

Foolish Obedience

It seems so long ago that my wife and I ministered in parking lots in the Baton Rouge area with our newly launched church. At age 19, married and on fire for Jesus, we joined a church team and spent Saturdays asking grocery shoppers if they knew Jesus. There, God taught me many lessons that still bear powerful fruit.

Our church had a flatbed truck for music teams. The Power Company was our lead group and sang worship music of the day while most of us had conversations. I sang with the Light Company, and our job was to keep the anointing fresh while the A-team rested a bit. Thankfully, the Gas Company never formed.

I recall many conversations with seekers from 48 years ago. Sure, there were many rejections and much mocking, but my memory serves up hungry faces of people looking for help. I learned to simply tell folks what Jesus did for me, hand out tracts and offer to pray with them. Those were truly the good ol' days.

In my *Greenelines* podcast interview with Donna Sparks this week, she shares a story that reminded me of my experience in busy parking lots. The Holy Spirit asked her, "Are you willing to look foolish for Me?"

As an evangelist for the Assemblies of God, Sparks travels to speak and minister at churches. She admits to a tendency to slip into introversion. But she works hard to prepare and find the favor of pastors she visits.

"I had to think about that for a minute," she says. "Because as an evangelist, I don't want to look foolish. The Holy Spirit began to speak to my heart about my focus and to quit trying to sound intelligent, quit trying to sound smart. The Spirit told me to 'just do what I asked you to do.'"

"I thought, *My goodness, this is the simplest message ever,*" Sparks says. "And the Holy Spirit just asked me to stick with it. And I said, 'OK, I will preach what You have asked me to preach.' Hundreds were baptized in the Holy Spirit in that service that morning. The power of God just moved in such a miraculous way. That night, I preached on healing with another very simple message, and many were healed in that service. The Spirit just wants us to be obedient."

The foundation of any ministry is obedience to the Holy Spirit. Whether in a parking lot, coffee shop or church meeting, when we press in to the Lord with obedience, powerful miracles, signs and wonders follow.

"We must consider whether the Holy Spirit compels us to do a certain ministry," Sparks adds. "That's it. And that's where my focus is; He is my best friend. I rely on Him completely to lead me and guide me in every church that I go into.

"I pray specifically for that congregation and ask, 'What do You want me to speak to them?'" she says. "And I believe that He will give me a fresh word for every congregation. He always provides.

Donna says she learned to seek simplicity. She stopped trying to impress and simply pressed in.

Today, I'm praying the Lord will remind me how to multiply spiritual simplicity.

✖ Listen to my entire conversation with Donna Sparks on *Greenelines* at this link, and be sure to subscribe to *Greenelines* on your favorite podcast platform for more inspiring stories like this. Check out Sparks' latest book, *The Masquerade*, wherever fine books are sold, and listen to her podcast, *Navigating Life in the Spirit*, also on the Charisma Podcast Network. {eo}

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