

ATTACHMENT THREE – SHARING OUR FAITH WITH OTHERS

THE GOSPEL OF GRACE

ETERNAL LIFE IS A FREE GIFT

“The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23b)

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

BECAUSE ETERNAL LIFE IS A GIFT WE CANNOT EARN IT NOR DO WE DESERVE IT

The bible says that no amount of personal effort, doing good things, or even being religious, can earn eternal life:

“It is the gift of God, NOT OF WORKS, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8c-9)

IF GOD DID NOT OFFER EACH OF US A PLACE IN HEAVEN AS A GIFT, NO-ONE WOULD GET THERE, BECAUSE

EVERYONE HAS SINNED

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

“There is none righteous, no, not one;” (Romans 3:10a)

“But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;” (Isaiah 64:6a)

“The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked;...” (Jer. 17:9)

“All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:6)

We all have our own standards for what sin is. But when it comes to heaven, only God’s standard is relevant. To God, **hate and lust** are sins just as much as murder or adultery, because both express selfishness and ignorance of His Law.

The greatest commandments are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to care for others as much as we care for ourselves. Every time we fail to love in this manner, we are sinning. That is why the Bible says: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

WE CAN DO NOTHING TO SAVE OURSELVES

The reason we cannot save ourselves is because we all miss the mark and fall short of God's standard of absolute perfection.

“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”
(Matthew 5:48)

No matter how good we are, any sin, no matter how trivial it may appear to be, spoils the perfection that God requires.

“For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James 2:10)

Whilst some people are better than others, being better is not good enough. It is like two people trying to jump across a deep chasm. If one falls only a couple of feet short of the other side, he is no better off than the other who only makes it half way.

BECAUSE WE HAVE ALL SINNED, NONE OF US ARE ABLE TO SAVE OURSELVES. NO ONE WOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH TO GET TO HEAVEN. HOWEVER IN CHRIST, GOD OFFERS US ETERNAL LIFE AS A FREE GIFT.

Why should God offer anyone the gift of eternal life?

BECAUSE GOD IS LOVING AND MERCIFUL, HE DOES NOT WANT TO PUNISH US

“The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, Slow to anger and great in mercy. The Lord is good to all, And His tender mercies are over all His works.” (Psalm 145:8-9)

“For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.” (Psalm 100:5) **“For He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm.”** (Joel 2:13c)

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:6-

In fact the bible says, “... for God is love” (1 John 4:8)

HOWEVER, BECAUSE GOD IS PERFECTLY JUST, HE MUST ALSO PUNISH SIN

God's love does not overrule His justice.

“Ascribe greatness to our God. He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.” (Deuteronomy 32:3b-4)

“For I will not justify the wicked.” (Exodus 23:7c)

“I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity;” (Isaiah 13:11) “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.” (Hebrews 9:27)

IF GOD WAS TO OVERLOOK OUR SIN BECAUSE OF HIS LOVE, HE WOULD NO LONGER BE JUST. HIS LAW IS PERFECT AND HIS SENTENCE HAS BEEN PASSED... “THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH” (Romans 6:23a)

HOWEVER GOD HAS BROUGHT HIS LOVE AND HIS JUSTICE TOGETHER IN THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

THE BIBLE MAKES IT CLEAR THAT JESUS IS GOD

JESUS WAS FULLY GOD YET ALSO FULLY MAN

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:1&14)

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” (Matthew 1:23)

JESUS CHRIST CAME INTO THE WORLD TO PAY THE PENALTY FOR OUR SINS AND TO FULFIL GOD'S JUSTICE

WITHOUT CHRIST, EACH ONE OF US WOULD STAND CONDEMNED BEFORE GOD BECAUSE OF OUR SINS. HOWEVER BECAUSE OF HIS GREAT LOVE FOR US, HE HAS PUT OUR SINS ONTO JESUS.

- **Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and to fulfil God's justice**
- **On the third day He arose from the dead and is alive forevermore**
- **Jesus gives the gift of eternal life to all those who RECEIVE Him (believe in Him)**
- **This is why we celebrate Easter**

This is the simple gospel message which must be preached to the unbelievers. (Refer to Romans 1:16-17, 1 Cor. 1:17-24, 1 Cor. 2:1-5, 1 Cor. 4:20 and Acts 8:4-8) “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” **(Romans 5:8)**

THE DEATH OF JESUS ON THE CROSS HAS REPAIRED OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. WE ALL NOW HAVE A WAY OF COMING INTO HIS PRESENCE, HOLY, PURE AND FAULTLESS

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE IS FOR **WHOEVER** BELIEVES IN HIM. **WHOEVER INCLUDES YOU!**

YOU CAN RECEIVE THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH FAITH

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” **(Ephesians 2:8-9)**

Relying on your own efforts or even human logic, or even religious activity, cannot save you. Faith in Jesus Christ is the only way to be forgiven by God and to receive the gift of eternal life.

HOW DO WE RECEIVE THIS GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE BY FAITH?

WE MUST TRANSFER OUR TOTAL TRUST TO JESUS CHRIST ALONE

We must simply **BELIEVE** what God has done for us, and **ACCEPT** His offer of eternal life and **TRUST** Jesus Christ alone. There is no other way.

WE NEED TO REPENT OF ALL OF OUR SINS

“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19)

REPENTANCE IS LIKE DOING A U-TURN

- 1) It is recognising that we are going in the wrong direction*
- 2) It is owning up to God and asking for His forgiveness, and*
- 3) Choosing to go in the opposite direction – HIS WAY*

TURNING FROM OUR OWN WAY TO GOD’S WAY IS ACKNOWLEDGING THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD OF OUR LIFE

The Apostle Paul wrote, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

A SUGGESTED SINNERS PRAYER

Father God today I confess that I have sinned against You. Today I choose to repent of my sins and to follow Your plan for my life. I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for all of my sins and that He arose from the dead three days later. Today I invite You Jesus Christ to come into my heart and life to be my Lord and Saviour and best friend from this day on. Fill me with the Holy Spirit I pray in Jesus Name. Amen

SOME KEYS TO BEING EFFECTIVE IN WITNESSING TO AND PREACHING TO OTHERS

1) The absolute importance of Prayer (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

- i) Prayer less people are powerless. We need God's help and enabling power to see our nation turn to Christ. Without Him we can do nothing. Prayer moves God's hand in our circumstances. (*Jeremiah 33:3*) (*Acts 4:23-24*) (*Acts 4:29-31*) Prayer is the key to seeing breakthroughs and miracles in our life. (*Acts 16:25-26*)**
- ii) Prayer Walking (*Joshua 1:3*)**
- iii) Pray as led by the Holy Spirit (*Romans 8:26-27*)**
- iv) We need to pray for the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest (*Luke 10:2*)**
- v) Travailing in prayer – Praying in the harvest**
- vi) We need to persevere in our prayers for the lost (*Luke 18:1*)**
- vii) Praying for protection from the enemy**
- viii) Prayer covering for outreach teams (*Colossians 4:12*)**
- ix) The Lord is our example for prayer (*Luke 5:16*) (*John 17:6-26*)**

2) Some things to consider when approaching people

- i) Be led by the Holy Spirit as to who to approach**
- ii) Making a good first impression (friendly / smile)**
- iii) Don't be pushy (*Colossians 4:6*)**
- iv) Ice Breakers (help to break down any barriers)**
- v) Conversation – First the natural and then the spiritual (We need to be first GENUINELY interested in those who we are witnessing to. Wait for the Holy Spirit to direct the conversation to the sharing of our faith)**

ICE BREAKERS:

- Compliments
- Any prayer need?
- Weather
- Child or Dog (talk about)
- Invite to our church meetings
- An open ended question such as, "What do you think happens when someone dies?"
- Allowing the Holy Spirit to direct our conversations

3) Overcoming Fear (2 Timothy 1:7)

- i) Fear can pull us away from God's call (*Ephesians 2:10*)**
- ii) We need to keep focused on what God has called us to do**
- iii) Perfect love casts out all fear. Having an ongoing intimate relationship with the Lord helps to keep our heart full of God's compassion. Having a genuine love for people is a great key to overcoming our fear of being rejected**
- iv) Know that when God directs us to share our faith with others He will give us the words to speak. Jesus said,
"Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist." (Luke 14-15)**
- v) The more secure we are in our relationship with the Lord, the more we are able to love people unconditionally – We must pursue wholeness in Christ**
- vi) Being continually filled with the Holy Spirit empowers us to witness to others (*Ephesians 5:18*) (*Acts 1:8*)**
- vii) We must never take rejection of the gospel message as being rejection of us. People are free to accept or reject the message of the gospel. Our responsibility is just to share our faith and to love people irrespective of their choices.**
- viii) Know that all people have some insecurities and fears in life. Some are just better at putting on masks than others. A person will only ever be secure and free indeed when they make Jesus Christ truly Lord of all their life. So when we share the gospel it is GOOD NEWS for all**

4) WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT GOD HAS A GREAT LOVE FOR ALL PEOPLE AND THAT IT IS HIS WILL THAT NONE SHOULD PERISH

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

5) Some Other Practical Considerations

- i) We must prayerfully make plans as a church to outreach into our community with the gospel message. God has the best strategies to help reach our community with the love of Christ and to see people coming to Christ. Individually we need to also be prayerfully seeking the Lord as to who we need to be sharing our faith with.

Without making plans to purposely outreach into our communities and to others, we can more easily be distracted and sidetracked from effectively reaching others in our life and communities with the gospel message. The Devil will continually try and prevent the gospel message from being made know to people. Planning helps us to be focused and efficient in the use of our time and to see others coming to Christ on a regular basis. In the book of Proverbs we read, “*The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty*, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty.” (Proverbs 21:5)

- ii) Don't compete with each other when ministering in pairs or in a team – Where brethren dwell together in unity God commands a blessing (*Psalm 133*) When one shares the other/s can pray in the background
- iii) We need God's compassion for the lost (*Matthew 9:36*)
- iv) We need to genuinely care for people (*1 Thessalonians 2:7-8*)
- v) We need to have a genuine interest in people's lives
- vi) The more real God is in our own life (when He is truly at the centre of all that we do in life), THE EASIER IT IS TO SHARE OUR FAITH WITH OTHERS. When Jesus Christ is truly Lord of all and our first love, it is natural to share our faith with others with passion and compassion (*Psalm 37:4*) (*Luke 6:45*)
- vii) Be led by the Holy Spirit in all that we do and say (*John 16:3*)
- viii) There is power in the use of Scriptures. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (*Romans 10:17*) (*John 8:31-32*) (*Isaiah 55:11*)
- ix) We are most anointed when we flow in our own unique gifts and calling (God has created us uniquely different) We need to be ourselves (*Romans 12:4-8*) (*Ephesians 2:10*)

- x) It is good to prepare ourselves so that we are always ready to preach the word in season and out of season (*2 Timothy 2:15*) (*2 Timothy 4:1-5*) We need to learn to share the gospel message simply and clearly, so that all that we minister to can understand the message that we preach and share
- xi) **AGAIN ALL THAT WE DO MUST BE MOTIVATED BY LOVE** (*1 Cor. 13:1-3*)
- xii) The importance of preparing our hearts before we go out to witness to and to preach to others (Worship and prayer is a key to preparing our hearts – Praying in tongues helps to build up our spiritual strength) *Jude 20*
- xiii) We need to be careful about the company that we keep. (Psalm 1:1) To keep our fire and passion for Jesus ablaze we need people of Godly passion and vision in our lives. (*Proverbs 12:26*)
- xiv) We must continually live a disciplined thought life. We need to be always quick to dispel wrong and critical thoughts that the enemy would want to put in our mind and replace them with Godly thoughts. (*2 Corinthians 10:3-5*) If we can win the battle for the mind we will always have a soft and loving heart towards others, a key TO REACHING OUT TO OTHERS WITH THE LOVE OF CHRIST and the gospel message. In the book of Proverbs we read, “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” (**Proverbs 4:23**)
- xv) We need to commit each outreach to the Lord in prayer and ask for the Holy Spirit to minister through us. We need to also ask for God’s will to be done in all that we do and for divine appointments. We need to also pray for God’s presence to be tangible in all of our outreaches and for unity in the team.
- xvi) Enjoy yourself when reaching out to people with the gospel message during the outreaches. The more relaxed we are, the more comfortable others will feel when we share our faith with them
- xvii) Always humbly give all the glory to God in all that we do and say
- xviii) GOSPEL TRACTS ARE A GREAT TOOL FOR WITNESSING TO OTHERS, and
- xix) Never forget the grace of God and from where God saved us from