

Open My Eyes ***Acts 2:43-47***

Intro: Today we come to the end of our Journey...not that the Journey is complete by any means; in fact the journey is really just beginning. We come to the end of our travel to our final destination.

Whenever someone goes on a journey – say a mission trip – when they get back one of the first things they want to do is “tell everyone they know” about their trip. Have you ever gone to someone’s home just after they returned from a long trip say to Europe, they inevitably want to get out the picture album, video or dvd of the trip and show it to you. Why do they want to do this? Because the journey has had such an impact on them they want to share that impact with you.

Illustrate here: Our recent journey to Guatemala is a good example. What we experienced; the things we say, the things we did and the people we met, all had an impact on the team members. It so impacted us that we has one entire service dedicated to “sharing” that experience with you. Why was that? Because we wanted you to experience what we experienced because it was so life changing.

The same is true with the first century Christians we find in our core text. They had been on the journey and had been impacted by, growing Spiritually, praying, fellowshiping, worshipping, and ministering and being ministered to by those around them that they couldn’t keep the experience to themselves...they wanted to share what they had experienced with everyone they met. This is called **Evangelism**. That is what we are going to look at today as we arrive at our final destination, evangelism.

[Stand/read Acts 2:42-47/pray]

The words evangelism and soul winning are not the same thing. They are forever connected to each other but they do not refer to the same things.

On the one hand a soul winning is reap the harvest or bring in the fruit. Evangelism, on the other hand, is the telling, proclaiming of the message. Soul winning is something all of us need to be ready and able to do in case we come across an opportunity to reap. Evangelism can be anything from the preaching of the gospel – the gift of evangelist to the church – to the handing out of a tract to a stranger. Since the Great Commission was given to every Christian we are all expected to **“be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you”** (1 Pet 3:15). That means we are all expected to be willing to evangelize by the simple giving of the message.

When He was on earth Jesus told the parable of the mast having a wedding and he told his servants to go out **“into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage”** (Matt. 22:9) in a very real way he was telling them to go and evangelize.

Evangelizing is just telling and inviting people to church. If the door opens you should be ready to win them, but you will never know if that is the case until you start telling and inviting. In our text today everywhere the people went they were evangelizing; in the market, in the street, in the shops, while talking with their family, their friends and their neighbors. Evangelism is a lifestyle, where as soul winning is being ready to strike when the opportunity presents itself.

What made those in our text today so evangelistic? The text doesn’t tell us but we know one thing for sure, they had an evangelistic passion. They didn’t have that passion naturally; it was something that was planted in them when the Holy Spirit took up residence in their hearts.

The same evangelistic passion was planted in our hearts at salvation as well but it has grown over because of lack of use and the daily grind. So now we have to ask God to give us something to re-ignite that evangelistic passion in our life.

What must we Ask God to give us to reignite the evangelistic passion?

We need to ask God to give us His...

- I. **Eyes so we can see humanity the way He does** Jn 4:35
 - A. In John 4:35 Jesus told his disciples, **“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest”**
 - B. In the context of the parable Jesus had just witnessed to the woman at the well and offered her the living water. She in turn had gone into town **“...and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.”** (Jn 4:28-30). As Jesus was setting there talking to His disciples He seen the people coming from the town, that is when He made is statement, **“...Lift up your eyes, and look...”**
 - C. The problem Jesus was getting at was that there is a harvest waiting to be brought in and if we don’t look with the right eyes we will miss it.
 1. They were looking at everything with earthly eyes

2. He highlighted the fact that for the human harvest we need to look at things with heavenly eyes.
 3. There is no set period for evangelism it is whenever and wherever the opportunity presents itself.
 4. He was trying to get them to open their eyes past their indifference to the condition of the soul of the lost
- D. We tend to overlook things that we mark as less important because they have no impact on our daily lives.
1. It is true that when we are sitting at a restaurant with our family taking time away from that seems like an intrusion into our private time
 2. Taking time to speak to the waiter/waitress and find out something about them seem less important
 3. I wonder if that would be so if we saw the waiter/waitress through Jesus' eyes.
 4. What would the lady checking me out at Walmart look like if I asked Jesus to give me His eyes before going in?
- E. I wonder how many times I have completely missed the opportunity to share Christ with someone because I was too wrapped up in my own agenda.
- F. Our prayer ought to be, **Give me your eyes for just one second; Give me your eyes so I can see everything that I keep missing.**
- G. **To be evangelistic we need to first ask God to give us His eyes so we can see humanity the way He does, secondly we need to ask God to give us His...**
- II. **Heart so we can love lost the way He desires** Matt 22:37-39
- A. When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was he said, **"...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"** (Matt 22:37) but then He said something that shocked them, He said, **"This is the first and great**

commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Vv. 38-39).

- B. It shouldn't have shocked them though because it sums up the 10 Commandments – to Love God and Love others.
- C. As Christ was approaching the time of His crucifixion, He said to His disciples one day, **“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another”** (Jn 13:34). He gives them His reason for this new commandment in the very next verse, **“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another”** (V. 35).
- D. What was actually being done here was laying down the foundation for evangelism in the church.
 - 1. Since most of the NT was first written to the church, which is made up of individuals, most of it was written to build the foundation for building the church
 - 2. Evangelism is a vital part of that foundation
 - 3. Jesus was saying *“You love one another, which will always be an attractive thing and people will see the love you have for each other and be drawn to you.”*
 - 4. When we land in Acts 2:42-47 you cannot help but see the love for each other being shown – sharing their belongings, their homes and their lives.
 - 5. The result was that they found **“...favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved”** (V. 47).
 - 6. It is first of all our love for each other that draws people to the church; it Christ's love for the lost that draws them to cross

- E. Peter reminds us that ***“And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins”*** (1Peter 4:8).
1. The word ‘*charity*’ in this verse means the same as it does in 1 Cor 13 – love, agape love which is the God love, the love spoken of in John 3:16, the love God showed us at the cross.
 2. Peter is speaking to the church
 3. He is telling the church that among the church we should have above all thing love for one another
 4. He then tells us why, because Love covers the multitude of sins.
 5. Jesus told His disciples that they should forgive other who wronged them 70x7 times all Peter is doing is tells us how to apply Jesus teaching.
- F. Our prayer out to be that *“God, never let someone’s multitude of sins get larger than my love for them.”*
- G. When we love each other like that then those outside the church – the lost will be drawn to us because the worlds idea of love is always conditional our is to be unconditional.
- H. When we love each other with this kind of love we begin to love humanity with the love of God, agape love toward the lost.
- I. **To be evangelistic we need to first ask God to give us His eyes so we can see humanity the way He does, secondly we need to ask God to give us His Heart so we can love lost the way He desires, finally, we need to ask God to give us His**
- III. **Arms so we can reach the broken hearted the way He demands**
- A. We all know the story of the Good Samaritan. A man from on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves

who robbed him, stripped him of his clothes and beat him and left him along the road half dead. In a little while a priest – a religious man – comes along and when he saw the wounded man the Bible says he “*passed by on the other side.*” A little while later a Levite comes by and when he saw the man he took time to at the man but he too passed by on the other side. Then came the Samaritan man. The Bible says that, “***when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee***” (Luke 10 30-35).

- B.** The teaching here is really very simple.
1. The Samaritan man showed mercy on the wounded man.
 2. When you show mercy on someone we:
 - a) We identify with the person
 - b) We can then have compassion on the person
 3. Consider this Samaritan man, there was no logical reason why he should rearrange his plans and spend his money just to help an “enemy” in need, but mercy does not need reasons. Being an expert in the Law, the Levite certainly knew that God required His people to show mercy, even to strangers and enemies but still he chose not to.
- C.** When we ask for God’s arms to reach the broken hearted we are showing compassion; and this text explains compassion:
1. Compassion is based upon need not worth

2. Compassion Feels something
 3. Compassion does something
 4. Compassion cost something
- D. When we ask for God's arms we will find that we will be able to ***"weep with them that weep"*** but we will also be able to ***"Rejoice with them that do rejoice"***
- E. We may read this passage and think only of "the high cost of caring," but it is far more costly *not* to care.
1. The priest and the Levite lost far more by their neglect than the Samaritan did by his concern.
 2. They lost the opportunity to become better men and good stewards of what God had given them.
 3. They could have been a good influence in a bad world, but they chose to be a bad influence.
 4. *The Samaritan's one deed of mercy has inspired sacrificial ministry all over the world.*
 5. Never say that such ministry is wasted!
 6. God sees to it that no act of loving service in Christ's name is ever lost.

Conclusion: Evangelism is our passion to share our journey with others, that can't happen if we don't have **His eyes, His heart and his arms** so we can see that they need what we have.