

What is The Message of Evangelism?

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[0:00] Please turn again in your Bibles to Isaiah 55. We've been away for some time from our study in evangelism, but we want to continue it tonight. And my question tonight is, what is the best way to communicate the message of evangelism?

The message is the Gospel. And we're going to talk about that tonight, but what's the best way to communicate it? What would you think of a calculus teacher? And I remember my calculus teacher very well.

He was a man named Mr. Rue. And he could make you live to, you know, rue the day that you took calculus. And he would sit beside an overhead projector similar to this one, but not exactly like it because it had not just one single overhead transparency on it, but it had a spool, a roll that you could roll and change.

And he would sit next to that thing, and man, he would write as fast as you can talk. Formulas, problems, and he would work those things out, and as soon as it would fall, he would scroll it, and he would keep writing and keep going.

Now, what would you think of a calculus teacher that did that, but he never opened his mouth to tell you what he was doing? To explain the problem that he was working out?

[1:16] To explain the formula that he had given to help you solve the problem? I had a hard enough time with calculus. If he hadn't explained what he was scribbling up there on the overhead, I wouldn't have had the first clue what he was talking about if he hadn't opened his mouth and spoken about it to us.

In a class like that, with a teacher like that, you probably wouldn't learn calculus very well. Or if you had a teacher that was doing that, he's writing formulas furiously and problems up there, and he's talking about world history at the same time.

And he's not talking about calculus. What's coming out of his mouth is very different than what he's writing on the overhead. Not going to learn calculus very well. Parents are going to be complaining to the administration soon that that teacher is not doing his job.

And I wonder about us with our job or work or task or duty of evangelism. We've talked here about what it is and why it must be done and that each one of God's people is responsible to do the work of evangelism.

And we've started to look at the how of evangelism. And we talked about the means. How do you do evangelism? You do it in the power of the Holy Spirit and with much prayer. That's the means for the work of evangelism.

[2:32] Spreading the good news of the Gospel. Tonight we want to think about the message of evangelism. And we'll get a little bit into the method tonight. But still under this heading of how, the message of evangelism.

It seems to me that many Christians do evangelism the way our calculus teacher that we just spoke of taught calculus.

He showed a lot, but he never said anything. And I think sometimes Christians are satisfied to let their light shine and to let their life serve as a witness and testimony, but to never open their mouths to communicate the message of the Gospel to people around them.

They'll try to communicate it only by the way they live. And such a witness, while partially useful and effective, and it's something we must do, we'll talk about that later, you must live out the Gospel before others.

But if you do that without speaking, people might just think, well, there goes a good person. He's just a really nice guy. He's one of those good people that you just love to meet.

[3:49] And if that's all they take away from your good life, then you haven't been a witness for Christ. Other people will be willing to open their mouth. They say, oh, I'm a Christian.

I go to church. And then, instead of living that way, they'll deny by their life what they say with their mouth. And so any discussion of how to do evangelism has to address both our life, the way we live, and our words, the things that we speak.

And we're going to start with the words tonight. We're going to talk about the message of evangelism. And then talk a little bit later about our lives. So, we're talking about how. The means is the Holy Spirit and prayer.

The message. God has revealed Himself to us in words. When we pick up God's Word, what do we find on the pages? We don't find pictures.

We don't find drawings. We find words. That's how He's revealed Himself to us. And so, it only makes sense then that if we are to make Him known to other people, it will have to be with words.

[4:52] Paul talks about preaching as the primary means by which men are saved. And preaching involves words, doesn't it? What do we do when we stand up here? Well, we speak. We open our mouths and we talk.

And so, he says in Romans 10, verses 14 and 17, how can they hear without someone preaching to them? Without someone speaking the words of the Gospel to them? Consequently, faith comes by hearing the message.

And the message is heard through the Word of Christ. That's true when we preach at the public level, but it's also true on the level of personal evangelism. You speaking to someone else about the Gospel.

It's what Jesus did. It's what the apostles did. Read through the book of Acts. And you don't find Paul and Peter and all of the apostles just living their life before pagans. You find them opening their mouths and explaining, teaching.

Next time you read it, find all the times where it talks about them teaching. Just today in Acts 17, this morning when we read from there, we found Paul explaining to them. It requires words to help them to understand the truth of the Gospel.

[5:57] We need to speak in order to be a witness. We've looked at this verse several times, but hear it again. 1 Peter 3:15 Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have.

Somebody says, hey, why are you the way you are? Why are you so hopeful? Why are you happy in the midst of trouble? We can't stand there and be a mime. Mime in the box.

Or you say, just look at my life. No, you have to give an answer. You've got to open your mouth and you have to speak. If someone asks you, or Colossians 4, verses 5 and 6, notice the context of the directions that are given here.

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders. Talking about when you're people that are outside the church, outside of the kingdom, non-believers, be wise in the way you act toward outsiders. Make the most of every opportunity.

Let your conversation be always full of grace. Seasoned with salt so that you may know how to answer everyone. Hear that? Conversation and answer with outsiders.

[7:04] It's not just them observing the way you live. It's you speaking. And when you speak, it's full of grace. We are, as we've heard in the adult Sunday school class, to breathe grace. We're not to be full of gossip, full of empty chatter, full of useless talk, or just empty period, but rather full of grace.

Our language is to be seasoned with salt, speaking the truth in love. And so, to be a witness requires words.

Because that is how God has revealed Himself to us. And so, what better way to do that than with the words that He has given us? If we're going to speak to others the words of the Gospel, why not use Jesus' words?

God's Word. The Bible. You remember, the message is heard through the Word of Christ. Romans 10:17. We've just read here in Isaiah 55 about the effectiveness of God's Word. This is a beautiful chapter in it.

God calling us to come without money. And still we can buy and eat. And He invites all to come to Him in repentance and faith. And it contains later a statement about God's Word and its effectiveness.

[8:14] And I want us to notice it again. Notice verse 10. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater.

He's giving us an illustration. You see the picture that He gives. Rain comes. It waters the earth. Things grow. And so we have an abundance. We have a crop. And when rain doesn't come, you get what my yard looks like.

It's brown. It's crispy. Because I don't bother to water it. And it gets brown and crispy. But when the rain does come, things grow. The rain doesn't come without accomplishing the purpose for which God sent it.

There's bounty for us. We can take food from the land when rain comes. It's a given that rain will produce this fruit. So also is God's Word. Verse 11.

So is my Word. That goes out from my mouth. It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

[9:16] When God's Word is spoken, it accomplishes what God desires. This passage doesn't tell us exactly what God's desires are, but you notice the comparison with water producing an abundant crop and provision.

The comparable result of the Word being sown is fruit in the life of God's people. We bear fruit when we receive the Word, or at least we ought to. We ought to receive it. And then our lives ought to change because we've heard that Word.

Or when an unbeliever hears it. The fruit being repentance and faith, the very thing we're called to earlier in the chapter. And isn't the desire of God's heart that men should come to Him in repentance and that none should perish.

It is. It should be our desire as well. And if that's our desire, then we should be speaking the Word of God to people because that Word won't return empty without accomplishing what God desires.

And so what words should make up our message to those that need to hear the truth of the Gospel? God's Word. It's not my Word that's living and powerful, active, sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing between soul and spirit, joint and marrow.

[10:28] It's not my Word that's like that. It's God's Word. And so that is the Word we speak. And so as you have opportunity to share truth with your friends or acquaintances or neighbors or even strangers, make sure your language is full of the Scriptures.

You don't always have to cite the chapter and verse. It can be as simple as God says. And sometimes you don't even have to say that. It'll be the natural byproduct of someone whose life is saturated in the Scriptures.

Someone that loves God's Word, that reads it, that memorizes, that meditates on it. Out of the overflow of the heart will come the Scriptures. And so just as we should breathe grace when we speak, we should also breathe the Scriptures to those we meet.

These are the words that God has promised to bless. And so why would we speak anything less than God's Word? And what a promise to go with that Word. It won't return empty.

It will accomplish what He desires. Now sometimes we know that part of what God's Word accomplishes is hardening men's hearts as they reject it further. Sometimes it accomplishes that rejection.

[11:38] People turning away from it. But again, the comparison here is of it being life-giving. And God does want us to come to repentance and faith. And so we can expect results when God's Word is spoken.

It's what Jesus did. He goes into the synagogue and He takes the Scriptures. And He reads from Isaiah. And He explains that He's the fulfillment of that process. He spoke the words of the Scriptures.

When Philip goes up to the Ethiopian eunuch, he doesn't ignore what the guys read. And he starts with that passage of Scripture. And from there, He explains to him the good news about Jesus.

They spoke the Scriptures.

And so which Scriptures should we give them? This is a thick book. There's a lot that we could say to someone. Well, we've said already in this series that the message of evangelism is the message of the Gospel.

The good news of how rebels against God can be made children of God. How chaff can be made wheat. Through the work of Jesus, the Son of God.

[12:40] The message is the Gospel. We noted that first message on what is evangelism. Four elements of the Gospel message. And tonight we want to return to those four things.

And I want to show you how you can take those four elements and tell people about them using the language of Scripture. I'm borrowing heavily here from Will Metzger to tell the truth.

He's got a diagram that I'm going to show you in a moment. As you explain these things to someone, as you have opportunity, and maybe you won't have opportunity to share all of these things at once.

Maybe it's an acquaintance that you see repeatedly. And one time you talk with them about God and His glory and the Word that He's given us and His way. And another time, you don't have to do all of these at once.

Or maybe it will all be at once. Or maybe you won't have time to explain all of these things. Be ready with that explanation in written form in the Gospel.

[13:38] And be able to put it into their hands if you're not going to have time to explain these things. But have a look at this diagram with me and we'll go through it. You don't need to see all the fine print.

There will be things up here that you can't read because you can only make the overhead so big and have it all fit together. But you'll be able to get, I think, the general idea of how He does it. And this isn't the only way to do it. And this is not a magic formula.

And if you draw this out on a piece of paper while you explain somebody the Gospel, it's not a guarantee that they're going to respond to it, okay? There is no magic formula. There's the Gospel. And it's what we share with people.

This could be a helpful tool for you to share the message of the Gospel with someone. I know it's faded. I should have darkened it on the printer.

But it starts with God. We put these first two together the first time we talked about that. And that's what we'll do tonight. God in His way. And then man in His way. And when man goes His way, it leads to hell, which you see down at the bottom here.

[14:36] And that separates us from God. And Jesus Christ is the bridge by which we come to God and can come safely home with Him. You could sketch something like that out.

You could draw the line and then the downward turn towards hell, the cross in the middle, which is Christ, and then how that can make you right with God. I'll leave that up while we talk. You can look at it as we go if you want.

That's fine. And I'll turn it off in a few moments when we've cleared it. But it begins with God in His way. You can go to something like Acts 17. And Will Metzger encourages using the use of Scripture stories to tell that.

We won't entirely do that tonight. But you begin with God in His way. And in Acts 17, you see Paul talking to the Athenians. We'll read it next week in our Scripture reading.

But he begins, the God who made the world. And everything is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temple built by hands. God who made the world.

[15:34] And there's the Creator. He's the one who made us. He's also the Lord of everything. He's the one who gives us our laws. It's right there in that passage. And He doesn't live in temples built by hands.

He's not like the gods around us. He's not like the gods of this world. The gods of the Athenians are the gods that we have today. The gods that people worship and serve today are made for them.

They want God to serve them. The gods of money and everything else are for their good. And their wants and their needs. They want their gods to obey them.

But our God is very different. He's not like those gods. Our God requires service and obedience and worship of us.

He's different. And He requires our obedience. And maybe that turns people off right away. I don't want a God like that that has laws and He makes me obey. And He's going to judge me if I don't obey.

[16:29] Oh, His commands are not burdensome. They're not there to restrict our enjoyment of life or our freedom. His commands, His yoke is easy. His burden is light. And you can talk about the two ways.

And they're given up here. God's way. Love perfectly. Love God perfectly. And love others completely. And Jesus said, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind

and strength and love your neighbor as yourself.

It's the greatest commandment. The second is like it. That's what God expects of us. Pretty simple, right? To obey or to love God and to love men. And people say, I don't like rules.

I don't want to be confined to rules. And we've used this illustration before, but I think it's a very helpful one. You can show people that God's laws aren't meant to be restrictive. They're not meant to quench our joy.

They're for our good. And it's like a train running on tracks. A train was made to go on train tracks. And if that train decides one day that it wants to be free, it doesn't want to go where the tracks goes. [17 : 32] It wants to go somewhere else. And I'm going to get off the tracks. How far is that train going to make it? It's not going to make it very far. Those tracks were created for that train's good. Or if you like a different illustration, a fish was made to live in the waters.

What Andy talked about this morning. The fish one day said, I'm tired of the water. I want to be free. This water is oppressive. It's limiting me. It's holding me back, which is what people say about God's law.

And I'm going to flop up on the land. And I'm going to really live. What happens when that fish flops up on the land? He dies. Fish can't breathe on the land. Can't function on the land.

And so too, it is with God's law. People try to get away. I don't want it. And as soon as we get off God's law, we go our own way. And that's where we get to the third point. Man going his own way. It's the third one here.

Sort of our second. The first is God in His way. The second, man in His way. And we go our own way, don't we? We turn astray.

[18 : 29] All we like sheep have gone astray. Instead of loving God and loving men, who do we love? Ourselves. Instead of being selfless and other-centered, we become selfish and self-centered.

We want whatever makes us feel good, whatever brings us happiness. And so in doing that, we go astray. We break God's commands. We do things contrary to His law.

Now, if we kept His law and we hadn't murdered and we hadn't hated and we hadn't committed adultery and we loved our neighbors, we'd be much better off, wouldn't we? But you see, in our going free, our attempt to go free, it's only made our lives far worse.

What do you get when a train goes off the tracks? Get a train wreck. What do you get when somebody tries to live their own way instead of living God's way? Get a train wreck.

It's a mess. You look around at the world that we live in. You see people going their own way every way. You look at your own life and you see that you've gone astray and you've made a mess of things.

[19 : 32] The fish out of the water dies. And so we abandon God's way and we encourage judgment. Part of who God is is a just judge. He's holy. He set a high standard and none of us are able to keep it.

So the person you're talking to says, well, that's not very encouraging. So we're all going to be judged. Okay, that's it, right? There's a standard. None of us can keep it. We've all gone astray and God's going to punish us all.

We've all broken His law. The wages of sin is death, you tell them. There's no one righteous. Not even one. All have sinned. It comes short of the glory of God. You know, if God's standard was easy, it would be no big deal.

If it was just a one-foot high wall that you had to jump over, we could do that, right? I can step over a one-foot high wall. But you see, God's standard is so much higher.

It's a 100-foot high wall. And it doesn't matter if I try to do a Fosbury flop, the high jump where you go over the bar backwards, or a pole vaulter. They can get up over around 20-plus feet, I think.

[20 : 37] That's pretty remarkable. They can't get over a 100-foot high wall, though. And so you can try all you want to please God. You can try all you want to meet His standard. But you won't make it. You'll hit the wall every time.

And so, it's a pretty big problem we have. Who can ever be okay with God then? Who can avoid His punishment? Well, no one can. But God doesn't leave us there, does He?

He doesn't leave us in our sin. And He doesn't leave us without hope. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

He's provided the answer. It's not that God is so mean, and He gave us all these rules, and makes it so that we can't keep them. And then He punishes us when we break them.

Rather, it's that God so loved the world, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And God doesn't want for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

[21:37] And He has provided that salvation in His Son, Jesus. And that's when you get to the really good news of the cross. That there's a way that you don't have to continue on that downward path towards hell.

You can be saved by the grace of God through the work of His Son, Jesus Christ. And so God sent His Son into the world, and He kept God's law perfectly.

He made it over that 100-foot high wall, something we could never do. And so He doesn't deserve to be punished, because He's the one guy that should be okay, right?

But what happens? He's punished anyway. He's punished in our place, a substitute for us at the cross. God made Him who knew no sin to become sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Christ died once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. Our sins separated us from God, but Jesus brings us back to Him. And now instead of following our own way to destruction, we can follow Christ back to God and on to an eternal reward instead of going down this way to hell, this way to our eternal home in heaven because of what Jesus has done for us.

[22:55] This Jesus is also the Lord of all, and all who would trust in Him for forgiveness of sins must follow Him and obey Him. And so we go back to living God's way and not our way anymore. We want to obey Him, and we want to love our God with all of our hearts, and we want to love our neighbor as ourself, and we make every effort in His strength to do that.

That's what Jesus wants for us, and that's what we will do if we love Him. If we love Him, we'll keep His commands. And so how can that salvation, this way back to God, be ours?

Well, it's the response. It's how Isaiah 55 begins. You can call that person, Come. All you who are thirsty, come to the waters, and you have no money. Come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

You call them to repentance. Seek the Lord while He may be found. Call on Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake His way and the evil man His thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him.

And to our God, for He will freely pardon. Do you hear those promises? If you come to God in repentance and faith, He will save you. Now you've got to help them.

[24:05] You can't just go straight there. You can't just start repent and believe. They've got to understand that they've got a problem first before they'll understand their thirst and their hunger.

But understanding it, then you call them to repentance and faith. Jesus Himself said, repent and believe. The kingdom of God is at hand. You can explain to them, repentance is turning away from your sin.

It's what's described here in Isaiah 55. Forsaking your ways and walking in God's ways. It's coming back to those train tracks and getting back on the track. Not in your own strength, but by God's grace.

Not going your own way anymore, but coming back and living God's way. And faith is trusting in Christ and His work. It's understanding that left to yourself, you would die. And so you totally and completely put your trust in Christ to save you from your sin.

From the power of your sin that's enslaved you. From the penalty of your sin that you deserve. And you trust Him to bring you safely home to God, for it's by grace that you have been saved through faith.

[25:06] And this not of yourselves, it's the gift of God. Not by works, lest any man should boast. So you ask them, what will you do with this message? You come back to Paul in Acts 17.

And when Paul preached in Athens, there were three responses. Some rejected him. And they did so to their destruction. Others said, we want to hear you again on this, Paul.

They wanted some further investigation. That's okay, as long as you're not using that as a stall tactic or just to get rid of me. But the best response, and the only safe one, is that some believed.

And so what will be your response today? Will you repent and believe? Come to faith in Christ.

There's one example of how you can present that message. And you see the response over here.

You can get copies of that from his book or I can make copies. He encourages you, write in the book, make copies of this. And use it. So there's no violation of copyright law if you want further resources.

[26:08] Now just there, in that relatively brief explanation of the Gospel, I referred to Scripture at least 19 or 20 different times.

I hardly at all cited chapter and verse. But you saturate your language with the Scriptures. And you give them God's Word because it's God's Word, not our rhetoric, not our clear presentation, not even our neat little drawings that will save men.

It is God that does that work. And so notice just a few things about that message. In summary, it has to be clear. It can't be cut short in any of its parts.

And the ability to do that might depend on how much time you have. Again, if your time is short with a person, make sure you have a written version of it. You can put in their hands a good tract. We'll talk more about tracts and how to use them, I think, next week.

But it has to be a clear message. You can't emphasize the work of Christ when you tell people the Gospel is all about Christ. How could you underemphasize it? But if you take Jesus out of the picture and turn it into some sort of self-help religion and just try to be a better person and get yourself back on those train tracks, then there's no way then without Jesus to get over that gap between us and God.

[27:28] No way to deal with the problem of our sin. So don't underemphasize the work of Christ. Don't overemphasize or really underemphasize the work of man. If we overemphasize man's work, people will think they don't need Jesus so they'll be proud of their repentance and faith.

Not understanding that it's a gift. If you underemphasize it, they won't ever do anything. Well, it's God that saves sinners so I'm just going to wait for Him to save me. But you know who said repent and believe and that you have to do that?

Jesus said that. Don't underemphasize that. It's your duty. If you are an unbeliever here tonight, and you hear us preach about the sovereignty of God and how He saves His people as elect, you say, I don't know if that's me or not.

I'm just going to wait for God to save me. That's not an excuse. You're commanded to repent and believe. Don't underemphasize that in your message.

It's what you must do. And if you don't, you won't be saved. Don't leave people thinking that there's no urgency. No need to respond. Today is the day of salvation.

[28:32] There's no guarantee of tomorrow. It's not like an invitation to go out with your friends. Hey, do you want to come out with us tonight? Well, I'm kind of busy. Maybe I'll get back to you.

I'm not sure. Or no. Or yeah, I'd love to go. It's not like an invitation like that where the consequences of you saying yes or no are insignificant. Or it doesn't matter if you say yes or no. It's a message that if you don't respond in the proper way, you'll die. It's urgent. And if you don't respond in time, you'll die.

Don't leave them thinking it's no big deal. It can't leave people thinking that they can respond and go on living unchanged. Oh, believe in Jesus, but I'm still going to live the way I've always lived. I still don't want to be back on the train tracks. I want to go my own way. No, you can't. You can't have it both ways. You can't have Jesus as Savior here and not as Lord over here. It's a package deal.

[29:28] You can't separate those things in your message. You can't trivialize sin and a holy God. We can't, as J.I. Packer says, hurry them on to the demand for faith and repentance without having made it clear just what they need to repent of or what they ought to believe.

It's a fault with a lot of modern evangelism. Nobody wants to talk about sin. It offends people. Nobody wants to talk about a holy God because we just want to think that God is only love and nothing else.

And people won't like it if they hear that God is a God of justice. Nobody wants to talk about hell, a place where you suffer forever. But if you don't show people the desperate nature of the situation, then they'll see no need for the Savior.

They don't think they're in trouble. They won't need to be saved. If you don't know you're sick, you're not going to go to the doctor. And so, we need to tell people that they're sick and then tell them how they can be saved.

And so the message must be the gospel in the form of spoken or written words. It must be the Word of God. And we must communicate it. Now, next week, we're going to talk more about ways to communicate that, opportunities to communicate it, how to create and take advantage of those opportunities.

[30:51] But once they're there, you're going to have to open your mouth. And you're going to have to share the message of the gospel, which is Jesus, the Savior of sinners against a holy God. And one other thing tonight.

We want to start for a moment to speak about our method. That's the message. What about the method? Well, it's got to involve our words. That's what we just talked about.

But it must involve our life. Something we mentioned at the beginning. A holy life alone, we've said, is not enough of a witness. If you just are a good person, you live according to God's Word, people might think that you're a good person.

And never associate that with the radical, transforming work that God has done in your heart. And on the other hand, if you talk a good game, you speak about Christ, and you're a Christian, and you go to church, but then you don't live according to His Word, your talk and your walk don't match up. It'll have devastating results for your witness and for the church. A life of hypocrisy will destroy your witness. Even if all you've ever said is, I'm a Christian, I go to church.

[32:01] If your life doesn't look any different from the world around you, you'll be ineffective. And so the way we live is an integral and vital part of the how-to of evangelism.

And I just want to briefly look at a couple of texts to make this point. Turn over with me to Matthew 5. Very familiar words. How do we do evangelism?

We do it by the way we live and by the things that we say. We could take an entire message on these texts tonight.

Just notice them briefly. Matthew 5, verse 14. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl.

Instead, they put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

[33:01] You are the light of the world. You see, he doesn't say be the light of the world. He says you are. And elsewhere in John 8, Jesus says, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

If you are following Christ, you have his light. As Christians, we reflect the light of Christ in a dark world around us. And what should we do with that light?

Should we hide it away in a closet where no one will ever see it? Is that what you do with the lights in your house? You turn them on and then you cover them up with dark blankets? Stick them in the closet where they won't do any good? No, they're there to give light so that you can see, to read or see each other or whatever it is you need to see to do in your house.

They give light. You let the light shine and we are to let it shine as well. We're to let other people see it. That light will expose the darkness.

Hopefully helping others to see their sin in the light of your obedience and therefore their need of a Savior. Maybe that shining light will create opportunities for you to explain why you are the way you are.

[34:06] That it's not about you. That it's about Jesus. And when I'm talking about letting your light shine, I'm not talking about witness wear or bracelets.

When I was in high school, the rage was the WWJD bracelets. What would Jesus do? And that was your mark. And I never had one. And that's not what Jesus means when He says, let your light shine.

If you need a bracelet or a bumper sticker or a t-shirt to tell people you're a Christian, then your light isn't shining like it should be. I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with those things, but if that's all you have, then that's not a shining light.

Your shining light will show in your patience with that person in the checkout line. The one that you can tell has only worked there for maybe four or five hours.

And they've messed up the order before yours. And you're in a hurry. And the person in front of you has yelled at them. And it made it clear that they were very unhappy.

[35:07] And you get up to the checkout counter. And your light will shine in your patience. And immediately, you'll have some sort of rapport with them because you're kind to them instead of

cruel like the person that went before you.

But all too often, we're in just as much of a hurry as the person in front of us. And we're just as frustrated and angry and really sinful in our attitude towards that person instead of loving and kind. You know what? That sort of patience will create an opportunity. I've got a friend. I've told you about him before. He's Rush Whit. He uses things like that to open a door to share Christ with people.

Your light will show in your patience in that line.

It will show in your humble response to praise. It will show in your peaceful marriage and home. It will show in your happy heart in the midst of trouble. It will show in the words you speak and the way you speak them.

It will show in your lack of worry. Your quiet confidence in the midst of trouble. Your light will shine because the world is full of people that don't live according to this word.

[36 : 12] And if you are living according to this word and you're loving God, so you're keeping His commands. If you love me, you'll keep my commands. And you're loving your neighbor as yourself. Whether your neighbor is that person in the checkout line or the neighbor that actually lives next door to you or whoever else it is you come into contact with at work or school or in your neighborhood or on your team.

Letting your light shine. It will be seen by the way you live. And the goal is that men will see your good deeds and then tell you what a wonderful person you are, right? And so you can feel good about yourself.

And you can go home and you think, I was a witness today because somebody said what a good person I was. Well, no. So that men may see your good deeds and not glorify you but glorify your Father who is in heaven.

And they'll do that as you deflect that praise or that comment and say, that person at the checkout counter says, you're the most patient person I've met all day. You're the first person I've met that smiled at me all day.

You say, well, I'm just a happy person. No, tell them, Jesus has changed my heart. I live for Him. I want to love Him and love my neighbor. The goal is that God would be glorified.

[37 : 32] And so make sure your life and your words match. Otherwise, you'll destroy your witness. One other passage. You don't have to turn here. This is Peter writing.

And he was there when Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount. And you hear Jesus' words in Peter's words. And he says in 1 Peter 2, 11 and 12, Dear friends, I urge you as aliens and strangers in the world to abstain from sinful desires which wage war against your soul.

Live such good lives among the pagans that though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us. Very similar to Jesus' words, aren't they? See your good deeds and glorify God. And the idea there, he adds something though. He says, people might accuse you. The concept is, if they accuse you, you should have lived such a good life that if there were an investigation into your life, whatever they're accusing you of, there would be no grounds.

They couldn't find anything to convict you of. Nothing to lay hold of and say, oh, they're right. That accusation is right. He did do that. He did talk that way. He did say those heartless, cruel words.

[38 : 44] He says, live in such a way that there's nothing they can grab hold of, that they can't accuse you of doing wrong, but rather see your good deeds and glorify God who's in heaven. Live so that there's no basis for them to accuse you.

And so, part of the how of doing evangelism are the words that we speak and the way that we live and we have to have both. They go hand in hand. We cannot isolate them one from the other and the two must match.

And so, may God help us to live in a manner that creates opportunities for witness and supports the witness that we do have opportunity to give. And may all of this be done not so that we might be praised, but rather so that sinners can be saved and so that God might be praised.

Amen.