

## Evangelism and Witnessing Lesson 2 2Q 2012

Every Member Ministry

### SABBATH

Read Memory Text “But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;” 2Peter 2:9

Thoughts?

What does this text mean to you?

What are we to proclaim? His praises – which means what?

- Sing songs?
- Prayers of praise?
- Something else?

According to the dictionary, praise is the expression a favorable judgment, or to give commendation.

In light of the controversy over God’s character, does it give any insight into what our praise is supposed to be? What our praise is to achieve? What purpose it is to function?

Genuine praise from God’s representatives is not simply singing songs of praise, or thanking Him in prayer for blessings, but much more significantly is revealing the truth about God, in both our words and the way we live our lives.

It reminds me of the 3<sup>rd</sup> angels message, “Fear God and give glory to Him for the hour of his judgment has come.” – the hour for Him to be praised – or judged correctly!

We are to reveal God in our lives, demonstrating that His remedy to sin works, that we are changed, by His presence,

from selfishness to love for others, thus bringing honor and glory to God in the time he is being judged.

Or, another way to say it is, as His agents, representatives, priests, we commend Him or make a good judgment about Him! Thus helping others to see Him in a commendable light so they also can judge rightly about Him.

What would the darkness we are called out of be and what is the light?

Would the darkness be the darkness of misunderstanding about God?

Jesus is the light that lightens all men (John 1) – the light about what?

Jesus said if we have seen Him we have seen the Father. Do we let our light about God's character, methods, and the principles upon which He built the universe to run, to so shine that the darkness of fear and misunderstanding are driven back?

Would anyone like to share how their view of God has changed over time and the difference that has had on their lives?

Would anyone like to share what they have found effective in revealing this light into the darkness of misunderstanding about God?

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, "Too often..." thoughts?

Do you believe all those who have experienced God's renewal of their heart have a ministry for His kingdom?

What can we minister to spread the kingdom of God?

- Teachers and speakers
- Organizers
- Helpers
- Health care providers
- Technical people
- Writers
- Animators
- Administrators
- Accountants
- Missionaries
- Evangelists
- Builders
- Mechanics
- Electricians, plumbers, carpenters etc. etc.

Is there any honest activity that is not useful in God's cause?

What can we do with our ministry to become more effective in spreading this message outside our group?

- Webcasting starting next week – thanks Dean! Without Dean this ministry would not reach outside the room in which we meet. God has truly blessed us by bringing Dean to be part of our ministry!
- TV programming we are partners with Heartwise Ministries and the first show to air in May 2012
  - This class is financially supporting our ministry which has partnered with HeartWise ministries. The new studio is built and open house is this Thursday April 5 from 5-7 p.m. We are all invited to the open house. I invite you to come. I can tell you this is the best TV studio in Chattanooga. You will love it when you see it. God is really blessing this ministry.
  - Keep praying for this ministry. The devil has been very busy trying to stop it. You know the obstacles we have endured, well Dr. Marcum has received numerous phone calls from all over the country and visits from people locally telling him that he should

not be partnering with Come and Reason, telling him of the problems with his message of focusing on bringing people to a relationship with a God of love. He has even received some death threats. Satan is scared because he knows his time is short and lies cannot stand up to the truth!

- We will also need volunteers to help run the cameras, answer telephones each Thursday. Some of you have already volunteered. If you are interested in helping let us know.
- Books –
  - Dr. Marcum's book *The Ultimate Prescription* does a wonderful job of presenting the truth of God's character of love through the life of a cardiac patient and the laws of health
  - *Could it Be This Simple* has helped tens of thousands
  - *Change Your God Change Your Brain: How Your View of God Changes Your Brain* will be published by IntersVarsity Press late this year. God is blessing in its development. Dr. Larry Crabb, psychologist author, world renowned speaker, Dr. Michael Lyles, Christian Psychiatrist and board member of the American Association of Christian Counselors, Dr. Tim Clinton Founder and President of the American Association of Christian Counselors, Dr. Gregg Jantz, author of more than 30 books, president of founder of A Place of Hope in Edmonds WA, are all writing endorsements for this book.
- Bible Study guides – our board has voted to create new Bible study guides that will focus on the truth of God's character. Charles Mills is the editor, and we already have four principal contributors. These guides will not be dated and will be written for all Christians.
- Magazines – Fundamental Focus – our ministry has contacted Genesis Road Ministries which produced the magazine and asked that the magazine be edited for all Christians not just one denomination and then we would purchase 20,000. They have agreed and will have those

soon. We can share this with our friends regardless of denomination.

- Webcards for sharing
- Many of you invite people to listen online and come to class
- Start a Bible study in your home
  - Is anyone participating in a Bible study?
  - Has anyone ever been involved in a Bible study?
- Share what your understanding of God's character and methods has done for you
- Think for yourself, question, search for truth, don't allow others to form your beliefs for you
- Seminars – we have our first “Modern Medicine, Biblical Technology, and the Brain” Seminar scheduled for the trade center this October 13. We will need people to help us do the various administrative and preparatory activities. Kathy Kiley has agreed to help coordinate the volunteers so some of you may be hearing from her.
- Other ideas?

The second paragraph points out that Paul says the believers are to be equipped for ministry.

What can we do to help equip you for ministry? Is there anything we can provide, assist, do to prepare you for your ministry?

Would any of you like us to have some Let's Talk meetings on how to graciously answer questions that arise?

The paragraph states we are to carry a message of love and grace to the world. How is the message we are to carry different from what every other church carries to the world?

If we innocently included distortions about God's character do such distortions still undermine the message of love and grace?

Doctrines are important as they inform us about God and His character, methods principles – what doctrines help you see God more clearly?

- The law of love
- God as creator
- Jesus is fully divine
- The trinity
- The nature of mankind – mortal not immortal
- The healing model of atonement
- The healing model of the end of sin and sinners
- Others?

What traditional doctrines or ideas have made it harder to see God clearly?

- Jesus is not fully God
- God requires appeasement or payment to forgive
- God uses His power to inflict punishment on sinners
- There is no trinity
- Man is immortal and the wicked will burn in hell forever
- Jesus died to pay our legal debt
- Others?

Read last paragraph, “Jesus is not...” thoughts?

What is the difference between a serving friend and friendly service?

Does Jesus call us to service? How do we harmonize Jesus call to be a servant with John 15:15 when Jesus said,

- I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

Did Jesus say in this verse we are not to serve? No! What is the difference between a servant and a friend?

Friends UNDERSTAND their master, servants do not!

- Servants, “God said it, I believe it, that settles it. We don’t ask questions if God said it that is good enough.”
- Friends, seek to understand the Master and will ask questions of the Master, especially if they are concerned the action would hurt the Master.
- Servants never consider what will hurt the Master they are concerned with not being punished by the Master.
- Friends are willing to risk punishment to protect the Master.
  
- Abraham, a friend of God, questioned Him about Sodom. Why? What was Abraham’s concern?
  
- Moses, also described as a friend of God, questioned God about destroying Israel – why? What was Moses’ concern?

Remember the movie *It’s a Wonderful Life*? In the beginning George is a young boy working for a pharmacist and the pharmacist got word his son had been killed and made a mistake filling a prescription. He ordered George to take it. George was concerned it was wrong and tried to tell the pharmacist, but the man was upset and yelled at George, George persisted and the man hit him, but he still persisted and the man finally listened and George was right and the man hugged George.

Was George just a servant, or a friend?

Why is it so many insist we remain as unthinking servants?

Why does Christ not simply order us into service?

- What kind of service does He want?

- Only the service that springs from love and love cannot be commanded.
- So, what does this mean?
- Servant mentality is not pleasing to God, only friendship mentality is what He wants!

Think about your children. When they are small, immature, they often may obey because they are told to do so. They don't understand why, they just do it. But what if your child never progressed beyond that, as an adult they continue to wait for you to tell them everything to do before they did it?

## MONDAY

Read first paragraph, "Sometimes..." thoughts?

Do you ever find you are working to undo the work of others? As a doctor, I have patients who sometimes come to me on 4,5,6 or more medications, diagnosed with illness for which I find no evidence and I will find it necessary to undo many things done by someone, before the patient gets well.

Spiritually, do we ever find we are working in fields that have been filled with weeds, distortions about God, ideas that close minds?

What kind of ideas close minds and prevent the truth from penetrating?

- Rumors and gossip about the person bringing the gospel message
  - Those who opposed Paul spread rumors about him to try and undermine his influence so people would not listen to him. Do we struggle with such tactics today?
- Belief that truth is determined by feelings rather than facts
- Belief that truth was discovered by the reformers and we only need to know what they knew



- The Jews in Christ's day believed they had Moses and the Prophets, and knew what it all meant and were not open to grow.
- Do we ever find church leaders today who hold to concepts hundreds of years old, doggedly unwilling to allow the truth to grow and advance?
- Belief that others, who were so loving and kind, like grandma, couldn't be wrong
  - Do we find good people, people with hearts oriented to do right, can still have erroneous beliefs?
- Belief that God's law is imposed

Do we need more workers in the field? Do we need more people sharing this message about God?

What can we do to have more workers in the field?

Why are we not more passionate to tell people? Do we have the same motivation to tell people the truth about God as we do to tell people our team won the Super Bowl?

We certainly would appreciate more prayer warriors, people who will pray for this ministry and people who will pray that God will bring more people to this ministry to help spread this message about Him!

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, "The local church..." – thoughts?

What do you understand the church to be?

How does one become part of the Biblical body?

When Martin Luther was ex-communicated from "the church" of his day, was he no longer a member of the church? Or, were the church authorities the ones who were not members of the church?

If someone today is not affiliated with a particular denomination or group, does that necessarily mean they are not part of God's church?

Where should our loyalty be – to Christ and His kingdom or to a denominational organization?

But does that mean we should not belong to a denominational church?

What is the benefit of meeting together? Could our ministry be as effective if we all stayed at home each week and studied our Bibles on our own?

The lesson suggests we need unite on areas of evangelism and witnessing – what do you think are the central points upon which we must unite?

Are there doctrinal points upon which we must unite? What are those points?

- The truth about God's character of love
- The truth about God's law of love
- The truth about what Christ accomplished
- The truth about God's calling for each of us
- The truth about our condition
- The truth about God's solution for our condition
- Others?

Are there methodological points on how we evangelize on which it is helpful we unite?

- Speak truth, in love, and leave people free – under this umbrella is not almost any specific method okay
  - TV, radio, internet, print, door to door, Bible studies, community seminars, literature sharing, visitations, health ministry, debate, music, art,

helping disaster victims, helping the disabled, etc.  
etc.

- What would you like to do to help spread this message? If we can help you let us know what you need to enable, empower you!

Read second paragraph, “The apostle...” thoughts?

- Is there anything we are doing that is inhibiting your ability to contribute?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Yesterday...” thoughts?

What happens if someone doesn’t feel strongly that they are working with God – does that mean that they aren’t?

Are our feelings a good barometer of whether we are or are not working with God?

Is there a difference from knowing and feeling?

What is it we can have confidence in regardless of how we feel?

Testable truths –

- Gravity won’t change based on our feelings
- The law of entropy won’t change based on our feelings
- The law of love won’t change based on our feelings
- The law of liberty won’t change based on our feelings
- God’s character of love won’t change based on our feelings, He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow!

What *can* our feelings change? The way we feel! And if we aren’t careful, if we permit it, our feelings can lead us into temptation and we can change our beliefs, and actions based on a change in feelings. But feelings do not determine truth or change reality!

Read second paragraph, “The Scriptures...” thoughts?

What do you understand God’s amazing grace to be? How has that grace impacted your life?

#### THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “This week...” thoughts

- Would it be beneficial to have a periodic meeting to share how people are sharing this message and the response they are receiving? And then talk about what we can learn from these experiences to be more effective?
- Does anyone have a report they would like to share of how they shared this message with others?
- Russ Crear told me that he was on the plane riding back from Florida and starting talking to a woman next to him and then they mentioned Come and Reason and this class and they found out both listen to this class. The lady was Lori, Russell’s sister. Anyway, they spent the time on the plane talking about this picture of God and as they were getting off the plane Russ looked to the woman on the other side and apologized for not talking with her and she said, “Oh no, I was so blessed by your conversation. I enjoyed so much hearing about such a loving God as you were describing.”

#### FRIDAY

Read question number 1 and discuss?

- Is this an absolute reality stated, or a generally good idea?
- What if this were stated about the church when Christ was on earth?
- What if the church leaders won’t unite with the laity in finishing the work but insist on taking a course as the

church leaders did 2000 years ago, or the church leaders did to Martin Luther?

- Is it a dangerous position to be a leader and believe you are there to defend the traditions of the church?
- How can we reach out in a constructive way to church leaders to help them grow in their understanding when they may be afraid they will lose their job if they should start teaching this message about God?

Read and discuss question 2 - thoughts?