

The Impact of Sharing Jesus

1 Thessalonians 1:8

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Disclaimer: The following are Dr. Jeff Stott's sermon notes and manuscript. They have not been carefully proofed for spelling or grammar. All Scripture quotes are from the New International Version unless noted.

Take your Bibles and open to 1 Thessalonians 1 and the book of Philemon. As believers of Christ we are to share Christ with others. There are many benefits to sharing Christ. I want to show you one of them in Philemon 6.

Philemon 6 says, "I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ" (NIV). When you share Christ with others it opens a door to greater understanding of what you have in Christ. One of the reasons why many believers don't understand some things about their relationship with Jesus is because they don't share Jesus with others. The New American Standard Bible puts it this way, "And I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake." This puts a different slant on the verse emphasizing the depth and dynamic of your relationship with others is impacted through your understanding of what you have in Christ. But the bottom line is this: As you grow in your understanding of Christ and share Christ you are going to learn truths and gain insights that you cannot gain in other ways outside of sharing Christ with others. Some of your spiritual growth is dependent on sharing Jesus with others. Some things you will never know nor understand until sharing Christ is a part of your life.

With that said, I want to show you four truths about sharing Jesus with others from 1 Thessalonians 1.

1. Sharing Jesus is evidence of salvation (4, 8).

Number one, sharing Jesus is evidence of salvation. When you have a passion to tell others about Jesus Christ that can be proof that you are a child of God. In verse 4 Paul tells them, “For we know, brothers loved by God, that He has chosen you.” He is saying, “We know that God has saved you, that you are born again, and have His Spirit living in you because of several reasons.” In chapter 1 Paul gives them a list of evidence of why he is so confident they are saved.

- In verse 3 he points out how their faith in Christ produced work for Christ, how their love for Christ prompted labor for Christ, and how their hope in Christ inspired endurance for Christ.
- In verse 5 he tells them about how the gospel came to them with power, the Holy Spirit and deep conviction.
- In verse 6 he describes how they chose to imitate other’s walk with Christ and eventually imitated the Lord Himself. Along with that he pointed out how they received the Word with joy even though it would cost them in many ways.
- Then in verse 8 (the verse we are focusing our attention on today) he describes how “the Lord’s message rang out” from them and how it was impacting others around the world. Sharing your faith serves as evidence that you have faith. Telling people about Jesus is an indication that you have Jesus in your life.

So Paul is telling them, “When I think about you and your salvation, I know it’s real because I’m seeing the Lord’s fruit come from your life and one of those fruit is telling others about Jesus.”

The principle applied

If you have been struggling with doubt regarding your salvation, try telling others about Jesus Christ on a regular basis. It is amazing how telling others about Christ confirms and encourages one’s faith in Christ. Write a letter to a lost friend or family

member lovingly telling them about Christ. Call them up and talk to them about Jesus. Take them out to lunch or for a walk to share what Jesus Christ has done in your life and letting them know that He can do the same for them.

2. Sharing Jesus is a relevant message to the lost: “the Lord’s message”

Number two, sharing Jesus is a relevant message to the lost. Notice verse 8 says, “The Lord’s message rang out from you....” This was not just any message, it was “the Lord’s message.” Some Bibles translate this as “the word of the Lord” (NASB, KJV, NLT). There are three things you need to know about the Lord’s message.

- **First, “the Lord’s message” is from the Lord.** He is the *author* of it. It is “the Lord’s message.” This is not a message that man created. This is a message that God created. 2 Peter 1:21 says, “For prophecy [about Jesus] never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” Even though God used over forty people to record the Bible, they did not write the Bible as other men wrote normal books. The message of Jesus Christ originated with God. Man did not stumble onto facts about Jesus nor did man think up truth about Jesus. Everything the Bible tells us about Jesus is from God. It is “the Lord’s message.” He is the author it.
- **Secondly, “the Lord’s message” is about the Lord.** It’s not only from Him, but it is about Him. He is the *subject* of it. Back in verse 5 it is described as the “gospel.” In verse 6 it is described as “the message,” and here in verse 8 it’s called “the Lord’s message.” What is the gospel or the Lord’s message really about? Well, we are told in 1 Corinthians 15:1, “Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. (2) By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. (3) For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (4) that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures....” The subject of the Lord’s message is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for our sins and eternal life. That’s the

Lord's message. The Lord's message is about Him and what He did to bring about our salvation.

- **Third, “the Lord’s message” is for the lost.** The unbelievers are the target of it. The audience for this message are the unsaved. The Great Commission, which is stated five times in the Bible, instructs us to tell a lost world about the saving power of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). The target audience for the Lord's message are the non-believers. Throughout Scripture you find people like Paul reasoning, explaining, proving, with non-Christians that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true (Acts 17:2-3; 28:23).

The Principle Applied

So what does this mean to you and me?

- **You can be confident.** You can have complete assurance that the message of Jesus Christ is true and God told us exactly what He wanted us to know about His Son Jesus. God is the creator of this message and He does not lie. It is the truth. You can be confident that you have the truth in your hand.
- **You can relax.** You don't have to worry about what to say. Tell them about the life, death, burial, resurrection, and return of Christ. The Holy Spirit will take care of the rest.
- **You can know that what you are sharing is needed.** Everyone needs Jesus Christ as their Savior. That lost friend of yours, needs to hear about Jesus. It is relevant to them whether they realize it or not. It is a needed message. It is an important message. Their eternity hangs on this message.

When you share Christ with a friend, don't be afraid or worried. You can be confident because God is the creator of the message. You can relax because you already know the subject is Jesus Christ. You can know what you are sharing is relevant and needed in their life.

3. Sharing Jesus is to be a constant theme in our lives: “rang out from you”

Number three, sharing Jesus is to be a constant theme in our lives. Telling others about Jesus should be a regular habit of our lives. Look at verse 8 again, “The Lord’s message rang out from you....” The phrase “rang out” (exechetai) is also translated as “sounded forth” (NASB) or “sounded out” (KJV) and refers to a rolling thunder, a rumor that runs everywhere, or a loud trumpet that gives a message. In the Bible trumpets were used to announce the battle commands and the beginning of festivals and celebrations. The point is, the Thessalonians believers were bold and open about the Lord’s message. They were like a trumpet or a thunder announcing the gospel of Jesus Christ, but it was a continual thing.

The principle applied

Ever how you are telling people about Jesus, keep doing it. Whatever way you are keeping the Lord’s message on your mind and on the minds of others, keep on doing it. Some Christians carry gospel tracts and hand them out, some people have Scripture as part of their email signature, others use FaceBook, some wear T-Shirts that point to Christ, some preach behind pulpits, some handout Bibles, some have bumper stickers on their cars, some give advice to their friends based on what the Bible says, others use sign language and so on. You be a sound and bill board for Christ. Let it be your lifestyle.

4. Sharing Jesus should be a part of our reputation: “your faith in God has become known everywhere”

Number four, sharing Jesus should be a part of our reputation. As a Christian and as a church we should be known for telling others about Jesus Christ. Look at verse 8 again, “The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia – your faith in God has become known everywhere.” These Thessalonian believers had a reputation of faith. The Roman Christians had the same reputation. Paul said in Romans 1:8, “I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.” Churches and Christians can be famous for many things but are they famous for their faith? For a group of believers to have a reputation

for faith, you have to have *individuals* who trust God. *A church's reputation is the collective reputation of the group.* So let's start with ourselves. How's your faith today? Is it healthy? Is it growing? Is it contagious? Is it struggling? The Bible has a lot to say about our faith.

- Hebrews 11:6 says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God...." Every time someone trust God for salvation it pleases God. Every time one of His children trust Him during a difficult time it gives Him joy. Our faith pleases God.
- 1 Timothy 4:12 says, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." As believers we need to be aware of what kind of example we are setting when it comes to trusting God. What kind of example am I and are you when it comes to trusting God during the times it doesn't make sense or when it gets tough to trust God?
- In 2 Timothy 3:10, Paul is talking to Timothy about his life and says, "You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, [and] faith...." When people hang around you, live with you, work with you, or spend time with you they should be able to easily identify "your way of life" and your "faith" in Christ.

Conclusion

As you share Christ with others it will boost your confidence and assurance that you belong to Him. Whenever you share Jesus with someone who is lost you can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that you are giving them a relevant message to their life. By intentionally sharing Christ on a regular basis through a variety of means you will gain the reputation of a Christian who loves Jesus and loves people.

Maybe today you are one of those who needs to receive Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life [explain salvation].