

Acts 8:4
Sharing Jesus Sunday
July 17, 2022

When you have the opportunity to travel, you make preparations and pack accordingly. Long trips require more supplies than a quick overnight. Wilderness hiking and camping call for a different set of equipment and clothing than an outing that involves ballroom dancing and formal dinners. Weather expected along the way also influences what you pack.

As we journey through life and its experiences we also have some travel preparations to make. Regardless of the conditions there is one essential.

TAKE THE WORD WITH YOU

When we hear the emphasis of a Sunday as we are making today, the first thought that may enter our minds is, "(I.) Who, me?" Objections arise. We feel unqualified. I haven't been trained—isn't that what we have church workers for? However, what the brief text is describing was a lay movement. The disciples were still in Jerusalem, attending to the flock remaining there and facing the effects of persecution.

Mention of persecution brings up another concern, a fear of the reaction we will receive if we talk about Jesus. We may encounter rejection or mockery or loss of friends. At this point in the book of Acts, persecution arose after the martyrdom of Stephen. When the enemies of the gospel stoned him to death and saw they got away with it, they became bolder in their opposition. Saul was especially prominent in identifying and arresting believers.

Politeness can be another obstacle to sharing Jesus. Perhaps you were brought up with the advice to avoid two topics of conversation: religion and politics. They can be divisive. Religious arguments result. But we aren't encouraging arguing. Nobody has been argued into heaven.

There is also the unreasonableness of the Christian message. We think of the makeup of the God we worship: triune, three persons in one being, or of Jesus: one person with two natures, divine and human. The way of salvation, being achieved by a death on a shameful cross, seems like failure and defeat, not victory.

Despite the obstacles, as we look at this text, sharing of the Word happened. The people scattered. They left Jerusalem. They could have decided to conceal their identity in a new location. Look at the troubles it had brought. Christians were being arrested and dragged off to prison. Some met death. So don't let anyone know who you are.

That's not what they did. "Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went." They didn't just have religious art work on their walls or a bumper sticker on their donkey cart. They actively shared the Word.

II.

A natural question is, "(II.) Why?" What led them to do so? It was the content of the message. Jesus loved us and came into our world to save us. He who was true God became man. He lived sinlessly as our Substitute. He died to pay for our sins. He rose victoriously as God had promised and as the men in the video learned from the prophecies explained and from meeting the risen Savior. He won heaven for us eternally. Isn't that news too great to keep silent about?

His work met the needs of the world and that means our needs, too. We were worthy of death because we had sinned. So has everybody else. They are lost without Jesus and wander through life without hope. They seek rescue where it cannot be found. They wallow in selfishness and violence. We have what they need.

We share it in love and because of the promise of our Savior about his message. "It will not return to me empty," he has stated. Results are obtained. Hearts are changed. No, it doesn't happen every time and often not the first time you share Jesus. But it is worth the effort because of the value of each soul.

Success has been shown. Read on in the book of Acts about Philip in Samaria and with the man from Ethiopia. Hear of Saul after his conversion and the mission journeys he completed. The gospel has spread around the world. God's Word works. It still is doing so. Be on the winning side as you take the Word with you.

III.

Do so (III.) wherever you go. Opportunities exist close at hand. There is family. Pass the faith on to the next generations, to children and grandchildren. Observers have commented, "Christianity is always one generation from extinction." If we don't bring up our children to know Jesus, faith will not continue. So it is good when we see members bringing their children and grandchildren to church and Sunday School.

We all have friends who need Jesus. "Everyone I know is a Christian," we sometimes think. Don't be too sure. People forget what they once knew. The rates of biblical illiteracy are evident in surveys. Some have strayed. We all face temptations and need building up in faith.

There are co-workers and neighbors who don't know Jesus. Build relationships and trust and opportunities will arise. People will ask questions about what makes you tick. In troubled times they look for support.

You can tell the blessing you have in knowing Jesus and his role in your life. Tell of the joy he has brought you and the strength the Word brings in times of trial.

The video we watched today is a tool. Invite others to view it with you in your home. Give them a copy for their own use. Pray for God's blessing on your sharing of Jesus. Check back with your friends. Did they have time to watch it? Did they understand the message? Keep showing the love of Jesus that fills your heart.

Take the Word with you. Have it in your heart, maintaining your faith, and on your lips, sharing Jesus.