



SERMON RECAP: WHAT DID THE TEXT MEAN? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

During this week's sermon from 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 we are shown how Paul became like the people he was presenting and teaching the Gospel to ("...a slave...in order to win more people..."; "...a Jew, to win Jews..."; etc.). In order for the Gospel to be spread further, Paul took on and made himself like these people so that they may receive the Gospel. In the same way, we as Christians today must adopt Paul's heart and methods when presenting the Gospel to friends, family, coworkers, etc.

WARM UP

If you were placed in a situation where you had to condense the Gospel into a short summary, how would you share the Gospel in 30 seconds?

THE TEXT: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ME?

READ 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

- How would those outside of the faith react if you spoke above their heads or used a "bible-thumping" approach to present the Gospel?

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
and the one who is wise saves lives." Proverbs 11:30 (NIV)

As Paul ministered he could have very easily "bible-thumped" and barked Scripture to those he was presenting the Gospel to. However, he utilized the practice of humbling himself in order to teach the Gospel because he believed the truth in Proverbs 11:30, "...the one who is wise saves lives." He knew the Gospel forward and backward but he brought it down to a level for everyone to be able to understand.

- In your neighborhood or work place, in what way or ways can you humble yourself and break down the Gospel so that others are able to understand it?
- What are barriers in your life that are stopping you from sharing the Gospel with neighbors, coworkers, or others?
- How can you break down those barriers?

In the same way that Paul humbled himself, we too must humble ourselves and present the Gospel in a way that is easy for those outside of the faith to understand.

In their book, "Contagious Disciple Making," David and Paul Watson present the concept of "deculturalizing" the Gospel, rather than "contextualizing" it. In short, in order to present the Gospel effectively to those far from the

faith we must not distort the Gospel into something it's not (Ex. dressing Jesus up falsely in a way that looks appealing to the culture you're presenting Him to). Instead we must present the Gospel for what it actually is, but adjust our method of presenting it.

James MacDonald gives some examples of distortions of the Gospel today, which include:

- The Cake Mix Gospel: Leaving certain "ingredients" out of the Gospel and not receiving its full effect.
 - The Carnal Gospel: "What Jesus can do for me: health, wealth, always happy, never hurting?"
 - The Careful Gospel: "Let's not upset anybody; just keep 'em comfortable and coming back."
-
- What is one example of how you might dress up the Gospel in order to make it more appealing to whoever you are presenting it to?
 - What would be the person's reaction if you presented the Gospel to them as it is, without dressing it up?

READ 2 Timothy 3:16

- What does this Scripture say about teaching the Gospel, and for what purpose?

Watch this short video on being a community on mission:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Jz9ACmgaTA>

Doug Phillips of Restore Strategies speaks into why we need to view service as something more than just an event with a designated start and end time. He says, "A service day or outing is easy to commit to. It requires little of us. In our minds once the event is over so is our calling or, in some cases our duty, to serve. We define the length of time and the occasion for our service, and when it is over we return to a life consumed with meeting our own needs. Service becomes an act one performs rather than an identity one demonstrates."

- Brainstorm and select a group of people that could be your focus for mission as a group. (Ex. Neighborhood, school, ministry partnership of Rush Creek, etc.) Be Creative!
- In what places should we regularly hang out in order to build relationships with those we want to reach?
- Write these ideas down and set a goal to start meeting or serving this group within the next month.
- If you are having trouble identifying a ministry partnership, contact Brian McFadden at brianm@rushcreek.org.



DIGGING DEEPER

Watch this video about what missional community looks like:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lc4tsw3kCok>

- How are you encouraged by this example of missional community? Does adopting this practice and actively living it out seem possible for you and your group?
- What unique advantages can we gain by being on mission as a group, rather than just individually?

CLOSING THOUGHT

We talked about being a community on mission, but that doesn't always require a service project and can be as simple as taking a walk around your neighborhood. Here are some simple ways to be missional within your surroundings!

- Sit on the front porch and letting kids play in the front yard
- Invite neighbors over for dinner
- Start a walking/running group in the neighborhood
- Host a movie night and discussion afterwards
- Do a summer BBQ every week and invite others to contribute
- Grow a garden and give out extra produce to neighbors
- Do a food drive or coat drive in winter and get neighbors involved
- Volunteer to coach a local little league sports team
- Start hosting a play date weekly for other stay at home parents
- Walk your dog regularly around the same time in your neighborhood