

Inspirational Nuggets

(Archived posts from www.discipleshipcenter.org)

SHARING YOUR FAITH:

When I was a teen, one word that always scared me was the word "witnessing." I thought it implied sharing the plan of salvation with everyone in my world, and it would mean getting laughed at or rejected in some way by most. I participated in just about every teen activity that my church had to offer, but when a "workshop on witnessing" was offered one weekend, I found every excuse not to go. I was too scared to attend.

Many years later, I discovered a definition of witnessing that took almost all of my fears away. It's a definition found in Mark 5:19, against the background of a man delivered from demon possession. Jesus said to the man: *"Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how much mercy He has had on you."*

Wow! I am not very good at memorizing plans of salvation, and even less competent at putting myself in positions where I might be rejected or laughed at, but I don't feel bad at all about telling someone else what the Lord has done for me.

If an opportunity arose today in which you could tell someone else of what the Lord has done for you, what would you say?

SHARING YOUR FAITH and PRAYER:

Most of us already know the importance of sharing the Christian faith with others. Think back to how important it was for someone to share their faith with you, so that you could come to know Christ as your Savior. There are many people in your world who need to know Christ, too.

What you may not be aware of is just how important prayer can be to sharing the Christian faith. Consider these thoughts:

- *You can pray that the Holy Spirit will convict people of their sins, and draw people to Christ.*
- *You can pray that God will give you a love and concern for people who need Jesus.*
- *You can pray for wisdom as to how to share your faith with particular people in specific situations.*
- *When people who don't know Jesus experience troubled times in their lives, you can offer to pray for them.*
- *You can pray that God will send one of His people into the life of someone you know who needs Jesus.*
- *You can pray for patience as you work with people who need Jesus but are slow to respond to Him.*
- *When it seems that all your efforts to help someone come to know Christ are not working, you can always pray for that person!*
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- *If a person you know is ready to ask Jesus into their heart, you can assist them in knowing what to pray.*
- *You can pray for new Christians, that they will stay faithful to their new Savior, and grow in their relationship with God.*

Prayer is one of your best allies as you share your faith and help others to come to know Jesus.

Are you investing regular prayer into your faith-sharing efforts?

SHARING YOUR FAITH:

This nugget presents the idea that most people do not come to a saving faith in Christ quickly, and helping them come to know Him faster is one of the motivations behind sharing your faith.

One of the object lessons used during a class on the above subject was that of a frozen container of water, and how that frozen water represented a significant part of the heart of a person who does not know Christ.

What would be needed to bring melting to that frozen water? Obviously, it would be warmth! And the more warmth that was applied to that frozen water, the quicker it could be melted.

There are people in your world whose hearts are cold toward Christ, His teachings, His church, and probably even His people. What is it that could warm their hearts, and set them free from their solid state of opposition to Christ? Let me suggest two things:

- **The work of God in their hearts**, counteracting the chill of sin and drawing them to relationship with Himself.
- **Relationships with genuine Christians**, who would love them, pray for them, do acts of kindness toward them, and help them find answers for their points of struggle about Christianity. Could it be that a person's heart might be melted more quickly if it were exposed to the warmth of several genuine Christians?

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, God is always actively drawing people to Christ.

Now, can God count on you to provide a relationship with at least one person who does not know Christ yet?

SHARING YOUR FAITH:

Friendship with someone who is already a Christian is one of the most necessary ingredients for helping people come to know Christ as their Savior. People want to know that Christianity is real and liveable, before they commit to it. They need someone who can answer their questions about Jesus. They would want to know that a Christian genuinely cares about them. And they would want someone to walk

beside them and help them, if they should actually choose to make the decision to ask Jesus into their heart.

If being a friend is such an important part of helping people come to Christ, then how do we build a bridge of friendship with someone? Christian author Rick Warren offers these four steps:

Step #1: Become Aware *(of persons who need Christ, whom God has placed in your life)*

- Make a list of them by name.
- How receptive is each one to Christ?
- Look for areas of common ground that you can build a relationship on.

Step #2: Commit to Prayer

- Use the list you made in Step #1, to pray regularly for persons on that list.
- Remember that you can always pray, even when it seems that other efforts to help a person come to Christ are not working.

Step #3: Show You Care

- Treat everyone with respect as people, not a "prospects."
- Help them in practical ways (listening, meeting needs, showing acts of kindness, offering to pray for them, etc.).

Step #4: Be Ready to Share

- Use crisis situations to briefly show why we all need God.
- Talk briefly about what God means to you, in many aspects of your life (but don't force Christianity upon them).
- Help them through prayer, appropriate books, and appropriate CDs or DVDs.
- Invite them to a worship service, or to a church activity that they might like.

Which of these actions could you do next to help someone come to Christ?

SHARING YOUR FAITH:

Christian author Bill Bright is an excellent source of help when it comes to the ministry of SHARING YOUR FAITH with people who don't know Jesus yet.

In his book, *Witnessing Without Fear*, Bill Bright tells of certain "lines" that the enemy of our souls will give us as we go to tell others about Jesus. Mr. Bright also gives some helps to us for overcoming those troubling lines of thought:

1. **"Mind your own business - you don't have the right to force your views on someone else."** -- When you hear this line, ask yourself: "Where would I be today if the person who introduced me to Jesus had 'minded their own business'?" When we share Christ in a gentle spirit of love, we aren't "forcing" our views on anyone. We speak gently and lovingly; the hearer is free to listen, change the subject, or move away.
2. **"You're going to offend this person. Don't say anything."** -- If someone you know were dying of cancer and you knew the cure for the disease, would you avoid telling him about the cure because you might offend him? . . . Why should we be any less enthusiastic about sharing the Ultimate Cure over the ultimate disease?

3. **"He'll think you're a fanatic."** -- Yes, he might. But then again, he might be the one person whom God has specially prepared for you on this day . . . We can dislodge the "fanatic" stereotype with a confident, loving, logical presentation of the claims of Christ, shared in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Would you be willing to ask God to help you overcome the things that keep you from sharing your faith?