

## Staying On Message

### Eloquence & Wisdom: Overrated & Not Always That Helpful

✓ “Brilliance” in Athens  
Acts 17:16 – 18:1

✓ “Power” In Corinth  
1 Corinthians 2:1-5

### Staying On Message

1) Keep it **simple**  
Luke 10:21 & Matthew 18:1-3/ John 14:6

2) Keep it focused on **Jesus**  
1 Corinthians 2:2 & 15:1-5/ 1 Peter 3:18/ John 3:16-17

### 7 Dead-end Detours

1) Arguments about **Morality**

2) Partisan **Politics**

3) Debates about **Theology**

4) The Bible & **Science**

5) End-Times **Speculation**

6) A One-Size Fits All **Canned Presentation**

7) Hard Sell **Pressure Tactics**

## Food for Thought

For the week of August 12, 2012

(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)

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1) Have you ever found yourself headed down one of the 7 Dead-end Detours that you heard in this weekend's message? Regretfully most of us have, resulting in more damage than good in impacting others. So what do we do if we know we did this to someone we care about? Read the following verses and write down what each says about how to address this kind of situation.

### **Ephesians 4:32**

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. [NIV]

### **Proverbs 6:2-5**

if you have been trapped by what you said,  
ensnared by the words of your mouth,  
[3] then do this, my son, to free yourself,  
since you have fallen into your neighbor's hands:  
Go and humble yourself;  
press your plea with your neighbor!  
[4] Allow no sleep to your eyes,  
no slumber to your eyelids.  
[5] Free yourself, like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter,  
like a bird from the snare of the fowler. [NIV]

### **Ecclesiastes 10:12**

Words from a wise man's mouth are gracious,  
but a fool is consumed by his own lips. [NIV]

### **Matthew 5:23-24**

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, [24] leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. [NIV]

Looking back at what you just read, is there anyone you know who you need to go to and ask for forgiveness for not respecting their point of view and not treating them as you would want to be treated? Know that doing this may actually show them God's love, grace and humility like they have never seen before.

2) This week we heard that eloquent words and knowing all the right things to say about Scripture isn't what's necessarily going to be the key in influencing someone to follow Jesus. But also know this doesn't mean we don't need to know Scripture and dig into it - in fact, to stay "On Message," we need to continue to have the regular input of Scripture in our lives. How do the following verses help us balance the importance of knowing Scripture and impacting others?

## 2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. [NIV]

## 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. [2] If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. [3] If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

[4] Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. [5] It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. [6] Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. [7] It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. [NIV]

3) Paul gave some insightful words to Timothy on how to stay “On Message” as he led his church in 2 Timothy 2:22-26. As you read the passage, jot down the various instructions given.

## 2 Timothy 2:22-26

Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. [23] Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. [24] And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. [25] Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, [26] and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. [NIV]

Now go back and pray through the list you just made. As you do this, make a “+” next to those you think you're doing OK with. Circle those that might need some work.

### Prayer for Impact:

- ⇒ *Pray that you can be the light God wants you to be at work, and with your family and friends through words, actions, and attitudes.*
- ⇒ *Pray for any friends or family that you hope come to know Jesus.*