

Witnessing 101

Why do we need this series?

- √ We were created to **live forever**.
Genesis 3:17-24, Hebrews 9:27, 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, Romans 6:23
- √ There really is a **heaven** and a **hell**.
2 Corinthians 5:1-9, John 14:1-3, Mark 9:43-47, Luke 16:19-31, Revelation 20:11-15
- √ Jesus is the only **answer**.
Galatians 2:20-21, Matthew 7:21-23, Luke 12:8-9, John 3:14-19, 14:6
- √ We are commanded to win **people**, not **arguments**.
1 Peter 3:15-16, 2 Timothy 2:14-16, Colossians 4:2-6, Philippians 2:14-16

Where do we start?

Acts 8:26-40, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23,

- ▶ We have to **be** the work of God, before we **do** the work of God.
- ▶ Look, pray, and listen for **open doors**.
- ▶ Start with where **they are**, not with what **you know**.
- ▶ Show them what **Jesus did**, not what they **must do**.

A roadmap to follow:

Romans 1:19-20

Romans 3:23

Romans 5:8

Romans 6:23

Romans 10:9-11

Romans 12:1-2

Food for Thought

For the week of July 29, 2012

(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)

1. Chris pointed out that there is a heaven and hell, and Jesus is the only answer. The reality of this is that people who don't know Jesus are spiritually lost. In Luke 15, Jesus tells three parables that all deal with this theme. Read the chapter and then answer the following questions.

Luke 15:1-32

Now the tax collectors and "sinners" were all gathering around to hear him. [2] But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

[3] Then Jesus told them this parable: [4] "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? [5] And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders [6] and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' [7] I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

[8] "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? [9] And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' [10] In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

[11] Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. [12] The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

[13] "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. [14] After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. [15] So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. [16] He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

[17] "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! [18] I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. [19] I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' [20] So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

[21] "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

[22] "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. [23] Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. [24] For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

[25] "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. [26] So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. [27] 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

[28] "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. [29] But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. [30] But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

[31] "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. [32] But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' "

[NIV]

What similar elements do you see in all three parables?

What elements are different in the third parable from the first two?

Jesus' intent in telling these parables was to give us some perspective on how God views people who are lost. What do these parables teach us about spiritually lost people and God's attitude toward them?

What does Luke 19:10 add to this discussion?

Luke 19:10

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." [NIV]

2. This weekend, Chris demonstrated how we can share the gospel with someone using verses from the book of Romans. The gospel is "good news" because it explains to people how they can experience a relationship with Christ. What do the following verses teach us about the gospel and how we communicate it with others?

Romans 1:16

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. [NIV]

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. [2] By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

[3] For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, [4] that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, [5] and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. [6] After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. [7] Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, [8] and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. [NIV]

2 Corinthians 4:1-4

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. [2] Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. [3] And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. [4] The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. [NIV]

3. As a result of this week's teaching regarding where you start in terms of witnessing to people, do you sense God calling you to...

...focus more on being the work of God before you do the work of God?

...change the way you care about those in your life?

...be a bit more open about going to church and your commitment to Christ?

...begin to invite some friends to church to come and see?

...ask your friends some questions about their spiritual background?