

We are looking at areas of growth and maturity for a Jesus Follower.

Today, look at this piece of the puzzle:

A growing ability to share the gospel in a practical, articulate, confident and compassionate manner

The Bible says that we are ambassadors of Christ. He relies on His children to be able to represent Him accurately and share with others the message of the gospel. Biblical discipleship equips people to share the gospel in a way that is not only practical and articulate but also genuine and compassionate.

God brings us in contact with people who need to hear the message of the gospel. Our responsibility is to share it, we aren't responsible for what they chose to do with the gospel. Often times Christians don't want to share because they feel that the person, they would be speaking to, will reject the message. If they refuse the message, that is on them. God just wants us to be faithful to communicate the Message.

Ezekiel 33:7-9 *Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you will surely die,' and you do not speak out to dissuade him from his ways, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his sin, but you will have saved yourself.*

We don't need to be afraid when it comes to sharing our faith because God gives us the power to do it. We need to allow His Spirit to lead and guide us as we witness for Christ.

Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

This world tries to make us ashamed of being Christians and embarrassed about our beliefs. There is no need to be ashamed because the only answer for mankind is contained in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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.*

"Don't preach at me" is a common response we hear today. If we are insensitive, pushy or rude, perhaps our "preaching" is offensive and inappropriate. If we share the gospel with a heart of love and compassion, our "preaching" can be the vehicle

through which God sets a person free. Our culture's disdain for the gospel being shared shouldn't keep us from lovingly sharing it when God leads us to.

Romans 10:14 *How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?*

God can and has in the past personally confronted people with the fact they need to turn to Him and receive Christ. (Acts 9:1-6 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.") But, more often than not, the method God uses is one person sharing with another person the message of hope, forgiveness, and love through Jesus Christ. If we aren't open to God using us to meet the divine appointments that He has arranged for us, then we are missing out on the blessings that God has for us and others.

2 Corinthians 5:20 *We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.*

Hale Pule Question:

When you think about “sharing your faith” with someone or “witnessing” to them, what are some of the first thoughts that come to your mind?

If it is fear, awkwardness, not knowing what to say, etc. meditate on the verses above and ask the Father to show you how you were created by Him and empowered by Him to be His ambassador.

Read through the information below for some practical help in equipping you to feel confident to share the gospel in a practical, articulate, confident and compassionate manner.

If you feel comfortable sharing your faith and witnessing to folks, ask the Father to help you be attentive to Divine Appointments around you and ask Him to send people into your path that you can plant and water the seeds of the Gospel in their lives.

Supplemental Handout for 11-15-20 Message

As you are engaging people in these unique days, there will be plenty of opportunities to engage in Divine Appointment Talk Story. Here are some ideas and resources for you.

With the COVID19 issue all over the airwaves and people's thoughts, it's not unusual for people to be anxious, fearful, panicked, etc. This is a natural bridge for us to be able to hear their hearts and respond with Christ-like compassion and empathy.

It would be helpful for you to be honest and vulnerable and share your journey through all of this. If you have had to take thoughts captive and choose to walk in His peace rather than fear, let them know you've had concerns, anxious thoughts, fears, etc. You can share with them that you find hope, strength, and peace through the truth of God's word and promises. Depending on what they are sharing and their particular issues they are dealing with, ask the Father to lead you to verses from the Bible that you can share with them concerning His promises to His children and how they apply to your life and help anchor you and calm your fears.

Listed below are some of the verses that the Father has reminded me of and I'm sure He can lead you to even more.

In order to explain to someone what it means to relinquish control of their lives to Christ and become born again, I like to go to **Romans 10:9** that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

Many of you have heard me explain this verse with a throne and wheelbarrow analogy. Let me write it out for you – you can adapt it to suit your needs: The phrase Jesus is Lord is kind of confusing. The Greek word (explain that the book of Romans was originally written in the Greek language) for kyrios (KOO – REE – AHS) which means complete, absolute, and complete authority. It's like there is a throne in our lives and whatever or whoever sits on there is our Lord. Most of us have many competing Lords. To become born-again means to take those things off the throne and choose to let Jesus be the one who owns and controls your life. Choose to begin to fashion your life and decisions around the teachings of Jesus.

Then when it says believe in your heart...that can also be confusing or vague – believe is a very nebulous word in our culture. The Greek word for believe is pisteuo (PISS – STEW – OH) and is often used for believing or have faith in, like putting your full trust in. It's like if we went up to the first look out in Waimea Canyon and I was able to string a cable over to the waterfall. Then I turned to you and asked you if you believe I can walk across the cable. You'd say, "No way!". So I walk all the

way across and back. You are amazed. I ask you if you now believe and you say something like maybe it was beginner's luck, so I do it again – only this time I show off a little, doing handstands, somersaults, etc. I get back to you and I ask you again, “do you believe I can walk across this cable?” and you say yes! I get a wheelbarrow and put it on the cable. I say, “If you believe, get in the wheelbarrow, let's go!”. Your belief has to go from your head to your heart in order to put your life in my hands. That's what it means to become born-again, we get off the throne and in the wheelbarrow. We allow Jesus to not only rule our lives but guide our lives. After this I ask them if they are ready to relinquish control of their lives to Jesus. I they say no, I tell them I'll be praying for them to have the courage to do so and I am available to talk when they are ready. If they say yes, I lead them in prayer. I usually explain a few verses from the “Romans Road” (see link below) and explain that they need to ask God's forgiveness for their sins (John 1:9) and give Him control – declaring they want Jesus to be their Lord and they want to give them the reigns of their life– they want to get off the throne and in the wheelbarrow.. Depending on what I sense is their spiritual understanding, I may lead them in a prayer with those components, but I always have them pray to the Father in their own words, telling Him those things. There is no “set” pattern, process, or procedure – be led by the Spirit in your communication, remembering that the Bible is very clear to the path of salvation. You can see this all through Scripture, but I love the succinct message in what has commonly been called The Romans Road (below).

The beautiful thing about you understanding, studying, memorizing, and abiding in His word is that He will pull from the tapestry of His word hidden in your heart to speak to the person you are talking with in a Spirit-led and powerful way! Remember, there is no pressure on you to “get people saved”. You are called to plant and water the seed of the Gospel.

Times like now, with this overwhelming focus on the COVID19 issue – we will have many opportunities to be His witnesses if we are sensitive and attentive!

Resources and verses:

App for iPhone and iPad: Life on Mission

<https://www.biblegateway.com/blog/2016/09/evangelism-the-romans-road-to-salvation/>

2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside quiet waters.

3 He restores my soul;
He guides me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You have anointed my head with oil;
My cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I
will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Deuteronomy 31:6 Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them,
for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake
you.

Psalms 139:23,24 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my
anxious thoughts; **24** And see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the
everlasting way.

1 Peter 5:6-11 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He
may exalt you at the proper time, **7** casting all your anxiety on Him, because He
cares for you. **8** Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls
around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. **9** But resist him, firm in your
faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by
your brethren who are in the
world. **10** After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called
you to
His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish
you. **11** To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Psalms 50:15 Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will
honor Me."

Psalms 57:1: "Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me, for my soul takes refuge
in You; and in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge until destruction passes
by."

Psalms 91:5-6, 9-10: "You will not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the arrow
that flies by day; of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or of the destruction that
lays waste at noon. For you have made the Lord, my refuge, even the Most High,
your dwelling place. No evil will befall you, nor will any plague come near your
tent."

Psalms 5:11: "But let all who take refuge in You be glad, let them ever sing for joy;
and may You shelter them, that those who love Your name may exult in You."

Psalms 34:4: "I sought the Lord, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my
fears."

Exodus 15:26: "And He said, 'If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the Lord your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the Lord, am your healer.'"

Psalm 55:22: "Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken."

Psalm 56:3: "When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You."

Philippians 4:6-7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Psalm 34:17: "The righteous cry, and the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles."

Psalm 46:1: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."