

The Wednesday Word, Feb. 8, 2017: Gossiping the Gospel Part 1

In Acts 8:4, we read how that the early church left Jerusalem and went everywhere spreading the Good News. It has been observed:

“This must often have been not formal preaching, but informal chattering to friends and chance acquaintances, in homes and wine shops, on walks, and around market stalls. They went everywhere gossiping the gospel; they did it naturally, enthusiastically, and with the conviction of those who are not paid to say that sort of thing. Consequently, they were taken seriously, and the movement spread, notably among the lower classes.”(Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*)

We have all been recruited to play our part in spreading the Gospel. Here, therefore, are a few pointers to help us do just that.

When we spread the Gospel.....

We gossip about (1) Christ's person.

He is the Word made flesh (John 1:14); David's Son, David's Lord; King of kings (Revelation 17:14), yet a servant (Isaiah 42:19); Lord of lords, yet a worm and no man (Psalm 22:6).

In His person, there is perfection.

There is perfection in the astonishing union of the divine and human natures. He is the God/Man; He has two natures but is one person. As in His divinity, there is perfection in His humanity.

There is perfection in His holiness and perfection in His love.
There is perfection in His power and perfection in His goodness.
When the Father looks upon Him, He sees perfection.

There is perfection in every movement of that remarkable person, in every word and deed. We have much to talk about when we gossip about the person of Jesus.

Not only do we talk about Christ's person, but we also gossip about (2) Christ's Name.

His name is Jesus, Immanuel, God with us (Isaiah 7:14)! He is the Christ, the Son of God. His name is a proclamation of the Gospel for that name contains the excellent news that He will save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father" (Isaiah 9:6). He is the unspeakable gift (2 Corinthians 9:15)

His name is the joyful sound (Psalm 89:15). It is the name of names; His name is as ointment poured forth (Song of Songs 1:3). As Horatius Bonas said, “With the voice of a trumpet, we proclaim His name, that the whole earth may hear it, and rejoice in it. “

His glorious name 'Jesus' is the name above every name. "Wherefore God also has highly exalted him, and has given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; that every knee should bow and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

Not only do we talk about Christ's name, but....

We also gossip about (3) His life.

He dwelt among us, doing and speaking grace. His whole life was good news; each part of it was good news for His life was a revelation of God. When Jesus spoke, God spoke. When Jesus healed, God healed. He was God manifest in the flesh. In His going out and coming in, we have the good news about God. Again Bonar says, "Miracles, parables, sermons, all contain the revelation of the mind of God. His whole life is the revelation of God's love for His people."

With great delight, we can learn to Gossip about Christ's life.

Not only do we talk about Christ's life, but...

We also gossip about (4) Christ's righteousness.

He was the Righteous One, fulfilling the law for us and accomplishing the righteous demands of God for us. Christ Jesus alone is now our righteousness. He lived suffered and died, the just for the unjust (1 Peter 3:18).

As Luther said in his commentary on Galatians, "In that righteousness and life [of Christ] I have no sin, no sting of conscience, no care of death . . . I have another righteousness and life above this life, which is Christ the Son of God, Who knows no sin nor death but is righteousness and life eternal.—pp.105-106.

The righteousness which is imputed to us is the very righteousness of Christ. It is His and reckoned to us freely without cost to us or cause in us. But remember, the righteousness that saves us is nothing found within us. Although we believe in performing good works, we must also be diligent not to trust in them. To rest on saving righteousness by works is to fall from grace.

What a lot we must gossip about.

And that's the Gospel Truth!

In part two we will consider 5 additional ways to "Gossip the Gospel."