

Words: The Weapons Of the Gospel Mission

Intro

- 'Presence' describes the terrain of the gospel mission.
- Courage = attitude
- Relationships = matrix
- Words = weapons

Rom 1.13-16

Paul on the gospel mission

- As big as Paul is on living the gospel, his mission involves more than example.
- No message is more central to Paul's life and ministry.

Preach the gospel ... and use words. They *are* necessary.

"Preach the gospel at all times, if necessary use words." -Francis of Assisi

The "say something!" commands

Mk. 16.15 "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation."

Lk. 24.46-47 "Thus is it written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations."

Col 4.2-6 "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison – that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person."

Paul's mission & the spoken gospel

Rom. 10
Phil 1.15-18
Rom. 1.16
1 Cor 1.21

“It is the gospel God blesses like no other words.... When you share the gospel, you share ‘the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.’ [Rom 1.16] Sharing the gospel is like walking around in a thunderstorm and handing out lightning rods. You don’t know when the lightning is going to strike or who it will strike, but you know what it’s going to strike – the lightning rod of the gospel. And when it does, that person’s lightning rod is going to be charged with the power of God and he or she is going to believe. That’s why we can be confident that some will believe if we will faithfully and tenaciously share the gospel.”

– Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, p. 104

The Messengers

“I don’t know enough!”

- Most of us know enough of the gospel right now to start talking it up.
- Can you answer, “Why are you a Christian?”
- We can talk about who God is and what He has done for us.

“I heard the story of a man who became a Christian during an evangelistic emphasis in a city in the Pacific Northwest. When he told his boss about it, his employer responded with, ‘That’s great! I am a Christian and have been praying for you for years!’

But the new believer was crestfallen. ‘Why didn’t you ever tell me?’ he asked. ‘You were the very reason I have not been interested in the gospel all these years.’ ‘How can that be?’ the boss wondered. ‘I have done my very best to live the Christian life around you.’ ‘That’s the point,’ explained the employee. ‘You lived such a model life without telling me it was Christ who made the difference, I convinced myself that if you could live such a good and happy life without Christ, than I could too.’”

– Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, p. 111

The attainable next steps: getting the gospel on ‘the pavement’

Meet new people

- Don’t just walk through life – engage the culture.

“We are all guilty of sometimes being fearful, lazy, or disengaged when it comes to listening to God’s voice, especially if He’s asking us to take the time to get to know new people.”

– Matthew Paul Turner, *The Coffee House Gospel*, p. 56-57

Relate to non-believers intentionally

- If you and me enjoy you and me, guess what good we do?
- We have classmates, co-workers, and neighbors around us that need Christ.
- People are often more open than we think.

“It’s always funny to me how some people are so comfortable sharing their life’s baggage with a complete stranger. Maybe it’s just me, but I find that people in today’s society are very open to talking about their struggles, disappointments, and fears.”

– Matthew Paul Turner, *The Coffee House Gospel*, p. 9

Ultimately, you’re not the evangelist (perspective on “success and failure”)

“What is success in evangelism? Is it when the person you witness to comes to Christ? Certainly that’s what we want to happen. But if this is success, are we failures whenever we share the gospel and people refuse to believe? Was Jesus an “evangelistic failure” when people like the rich young ruler turned away from Him? Obviously not.... We need to learn that sharing the gospel *is* successful evangelism. We ought to have an obsession for souls, and tearfully plead with God to see more people converted, but conversions are fruit that God alone can give. In this regard we are like the postal service. Success is measured by the careful and accurate delivery of the message, not by the response of the recipient. Whenever we share the gospel (which includes the summonses to repent and believe), we have succeeded. In the truest sense, *all* biblical evangelism is successful evangelism, regardless of the results.”

– Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, p. 103

- God is the one who makes it possible for someone to repent and believe.

We can’t fail ... unless we simply don’t throw the seeds

“Only the sheer rapture of being lost in the worship of God is as exhilarating and intoxicating as telling someone about Jesus Christ. Some of the most rewarding times of my life have been during mission trips when I have done nothing but talk about Christ on the streets and in homes, with one individual or group after another, all day long. The same is true in my own locale – nothing so excites me as a conversation about Christ with someone who does not know Him.”

– Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, p. 99