

The Heights Baptist Church

EVANGELISM • SESSION FIVE: SHARING THE GOSPEL MESSAGE •

ROMANS 10:14-15; 1 PETER 3:15 • 8/22/2021

MAIN POINT

Every believer has a responsibility to share the gospel message, which God has made plain to us and alive in us.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Name something you talk about easily and are always ready to discuss when the subject comes up (i.e. your favorite hobby, team, shows, etc.).

Does it feel natural or awkward for you to talk about spiritual matters with other people? Explain. Why is talking about Jesus often harder for us than talking about other things?

Most believers understand they are supposed to tell people about Jesus. It's also true, however, that most believers struggle to do so. It's much easier to talk with coworkers and neighbors about last night's game or vacation plans than it is to share with them the gospel message. Yet, nothing is more important to talk about with others.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ROMANS 10:14-15.

What keeps some people from calling on the name of Jesus?

How does verse 14 help you better understand the importance of having conversations about Jesus?

Read Acts 1:8. How does it make you feel to know that Christ followers are God's "plan A" for spreading the gospel message?

In these verses, Paul shared how God saves people. It is not through seeing His handiwork in creation (Rom. 1:20). It is not through our own good works (Rom. 9:32). Instead, it is through the

sharing of the gospel. No one will be saved apart from hearing the gospel and believing in Christ as Savior and confessing Him as Lord. We are God's chosen instrument through which God declares His gospel message to the world. If we do not share the gospel with our lost friends, their only hope to be saved is to hear the gospel from someone else. As Christians, we possess the best news in the universe that has the power to change the eternal destinies of those we love. Why wouldn't we tell them the good news about Jesus?

From verse 15, what is the core message God desires the church to preach?

What do you think Paul wanted His readers to understand about evangelism when he used the words "sent," "feet," and "bring" from Isaiah 52:7?

How does this help you know that the question, "Will you come to church with me?" is only a starting point? Why isn't inviting someone to church the end of your duty as a believer?

We learned last week that the gospel is the good news we are to share. Not only that, but it is our mission to do so. The gospel won't spread if we do not give a verbal witness. Lots of forces are fighting against the advancement of the gospel. Sometimes it's our own fear, sometimes it's Satan's schemes, but regardless of what it is, we know that when we present the gospel, God is right there with us. We can trust the Holy Spirit to guide us as we share the hope of the gospel.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 PETER 3:15.

Does "anyone who asks . . ." (1 Pet. 3:15) mean you're off the hook for explaining your faith if no one ever asks you about it? Why or why not?

What does it mean to always be ready? What's the challenge in that?

The call to share the gospel message not only means having to speak, but also being ready to speak. Peter explained that we are to be ready to speak, and also measured in what we say.

Here's how this verse reads in The Message: "Through thick and thin, keep your hearts at attention, in adoration before Christ, your Master. Be ready to speak up and tell anyone who asks why you're living the way you are, and always with the utmost courtesy." At any moment, we could encounter someone who wants to know more about our beliefs. The more familiar and comfortable we are talking about our hope in Christ, the better witnesses we can be.

From what you know about Peter, does it seem strange to you that he would instruct other people to "always be ready" to tell people about Jesus?

Why do you think he added that our witnessing should be done “with gentleness and respect”? How can you be gentle and respectful with disagreeable people?

How do you like to be talked to? How should that inform the way you share your faith?

Think back to what you know about Peter. He was fearful, right? He wanted to be brave, but he wasn't. When he stepped out on the water, he sank. He denied knowing Jesus because he was afraid of suffering. But that was before the resurrection.

The resurrection changed everything. After Jesus rose from the dead, Peter understood that there was more than just life on this earth. It's not the end or even the main thing. If we believe that Jesus is alive and we will be with Him one day for eternity, then we have a different perspective. We learn what Peter learned—there is nothing to fear. Instead of worrying or being afraid, worship Jesus and always be ready to tell people why you do. Your circumstances (for Peter's original audience, the circumstance was suffering) bring opportunities to tell people about Jesus.

Name an everyday circumstance you might encounter. Discuss good ways to transition that circumstance into a gospel conversation.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What needs to change in your life for you to be consistently ready to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you?

How would becoming more familiar with the basics of the gospel message help you share this message more often?

What fears or hangups do you still have about sharing the gospel message? How can this group help you in that?

PRAYER

Thank God for His Spirit, which reminds you of the resurrection hope you have in relationship with Jesus. Ask Him to help you set apart Jesus as Lord above all else in your daily life, and to make you ready at all times to tell people about Him.

COMMENTARY

| ROMANS 10:14-15

What must occur for someone to call on the name of the Lord? Someone must first be sent to proclaim the gospel message, and then listeners must pay attention and believe. In the absence of any one of these factors, no one can call on the name of the Lord. Paul quoted several OT passages to show that the conditions described in verses 14-15 had been met for Israel. The gospel message was proclaimed throughout the Roman Empire. The Jews listened and simply did not believe. The Gentiles heard too, and many embraced it. Paul's citations show that the Gentile conversion was predicted in the OT. Ultimately, all peoples are a disobedient and defiant people. Israel was singled out in this way due to their consistent rejection of God's message and messengers (see Ac 7:51-60).

| 1 PETER 3:15

Honor . . . in your hearts means "to acknowledge as holy" from the center of one's being. This inner reverence for Christ should lead believers to always be ready, especially in the midst of persecution and suffering, to give a frank defense of the hope within them.