



L.I.F.E. Groups
September 2010 Lesson
Importance of Sharing the Good News

Thank you for being a part of this month's LIFE Group lesson. Today I would like to share with you about the importance of sharing the GOOD News to the world around you. I pray that this message will be life-changing so that you can make a difference.

In Acts 8:26-40 we read about how the Lord speaks to Philip, the apostle of Jesus, to go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. As Philip gets there, the Spirit of God prompts him to go and speak to an Ethiopian eunuch who was traveling on a chariot. This eunuch was in charge of all the Ethiopian Queen's treasury and was returning after worshipping in Jerusalem. Obeying the voice of God, Philip overtakes the chariot and hears the eunuch reading from the book of Isaiah. Philip asks the eunuch: Do you understand what you are reading? The eunuch responded: How can I, unless someone guides me? He was in need of someone to explain the Word that he was reading! He asked Philip to come up and sit with him and he began to ask questions about what he was reading. Interestingly enough, the eunuch was reading the prophetic word about the death of Jesus. What an incredible opportunity! Philip then, beginning at that Scripture shared the Good News about Jesus.

What is this Good News?

The Good News is that God sent his Son Jesus into this world in the form of a man. He lived on this earth for about 33 ½ years going about doing good – healing all who were oppressed, doing signs and wonders, and teaching the kingdom of God. His purpose on earth was fulfilled when He gave Himself to die on the cross taking upon himself the punishment of our sins. The bible says in Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus not only took upon Himself our sins, but He also took our sickness, our curses, our poverty, our burdens and nailed it on the cross. He was buried in a tomb, sealed by the Roman government and guarded by the soldiers. But death could not hold our Savior. Neither could the seal or the soldiers. He was raised from the dead on the third day having the keys to hell and death. He now sits at the right hand of the Father as a mediator of the new covenant.

The Good News is that God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Jesus paid the price in full for the debt of our sins by becoming the greatest sacrifice. Because of the finished work on the cross, we can experience forgiveness from our sins. His blood was shed so that all our sins – no matter how big or small - can be forgiven. His body was broken so we can be healed! Jesus took upon himself our curse so that we can be blessed. He became poor on the

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cross so that we can be rich. He was despised and rejected so that we can be accepted. Jesus came to give life and life more abundantly. We don't have to work towards experiencing this wonderful gift. It has been given to us freely because of His grace. Today we have experienced this gift by our faith in Him. The bible says (Romans 10:9) that if you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart that Jesus died and rose from the dead you will be saved. We were once slaves to sin (Romans 6:16-18) imprisoned by the devil in many ways. But having received Jesus by faith we have been set free to experience the life that God has for us. The Bible says in Colossians 1:21 "And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight. Jesus became the Way for us by His broken body so that we can have access to the Father. We have now received the Spirit of adoption so we can call Him – Abba Father. Imagine that God sees us as His dear sons and daughters. From the moment we have received this great gift, something supernatural took place. The Holy Spirit of God comes to dwell in our lives forever. We are no longer alone – He has promised to never leave us or forsake us.

Philip shared the Good News to the eunuch. He didn't take time to mull over it and then re-think about it. He made the decision right away! He received this gift and made it public by being baptized in water. All that the eunuch needed was a person to share the Good News to him.

We have received this Good News, but the question remains have we shared it to the world around us?

See Philip made himself *available* to do the work of the Lord. When God spoke to Him, He was not aware of all the details of the assignment, but he trusted God and was obedient to His voice. Philip made a difference by his availability and his obedience to the Lord. There is a world around us that is in need of a Savior and God has strategically placed us to touch our own spheres of influence with the Good News. This will require our availability and obedience.

Sometimes we are fearful and intimidated to share the Good News to the people around us. I want to bring your attention to a person by the name of Gideon. God calls Gideon to save Israel from the hand of the Midianites who would come and destroy the livestock and the produce of the Israelites leaving nothing behind. It was at this time God calls Gideon and tells him: You are a mighty man of valor. Gideon's response: I'm part of the weakest tribe and I'm the least among my father's house. How can I save Israel? But the LORD says to Gideon, "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man."

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It wasn't about Gideon's family, education, or his abilities that made him stand out. It was because God chose Him to save Israel. Don't be fearful or intimidated to share the Good News. You might think well I'm not a Pastor or a Reverend so I'm exempt from sharing the Good News. I'm not talking about "preaching" or even "teaching" but simply sharing the truth of God's great love. You might come up with a ton of excuses of inabilities such as bible knowledge, being looked down upon, made fun of ... etc. It's not about us. It's about the message that will bring hope and freedom to those who hear and receive the truth. We can't be ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is this truth that has set us free and made us confident of His great love. Gideon felt that he was a minority and he was in-adequate for the job. But God assures him that he will defeat the Midianites as one man because God is with him. In like manner, you are not the minority. You are the majority because God is with you. God will give you the words to speak that will be a seed gone forth and will bear fruit. Gideon experienced the favor of God and so shall you experience His favor by making a difference.

We will have to next recognize this Good News is for everyone. The message of the Gospel is not just for the elite or for a certain group of people based on culture, background, or ability. This message is for all! The apostle Peter once had a revelation of this in Acts 10. He saw in a vision the heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. In it were all kinds of animals. And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." And a voice *spoke* to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again. The whole point of this vision was for Peter to understand that the message of the Good News is not just for the Jews but for all people. Right after this vision, Peter is called to a home of a non-Jew where He shares the Good News and sees the Holy Spirit fall on them. God shows no partiality. He has come to save all of mankind. Its God's heart that all are saved and that none are lost!

The necessity of sharing this message must be pressed in our hearts.

A neighbor of mine jokes about eternity. He says well there will be a condo in hell made just for me. At first, I thought it was funny. But then I began to realize that hell is a real place and I wouldn't want one soul to be lost in it. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:16 "... for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!" If you ever watched the movie "Schindler's List", Oskar Schindler who saved so many Jews during the Holocaust by buying them out was still not satisfied at the end. Towards the end of the movie he said, "I could have got more... I didn't do enough.... I could have got more." It's my prayer that we would have God's heart for all of mankind to be saved. I pray that we would have a burden for the lost so that the void of their lives would be filled with Jesus and be saved!

You are the man and woman God has chosen to fulfill His mission. God has commissioned us in His word in Matthew 28:19: Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. He has called us to be the light that will draw others to Jesus. This is high-time than ever before to make a difference. Mary was God's chosen vessel to be a carrier of Jesus. In like manner, we too are carriers of the Lord because He dwells in us. There are those who are carriers of certain viruses. If they get around people that virus is contagious and can infect others. But see we are carriers of Jesus and if we get around people, we too can be contagious. If we can make ourselves available, without fear and intimidation, having a burden for souls – we can AFFECT lives to never be the same again!

So how can we make a difference?

1. Evangelism begins with our life. The people around us are very observant because they know that we are the children of God. We are to be true representatives of our Father in heaven. The world around us should see the hope that we have in Christ for every need of our lives to be met. They should see that the work that has taken place inwardly is expressed outwardly in our life of holiness and love toward others. We are God's ambassadors on earth and our life should be a reflection of the King. Our life will be a tool of evangelism so that others will want the same Jesus that saved us.
2. Pray for divine opportunities. God will make those opportunities for you to have a platform to share God's love to others. Pray that God would open their eyes to the truth. Stand in the gap and intercede so that they would turn to the Lord.
3. Make the move. Take a hold of the God given opportunities. Invite them to a LIFE Group. Invite them to a church service. When the opportune time comes share the GOOD' NEWS!

In Isaiah 6:8, Isaiah hears the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" My prayer is that you would respond like Isaiah, "Here *am* I! Send me." You don't have to go to other side of the world to share the Good News. You can do it right in your neighborhood, at your job, or among your friends and family. Eternity for lives is at stake and we need to be determined to fulfill God's assignment for us.

We must do this out of our love to others and to God. In John 21 we read about Peter and a few disciples who went fishing after the death and resurrection of Jesus. It was not that fishing was a sin but they were called out to be fishers of men. They worked all

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night and caught nothing. By morning Jesus appears on the shore and tells them to cast the net on the other side. After a great catch, the disciples come to the shore and Jesus had already prepared breakfast for them. During breakfast, Jesus asks Peter Do you love me more than these? Peter responds: Yes Lord I love you. Then Jesus says to Peter Feed my sheep. Again Jesus asks Peter, do you love me? Peter says: You know Lord that I love you. Jesus says tend my sheep. Jesus asks a third time, Peter do you love me? Peter was grieved in his heart and said Lord you know all things; You know that I love you. Jesus responds feed my sheep. Listen to Jesus' question to Peter: do you love me more than these? The "these" could have referred to the fishing boat, the disciples, or anything else that could have displaced his love to the master and distract him from fulfilling His assignment.

Today, the question remains to be answered by you as well. Do you love the Lord more than _____. Perhaps that blank is time, fear, or whatever it might be that will prevent you from loving the Lord and fulfilling His assignment.

Let it be our prayer today: Lord, I love you and I'm making myself available to fulfill all of your purpose in my life to share this Good News to the world around me.

For those of you who are at this Life Group today and heard about this Good News and perhaps have never made Jesus the Lord of your life.

Pray this prayer with me:

Dear Heavenly Father I come to you in Jesus name and this day I confess with my mouth and believe with my heart that you died and rose again. From this day on, be the Lord of my and change me to never be the same again. In Jesus name!

If you prayed that prayer for the first time, you are now the child of the king. What an incredible privilege we all have because we have received this Good News.

I encourage each of you to take this Good News that we have received and share it to the world around us. God bless you!

Discussion Questions:

- 1.) Describe how the Good News has changed your life forever.
- 2.) How can you make yourself available to share the Good News?