

Communicate Bible Truth with Life Changing Clarity

Christians are communicators. And while some Christians may be more or less gifted at the skill of communication, all Christians are “witnesses.” That is, we are, by the very fact that we have been born again into Christ and therefore witness personally the power of the gospel, to bear witness of what we have seen and heard:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

It is inevitable. Jesus did not say “you might be” or “from time to time you could be,” but instead “you will.” We have been issued a divine summons, and our appearance to testify is not optional. So all of us, whether we be plumber or preacher, poet or pastor, are communicators of the gospel. We communicate about God, His Word, and the gospel in our homes, in our jobs, with our friends, and in our churches, so the question of how we communicate should be very important to us.

It hasn’t always been to me. Once upon a time, a lot of years ago, I was pretty impressed with my own rhetorical skill, and I put together a sermon I was super proud of. I started with a lengthy and elaborate illustration using *Gilligan’s Island* as the premise. I wrote out the sermon which detailed how all of us, from time to time, get stuck on a spiritual island. And we might use all kinds of things to get off that island – we might use our intelligence, our money, our talent, our charm. See what I did there with each of the characters on the TV show?

Yep. I did that. And then, after it was written out, I remember thinking to myself, *I should find some Bible verses to stick into this talk.*

By God’s grace, I’ve gotten older. And as I continue to get older, there are some things, I think, that are becoming more important to me about communicating God’s Word. Hopefully these will be helpful to you, too:

1. Clarity over cleverness.

It’s so easy to get enamored with our own cleverness. And in so doing, we can come up with all kinds of clever ways to try and explain things in the Bible through use of illustration. But the danger of doing so is that we might end up obscuring what the Bible says with our own cleverness. In the end, as we think through illustrations, it’s a wise thing to ask whether we are trusting, through the use of our clever rhetoric, if we are trusting in our own ability to communicate more than the power of God’s Word.

2. Faithful over funny.

Humor is a powerful thing. I think Jesus used humor from time to time in His own teaching. I mean, it’s funny to think about a person walking around with a plank sticking out of his head all the while he’s looking for splinters in someone else’s. So humor is a gift, and a tool that we can

use to help communicate. But we should also be careful here, because we can easily keep a bag of our “go to” stories that we know will solicit a laugh, and then look for a way to bend the true content of the message in order to work them in.

3. Adoration over admiration.

Everyone likes to be liked. I certainly do. But the danger when we communicate and communicate effectively is that people might leave a conversation or a class or a church service with us dazzled at our rhetoric and yet never brought humbly to the God we represent. If that happens, then we have garnered admiration from another, but we haven't led that other to adoration of Jesus Christ.

Christian, you are a witness. I am too. The call for us in that witness is faithfulness and clarity that points people to Jesus. Let's make sure together that in our cleverness and humor we aren't leading others to admire us but miss the Son of God.

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