life** is just as important as our **words**
- To Keep it simple – tell YOUR **story** & answer THEIR **questions**

Food for Thought

For the week of August 23, 2009

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. Pastor Larry helped us remember that when it comes to sharing our faith, “our life is just as important as our words.” 1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 gives us a great picture of what sharing both looks like. Read the passage and answer the following questions.

1 Thessalonians 2:1-13

You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure. [2] We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. [3] For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. [4] On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. [5] You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed--God is our witness. [6] We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.

As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, [7] but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. [8] We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. [9] Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

[10] You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. [11] For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, [12] encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

[13] And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. ^[NIV]

What do you think Paul meant by sharing his life in verse 8?

What could it look like to share the Gospel and your life?

List a few of the character qualities that Paul modeled as he kept it simple and shared the good news.

2. 1 Peter 3:18 sums up the good news in this, "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God." When we share this simple yet profound truth we can expect a mixed reaction. We looked at the parable of the four soils this weekend. Go back and read Jesus' story in Matthew 13:1-23.

Matthew 13:1-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. [2] Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. [3] Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. [4] As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. [5] Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. [6] But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. [7] Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. [8] Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. [9] He who has ears, let him hear."

[10] The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

[11] He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. [12] Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. [13] This is why I speak to them in parables:

"Though seeing, they do not see;

though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

[14] In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

*"You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.*

*[15] For this people's heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.*

*Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts and turn,
and I would heal them.'*

[16] But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. [17] For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

[18] "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: [19] When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. [20] The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. [21] But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. [22] The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. [23] But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." ^[NIV]

Can you remember what kind of soil might have described your life when you first heard the good news? How about now?

If you could sow seeds into the life of anyone in your current circle of relationships and influence, who would you most like to see take a step closer to Jesus? What could you do or say that might help that happen?

3. One effective means of sharing the Gospel with others is the "Roman Road." Whether you are a new Christian, a long-time Christian, or still trying to understand Christianity, these verses can help us understand our need for salvation and how a relationship with Christ begins. As you read each verse, jot down what essential truth each passage communicates about our relationship with Christ.

- Romans 1:19-20
- Romans 3:23
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 5:8
- Romans 10:9-11

- **Romans 1:19-20**
since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. [20] For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. [NIV]
- **Romans 3:23**
for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [NIV]
- **Romans 6:23**
For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. [NIV]
- **Romans 5:8**
But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. [NIV]
- **Romans 10:9-11**
That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. [10] For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. [11] As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." [NIV]

Take a few minutes and talk to God. Thank Him for what He has done for you. Ask Him to help you understand how you might share the "Good News" with others.