

Mission Possible: Preach
February 19, 2017
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

And then [Jesus] told [the disciples], “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:15-16 NLT)

Every one of us is called to deliver the good news of Jesus Christ. However, we tend to resist this calling for many reasons: feelings of inadequacy, fear of people’s reactions, the idea that someone else will take care of it or perhaps just plain laziness. Unfortunately, whatever your hang-up of choice might be, Jesus didn’t say “If they happen to cross your path, and you’re in the mood to share, can you maybe try to tell a few people about Me today?” To truly reach people with His gospel, we have to start letting Jesus interrupt our comfortable Christianity. So, to borrow a sporting goods slogan you might be familiar with, “Just do it!”

Digging Deeper

We are able to continue Jesus’ ministry and fulfill our mission when we...

1) Go

FRAN Network:

Are you making the most of every opportunity to spread His message with the people in your Fran Network?

- **FRIENDS.** Friends are like the family we choose. And we want our family to be with us for all eternity, right? These people should be one of our primary mission posts. You already have their ear and affection as someone they call friend. Do you have friends who are non-believers? Non church goers? What are you doing to share God’s word with them?
- **RELATIVES.** Sometimes speaking the truth is easiest with our family because they are supposed to be the people with whom we are the closest. But it is also easy to take them for granted and relax our “preacher instincts” as a result of that familiarity. Do you find it difficult to talk about Jesus with members of your immediate (or distant family)? Is that difficulty enhanced by the fact that these are the people that have had a front row seat to the good, the bad, and perhaps sometimes ugly, details of your life?
- **ASSOCIATES.** Since we spend a large part of our waking hours with our co-workers, we have a golden opportunity to demonstrate just who we are in Christ. But we have to be careful about what we say nowadays, don’t we? Luckily, in Matthew 10:19 NLT, Jesus tells us not to worry too much about that. God will give us the right words to say at the right time. While He is helping us form our verbal testimony, He can also be glorified through our actions as others see the evidence of Him in us via the things we do. Something as simple as how we react to a difficult situation can be a powerful statement of the love of Christ that lives in us. Have you ever

stopped to compliment a co-worker by acknowledging a good deed or praising a general goodness you observed in them? How can a conversation like that open the door for sharing Jesus' message?

- NEIGHBORS. This is sometimes a big one that we miss. They are the people we see every day in our neighborhood. Do you have a relationship with any of your neighbors beyond the "hello" at the mailbox? What are some ways you could expand these encounters to build friendships with the ultimate goal of reaching people for Christ?

But go to the people of Israel, who are like lost sheep. When you go, preach this: "The kingdom of heaven is near." (Matthew 10:6-7 NCV)

2) Preach

- Preach = "messenger's proclamation from the king." Have you ever fancied yourself to be a preacher? Even if your answer is no, you have an important message to share. Your personal journey to faith is one that no one else can tell. Maybe it won't be conveyed as eloquently as you would hear from a pulpit on Sunday morning, but if a love for the Lord lies in your heart, you have the match that can light a fire in others. Have you ever had an opportunity to share your testimony with a stranger? What was the impact/outcome of your conversation?
- Gospel = "message of victory or news that brings gladness." When you have really good news to share don't you want to tell everyone you meet? You're having a baby! You got the promotion! It is the same with sharing the reason for your faith. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again! Have you ever thought of sharing His kind of love in the same way you would share a personal triumph? How can this perspective help you feel more comfortable in doing so?

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. (Luke 4:18-19 NIV 1984)

Conclusion

It is the great privilege of all Christians to be able to tell others about the love of Jesus Christ. He who was without sin, but loved us so much He willingly took our place on the Cross so that we could be restored in a right relationship with our Heavenly Father. If it ever becomes a challenge for you to tell people about Him, just focus on the powerful way in which He showed His love for us when we certainly didn't deserve it. We can trust our God. He is with us always.

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction." (2 Timothy 4:1-2 NIV)