

Session 6: Becoming a Messenger for the Good News

Lenten Bible Study • April 15, 2019

First Church of Squantum

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"But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream."
—Amos 5:24



I. Welcome. Introductions and Prayer

II. Teaser: What's the best news anyone ever shared with you?

III. Decoding the "Christian-ese" — How do you feel about each word?

- a. Sins (*Greek, hamartia, immoral*) the things we do out of the brokenness and neediness in each of our lives that leads us down dark paths
- b. Good News (*Greek, euangelia, can also be translated as gospel or "God story"*) So evangelism is sharing Good News, an evangelist is someone who shares that Good News, evangelical describes someone who believes sharing Good News matters
- c. Salvation (*Greek, soterios, lit. saving*) in a life-giving, transformational, personal relationship with God. Finding true wholeness and lasting peace that comes from that relationship.
- d. Redeemed. Being saved. Knowing to Whom we belong and how that makes our lives different. Living out of the wholeness and trust of a life with God.
- e. Justification (*Greek, dikaio, making right*) Through Jesus' death, we are justified—made right—with God. Our brokenness is healed and our sins are forgiven and blotted out.
- f. Grace (*Greek, charis, gift...note that joy is charas*) the unearned gift of God's love and mercy. Grace comes before we are ready or deserve it.

IV. Video Segment

- a. What are some of the things that stood out for you in the video?
- b. In the video, Mark tells the story of Anita. From what he says, what would you say are things Anita is good at?
- c. Mark began with three key points
 - i. God wants people saved.
 - ii. It's God who saves people, not us or our efforts.
 - iii. We have some role in this, even if it's small.

V. 1 Peter 3:8–22

- a. What is the first part of the passage about?
- b. The idea of sharing one's faith is a little scary. Peter talks about it as "sharing the hope that you have"? Does that make it sound easier to you?
- c. Peter goes on to add *how* one should do the sharing. What are those qualities? Why do you think Peter adds those?
- d. Mark later lists three ways that we can bring our faith out in conversations
 - i. Offering biblical perspectives on what's being talked about — films, family, football, finance, etc.
 - ii. Telling your stories about the ways Jesus/God has made, and continues to make a difference to your life...your personal stories are compelling!
 - iii. Explaining the Good News—why is it Good News? If the person with whom you are speaking wants to know more, then what?
- e. What do you think of these ideas? Do they help you consider how to make a difference or are they just more "blah blah blah"?
- f. Since Peter is writing to Christians who are experiencing some persecution and suffering, why does he include this bit about sharing the hope that you have? How could those possibly go together?

VI. Conclusions

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect..."