

Caring for the Needs of Others
Lesson 3 – Opening Hearts with the Gospel
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Introduction: What is the greatest act of service you can do for another?

A. The greatest blessing one can bring to another is the gospel. **(Rom 1:16-17)**

1. What does the gospel offer to men? **(Eph 2:1-7)**
2. What can compare to the blessings that the gospel gives?
3. The gospel has a relationship with God at its center. Knowing God and living by faith is the greatest blessing we can know.

B. Do we believe the gospel is really needed?

1. Consider the illustration of seeing a brother needing food and clothing. Would we act and be willing to sacrifice? What about someone without the gospel? **(James 2:14-16)**
2. Do we long to see others saved? Are we really debtors? **(Rom 1:14)**
3. We might have great zeal to teach others but we also need wisdom.

I. We should seek to open a heart so that the gospel may be accepted or rejected

A. It is not our work to save others but it is our work to spread the seed of the gospel.

1. There are two common reactions to the gospel. **(Acts 17:32-34)**
2. The opening of the heart in the scriptures is described as a “cut.” Notice the two reactions when a heart is opened. **(Acts 2:36-37; 7:54-55)**
3. Have you spent effort in reaching another and had that person turn on you?
4. Showing God’s love to another puts you at great risk to be hurt! Aren’t you glad that others did not give up on you? **(2 Tim 4:13-14)**
5. We have not failed with one rejects the gospel! **(2 Cor 2:14-17)**

B. Hearts can be opened when men see Christ in our lives. **(Mark 5:15-20)**

1. Jesus cast out demons in a man who had a terrible reputation.
2. All the town wanted Jesus to leave and the man wanted to go with Jesus.
3. Jesus told the man to stay and speak to others about “what great things the Lord has done for you.” What was the result?
4. How we respond to the issues of life will open the hearts of some! **(1 Pt 2:11-15; 3:1-2)**
5. We must be consistent in our love for others and very patient. We must pray for and wait for doors to be opened! **(Col 4:3-4)**

Questions

1. Make a list of the blessings that the gospel brings to one’s life.
2. Why should a clear view of the condition of the lost change our attitude towards them? **(Mt 16:26)**
3. What should our goal be as we teach others the gospel?
4. Why do we often shun from sharing the gospel with others?
5. How can we best open another’s heart to the gospel?
6. Have you ever played a part in bringing another to receive the gospel?

II. How can we best teach another the gospel?

A. We must care enough to know the background of those we seek to reach.

(1 Cor 9:19-22)

1. This would cause us to take great care that we do not needlessly cause them to turn away from us.
2. We should care enough to make real sacrifices in our time, actions and words.
3. We should care enough to always be truthful! **(2 Cor 4:1-2)**

B. We should start with “common ground” and lead them to make a decision.

1. Paul helped a Jewish audience by quoting scripture and giving eyewitness testimony. **(Acts 2:25-32)**
2. Paul quoted a gentile poet and used an altar to an “unknown God” to point them to his eyewitness testimony. **(Acts 17:22-23, 28, 30-31)**
3. This takes a willingness to listen and to be patient.

C. Good teaching involves us in leading another to see the truth.

1. It is often a mistake to drive to the point of disagreement first!
2. Most people do not want to debate about the Bible because they know so little about it! This is like challenging someone to play chess that has never done so.
3. This likely will bring out stubbornness and anger.
4. When a person has struggled with issues and found the truth they then will have a logical basis on which to stand. **(1 Pt 3:15)**
5. This kind of teaching takes time.

D. What are some common objections that close people’s hearts? **(2 Tim 2:24-26)**

1. Why did God allow this bad thing to happen?
2. Will I go to hell if I do not believe like you do?
3. There have been hypocrites I have known that called themselves Christians!
4. How can I know that God and Jesus are real?
5. Will I will be condemning my grandmother if I become a Christian?

Questions

1. What kind of preparation do we need to make in addition to knowing the gospel message?
2. How can matters in our personal life help or hinder the gospel?
3. Where should we start teaching a particular individual?
4. Why did Paul not quote Old Testament scripture to Gentile unbelievers?
5. Which is the best ways to teach: (a) to start at the area of disagreement and debate or (b) to start at common ground and lead to the point of disagreement?
6. What kind of objections have you faced by those who are resisting you sharing the gospel with them? How should you respond?