

Taking Jesus to the Marketplace

✖ *Everyday*

we pass up opportunities to reveal Jesus to others. But with a little creativity we can seize those moments for eternity.

One

of the last things Jesus said to the disciples was, “Go into all the

world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15, NKJV). This

Scripture applies to His followers today as well, but it doesn’t mean

we all have to leave our jobs and homes and go into full-time ministry.

It simply means we are to act as Jesus acted.

Jesus

deposited His life in us, the church. Now we are commissioned to do

just what He did—and He gave us the power and authority to do it. He

said, “I give you the authority over all the power of the enemy, and

nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:19).

The

problem is that we often put limits on God. We acquire wrong mind-sets

about the ways in which He works—or the ways in which He will work

through us. We need to ask Him to remove the mental “box” that limits

our faith and to help us believe that the same Spirit who was

in Jesus
is in us, making it possible for us to operate in the same
types of
ministry He did.

Everyone
Jesus met was affected by Him. Not everyone followed, not all
became
disciples, but they still knew He was connected to something
or someone
other than Himself. He met people where they were and helped
them
connect to a higher realm, a realm outside their natural
circumstances,
where they were changed by the power of God and brought into
relationship with Him.

WOMAN AT THE WELL

The woman from Samaria is a good example. She came to the well
to draw
water and found Living Water instead (see John 4:5-30). When
she first
met Jesus, she knew He was no ordinary man because He spoke
with
authority.

She wanted to
have a religious discussion. But Jesus ignored her attempt to
steer the
conversation in an intellectual direction and spoke directly
to her
situation: “‘You have had five husbands, and the one whom you
now have
is not your husband’” (v. 18).

His
words must have been disarming. She wasn't expecting this
encounter to

turn personal. But Jesus saw by the Spirit that she was more than a woman fetching water, more than a woman talking about religion. She was a lost sheep who needed the Great Shepherd.

In order to reach her, He spoke right past all He saw in the natural realm and zeroed in on the hidden facts of her life. She perceived that He was a prophet, but it wasn't until He revealed Himself more completely that she began to understand He had the power not only to discern her situation but also to bring lasting change.

“Whoever drinks of this water [from the well] will thirst again,” Jesus told her, “but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (vv. 13-14).

Jesus had a wonderful way of reaching people where they were, but He didn't just meet their immediate needs. He introduced them to a greater realm of life and death and helped them come to know His Father.

His compassion caused Him to reach out not with mere sympathy but with power from God. Because He lived in the Spirit realm, He

didn't respond
to natural circumstances; He saw past them and ministered to
the real
issues. He brought the truth into outward circumstances and
delivered
people from the bondage of natural things—even death.

We
can do this, too. And we don't have to wait for people to come
to us;
we can take Jesus right out into the marketplace and minister
to those
we meet with His love and His power.

PRAYING IN FAITH

Years ago I was in a wonderful move of God in London. We
reached out to
people through the gifts of the Spirit and in faith. One of
the elders
in our church was an actor named John, who had been in a show
for a
number of months and had a burden for the orchestra leader.

John
shared the gospel with him several times, but the man was not
interested. He didn't appear to need God! He was very happy;
he had a
good marriage, a good income, a nice home—and no bad habits to
kick. He
simply saw no reason to get saved or give his heart to God.

When
the play finally finished its run, we prayed with John for
this man:
“Lord, please reveal a need that this man and his wife cannot
meet for
themselves.” We left it at that, and John did not see the man
anymore—until about a year later.

We
were all in a "Let Your Light Shine" march in London. There
were many
thousands of Christians taking part in the march, all singing
and
shouting praises to God. While we were walking, John suddenly
looked up,
and a hundred yards away he saw Denis, the orchestra leader,
carrying a
huge banner, which said in bold letters "Jesus Is Lord."

John
learned that Denis and his wife had been living their happy-
go-lucky
life when their cat was taken very sick. The veterinarian who
examined
the cat told them she had leukemia and wouldn't live long. He
offered to
put the cat to sleep.

The
couple were distraught because they loved their pet. Denis
remembered
that John had said something to them about healing, so they
looked in
the Yellow Pages to see what they could find. They came across
a listing
for the London Healing Mission, which, unbeknownst to them,
was a
ministry to street people that actually had nothing to do with
physical
healing.

They called the
number. "Do you heal cats?" they asked, when the minister
answered the
phone. "Well, I don't see why not; after all, they are God's
creatures,"

he wisely answered. So Denis and his wife wrapped the cat in a blanket and drove clear across London to the mission.

When they arrived they put the cat into the arms of the minister, who had answered the door. "Lord, please touch this little cat," was all he prayed. Suddenly, the cat leaped from his arms and was perfectly fine.

The couple were saved that night and later became Spirit-filled. God answered our prayer by working through a need they had! He loves to use the situations people find themselves in to reveal Himself to them, if we will release our faith and pray.

PROVING GOD

When I was first filled with the Holy Spirit I was working for a company in the West End of London. Up to that point I didn't have much of a testimony.

But once I became filled with the Holy Spirit, I had the power to witness—and something to witness about. I asked Him to help me evangelize the worldly people I worked with. I knew they were not going to take any notice of what I said, so I needed the Holy Spirit's demonstration.

My

work at the company was in the accounting department, and at the end of

every month, we would have to balance the books. Invariably the

balances would be "out," and we would spend several hours—sometimes

days—finding the differences and reconciling the accounts.

I

seized the opportunity I saw and made an announcement. "When we do the

balances, I am going to pray, and the Holy Spirit will show me where my

balances are out."

Everyone

looked at me as if I had forgotten to get dressed. But at the end of the

first month when we started to reconcile the balances, I sat and prayed

and asked God to show me where my accounts were out.

"Oh,

Lord," I said, "I stepped out and told everyone that You are alive and

real. I know You want me to have a testimony. Help!" The Holy Spirit

whispered in my ear and told me in which section of the accounts to

look. In a few minutes I had found the error, and my balances were all

OK.

No one said anything. I

didn't say anything either, but the point was made. Every month after

that I would sit and pray, and the Lord would tell me where to

look.

Always within a few minutes my balances were OK. The other employees began to wait for me to pray and got used to seeing God come through.

But

settling my accounts was not the only way God revealed Himself to the employees. He began to show me things about them—and released me to confront them.

You see, I

wanted to have a testimony when I left that place. I wanted people to know that God is real and that He really does communicate with us today.

And I wanted an opportunity to tell them about Jesus. So when God would show me things, I would let the people know that He was “reading their mail.”

The chief salesman was a very worldly man. When the Lord began to show me some things about him, I stepped out in faith.

“Ron,”

I said one day when he came into the office for a file, “God showed me that you are selling the company accounts to another company and that you are planning to follow them.”

Ron looked at me with a very open mouth, like a goldfish. He knew he was caught.

“What are you going to do?” he asked.

"Nothing if you bring back the accounts," I said. He did, and after that he began to keep well away from my desk.

When

I was in the chief accountant's office one day I stepped out again.

"The Lord has been telling me something concerning you," I said.

"Oh, really!" he responded.

"Yes," I said. "You have been swiping the petty cash."

"What will you do?" he asked me.

"Nothing, if you promise to stop and put back what you can."

As far as I know, he did stop, but he kept his distance—except when his wife left him. Then he wanted me to pray!

The

Lord gave me words of knowledge and prophetic words for people there

all the time. They came to know that God was around and that He knew all about them.

This is part of

the purpose of prophecy, as 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 points out:

"If all

prophecy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in [to the

church], he by all. And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and

report that God is truly among you."

GOD WANTS YOU

The Lord wants to give you opportunities such as those I had to show

that He is real. How will people know if you don't step out and let them see God in action? If you can hear His voice and are willing to obey, He is more than willing to demonstrate His Word.

Unfortunately, we take ourselves too seriously sometimes. We get concerned about our "reputation," and it hinders us from obeying the Holy Spirit. We miss a great deal of excitement and adventure that way.

Don't let self-consciousness hold you back. God wants to use you. People may not always get saved right away, but they will know that God has their number. The rest is up to Him and the work of His Spirit. Your job is simply to listen for His prompting and do what He says, no matter where you are, what you're doing or who's looking. If you do, you will make a difference for eternity!

Read a companion devotional.

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