

Coach House Church BEACONS

HOW TO TELL OTHERS...

21 APRIL 2021

In many of our beacons we have talked about the need to share the good news we have received with other people. We have said why it is important to let others know the message as their eternity depends on it. But how should we do it?

I have seen the gospel preached in many different ways over my lifetime. Some people go out in the streets and shout about it, and others sit in their churches waiting for people to just walk through the door. Others go to the surrounding areas and post leaflets through doors or knock on them and still others talk to their friends about their faith. Now there are good and bad parts of each of these methods and God can use any of them, but let's look at what the bible says.

First this is the responsibility of all of us. We sometimes think that there are people that are "anointed" for evangelism. And that's sort of true in that there are people that are particularly gifted for bringing people into the family of God. But the truth is that it's the job of all of us. Jesus said to His disciples in Mark 16:15-16 "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." So we all need to do it for the sake of the people we know that aren't Christians. We all have people we care about in our lives, family, friends, coworkers, that don't know the gospel. They don't know the freedom they could be living in. So we all need to tell them. Each of us is perfectly placed to help someone on their journey to Christ. We may not be able to properly explain to everyone we know but we all have someone to share the gospel with.

But this beacon is meant to be more about how than why so let's move on to the how. To do this effectively we need to use all the tools that we have been given. God promises us to give us the Holy Spirit to help us. In Luke's gospel 12:11-12 says "When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry

about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say" The Holy Spirit is our guide and will help us when we feel lost for words. This doesn't mean we will be a perfect evangelist we all make mistakes but in the end it's not our choice as I will talk about in a minute. But we needn't be worried about evangelism. God wants everyone to turn to Him as it says in 2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." So He will do all He can to help us be good witnesses.

We can also use the tools that the church makes available to us. Maybe that is an alpha course or an evening activity, or a parents and toddlers, something that we can bring people through the door into. This removes a lot of people's inhibitions of coming into church if they come to another event and they know what the church is like on the inside. People make connections and friendships in the church and they suddenly start getting to know the family and feeling comfortable.

Our invitations and our message should be done kindly though. We need to be respectful of others and not try to force the message down their throats. This is sometimes where I think shouting in the streets falls down. It isn't gentle and often makes me want to run away, let alone someone who has no idea what the gospel is about. The bible tells us we need to speak to people with understanding. 1 Peter 3:15-16 says "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." We need to treat people properly or they will be switched off to the message before we even start.

Therefore, thirdly, don't prejudge who will come to Jesus. Sometimes we think in our "wisdom" that we know who is ready to hear about the gospel and who isn't. It is true that not everyone will respond positively to what we have to say. Some will respond with hostility because they are rejecting the message and for others it won't be the right time.

Although evangelism is the responsibility of all of us, we can't save anyone ourselves. We can't make someone make a choice to follow Christ. So don't be discouraged if people reject what you have to say. It's not your job to save them. All you have to do is be faithful with what God has given you. Having just finished

alpha for the first time I was very surprised at who decided to keep on with the course and got a lot out of it and who decided to drop out, but I pray that all of this is in God's timing. Sometimes things line up perfectly and someone decides that it's time for them to make a decision for Christ. Usually people are brought to Christ by more than one person and it might surprise you when you get to heaven how many people's testimonies you appear in. But ultimately the decision is not up to us.

To tie it all together prayer is key. When we pray we get ourselves on the same wavelength as God, especially if we use prayer time to listen to what God has to say instead of just saying our bit and going. We need to hear Him to be able to speak His words. We need to know when the seed in someone's life is ready to be watered and ready to grow.

So let's pray, let's find out where God is moving in the lives of our friends and let's begin the joy of working alongside Him.



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