

Rooted: How & Why Should I Tell Others?

11.07.2021

We're in the 9th week of the Rooted series

The finish line is just around the corner

Keep it up, you can do it

The title of today's message is:

How & Why I Should Tell Others

Today we're going to talk about the Gospel

And how the Gospel should compel us to tell others

By the way – I know that lots of us have had great conversations in our Rooted groups

If you missed out on those

We're starting new ones in January

Hint/hint

But I know lots of us have had great conversations in our Rooted groups

And some of us have felt the calling of God to accept Him

As Lord & Savior

And some have felt God calling them to baptism

If that's you, 2 weeks from today

We're going to celebrate the end of our Rooted series

And we're planning to have a bunch of baptisms that day

You can get baptized anytime

We've had 2 this week

And 2 more this morning

You can get baptized anytime

But if you've been thinking about it

That might be a great day for you

You can go to wellspringchristian.org/baptize

Or plan to be at a baptism class next Sunday morning during 1st service

What the Bible says about baptism – 11/14 @ 9am in the lounge

?Prayer?

To get us started, let's look in the 2nd letter to the Corinthian Church – chapter 5:

2 Corinthians 5:11 starts with the words – Since, then

“Since then”

So he's referring back to a previous section

He's building a case

What's the case?

We won't read all of it – so let me summarize

He's talking about how *all of us* are going to die eventually

And how *all of us* are going to stand before God

We won't read all of it

But you can see his conclusion in verse 10

2 Corinthians 5:10 - For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

So we're *all* going to stand before God

And we're *all* going to be judged

Evaluated

For how we've lived our life

Then 2 Corinthians 5:11 starts with "since then"

Since we are going to be judged & evaluated

Since we know that *all of us* are going to stand before God

Since we know that *all of us* are going to be evaluated by His Holy Standard

What do we do?

Verse 11:

2 Corinthians 5:11a - Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others.

Since we know eternity is waiting

"We try to persuade others"

Now this ruffles our modern sensibilities

Because we don't like imposing our beliefs on anyone else

But a portion of the Christian life involves followers of Jesus trying to persuade others

If we know that *we're* going to stand before God

If we know that *everyone we know* is going to stand before God

If we know that everybody spends forever somewhere

We must try to persuade others

Look at verse 14:

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 - For Christ's love compels us... that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again.

We live in a world full of people

Living for themselves

Even though they were designed to live for God

They were designed to live for the One who died for them and was raised to life

So we try to persuade others

And knowing that Jesus died for each person

That Jesus saw each person as worthy of His life

It changes the way we see people

Verse 16:

2 Corinthians 5:16-17 - So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

We try to persuade people – why?

Because the scorecard is now different

Without Jesus:

Good people go to God

Bad people don't

It's that simple

Without Jesus' death

Without His resurrection

Good people go to God

Bad people don't

And because no one is fully good

All of us have brokenness and mess in us

Starting with me

Because no one is fully good

Good people pretend

And bad people walk away

But that's a worldly point of view

One we no longer hold

The new creation has come

The old is gone and the new is here

So we persuade people

We must persuade people

And this isn't our plan – it's God's

Look at verse 18:

2 Corinthians 5:18-19a - All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them.

This is a two-step process:

He reconciles us

Because of Jesus

And then He calls us to help reconcile the world

With Jesus

Because of Jesus

Sin is no longer the world's biggest problem

Because of Jesus

Separation from God is now the world's biggest problem

He can handle the sin

His death & resurrection paid for that

And this verse makes it clear

That if separation from God is now the world's biggest problem

Then Christian's unwillingness to persuade others has actually become the world's biggest problem

Because He gave us that ministry... more than that

2 Corinthians 5:19b-20a - And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us.

He's making His appeal through us

So listen, if the world's a dark place...

I contend with you that sin is no longer the world's biggest problem

Christian's unwillingness to persuade others has actually become the world's biggest problem

For God is making His appeal through us

An appeal to no longer live for ourselves

An appeal to no longer live this life like eternities not waiting for all of us

An appeal to be reconciled to God through Christ

And then – I love this – look at this next verse

It's like he's answering a question that he thinks the Corinthian church is going to ask

Like they are saying:

Well, that's great for you, Paul

You're an apostle

But, like, what are we supposed to say?

Verse 20:

2 Corinthians 5:20b-21 - We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

Say that, Paul says – Say that

I love the Message version of that verse:

2 Corinthians 5:21b (MSG) - God put the wrong on Him who never did anything wrong, so we could be put right with God.

Say that

But you know

I don't think persuasion comes mostly from clever words

I work really hard to be articulate and clear

But I don't think a Christian's best weapon in persuasion

Is articulate, clear words

I have a friend – Will Truesdell

Who has worked on secular college & university campuses in New England

For the last 20 years

Most of the students there are not Christians

Most of them don't know the Bible

Most of them don't *want* to know the Bible

So he's better at this than we are

A few years ago, they began a new initiative

They would take a trip over spring break

In churches, we'd call it a missions trip

But they don't use that language

They take a trip to an area of great need

New Orleans has been a repeat target

And they invite 15-20 students along

Half of them are committed Christians

Half of them are not

The Christians invite their friends

And the non-Christian students come

To work hard in New Orleans over their spring break

When they could be partying on a beach in Florida

Why? Because this generation cares more about the needs of people

Than my generation did

They work meeting needs all day among the poor

And then at night – they take a few minutes – just a few minutes - to
debrief and talk about how Jesus was a model of serving people

Then they hang out for a bit

And go to sleep

Do it again the next day

Each year, over the next year, a significant percentage of those non-Christian
students become followers of Jesus

Why?

Because of clear, articulate words?

No.

Because of clever persuasion techniques?

No.

A significant percentage of those non-Christian students become followers of Jesus over the next year

Because they had friends

Who were Christians

Who weren't weird

Who broke the stereotypes

And who cared about them

This lines up with the ministry of Jesus

Mark 1:16-17 - As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."

I think I've always misunderstood this passage

Until maybe this week

I think

Although I wouldn't have ever said it

I think I saw Jesus describing three locations

You're over here doing your life

I'm over here – Jesus says – doing mine

So if you leave over there

And come over here
I will have you start doing something over there
I'll teach you to do that
Come – Follow me – I will make you a fisher of men

I don't think that's it

I think maybe we've misunderstood what following Jesus means

When I think about following Jesus

I think about love – forgiveness – service & sacrifice

But what about *the rest* of Jesus?

I mean, I worked for a plumber in college

If I went to a plumber and asked to be his apprentice

And he said, work with me and I'll make you a plumber

That would make sense – because that's what he does

If I went to an electrician and asked to be his apprentice

And he said, work with me and I'll make you an electrician

That would make sense – because that's what he does

When I think about following Jesus

I think about love – forgiveness – service & sacrifice

But what about *the rest* of Jesus?

The Bible says so, so many things that we skip over:

Matthew 9:10 - While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with Him and His disciples.

"Many" tax collectors and sinners

Not just a few

He lived in such a way that they were attracted to Him

They wanted to be around Jesus

Why don't they want to be around Jesus' followers?

Much has changed

Later in Matthew's Gospel:

Matthew 11:19a - The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.'

Jesus lived His life in such a way that "friend of sinners" was the accusation

An accusation that He never once denied

He was a friend of sinners

In Luke's Gospel:

Luke 15:1-2 - Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This Man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Catch that:

Jesus' life called the sinners to gather

And the pastor's to mutter

Jesus' life called the sinners to gather
And the pastor's to mutter

Later on in Luke's Gospel:

Luke 19:5-7 (NLT) - When Jesus came by, He looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" He said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today." Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. But the people were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled.

Consistently, people didn't get it

Jesus was devoted to reaching out to all kinds of people

To being a friend of people who religious folks rejected

And people didn't understand

They just didn't get it

Look at this story from earlier in Luke:

Luke 7:36-37a (NLT) - One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with Him, so Jesus went to his home and sat down to eat. When a certain immoral woman from that city heard He was eating there...

She wanted to visit with Him

Question – when immoral people hear that you & I are around

Do they go out of their way to visit with us?

Do immoral people go out of their way to visit the church?

She wanted to visit with Jesus

And Jesus wanted to visit with her

Luke 7:39 (NLT) – (But) When the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to Himself, “If this man were a prophet, He would know what kind of woman is touching Him. She’s a sinner!”

She is

And because Jesus is a prophet

He knows what kind of a man you are, Simon

You’re a sinner too!

And He came to your house, too!

Jesus says if you follow me, you’ll be befriending broken, sinful people

Why?!? Because that’s what I’m doing

So – if we’re not becoming a fisher of men over time

We have to ask:

Are we really following Him?

Because that seemed to be where He was consistently going

Charles Spurgeon – “Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter.”

I’m beginning to believe that Spurgeon is right

Missionary or imposter

I mean, be honest – candid

When you look at your life

Your time, your schedule, your influence

Which are you?

Because Jesus told us:

Acts 1:8 – But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

He's not calling us to be the defense attorney

He's not calling us to be the prosecutor

He's certainly not calling us to be the judge

We're witnesses

But even being witness is overwhelming

Which is why He says we'll get power as we go

This is a key, key verse for us

For Christians

For the Church

But look at the verses right before this one:

Acts 1:6-7 - Then they gathered around Him and asked Him, “Lord, are You at this time going to restore the Kingdom to Israel?” He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority.

I love it

Nothing much has changed

Jesus is telling us to do something simple

Tell people about what I've done in your life

Be my witnesses

And they were getting all lost in the details

But wait, when are you coming back?

But hold on, when are you going to restore Israel?

I mean, What? When? How?

He says, you're missing it

You're missing it

I'm telling you that

Acts 1:8 – But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

But you're worried about all of the what's and the when's and the how's

But I'm laser focused on the why

And on the who

Jesus says, I laid down My life – so you could be reconciled to God

And I've given *you* the ministry of reconciliation

And I'm promising to give you power as you go

A few years ago

We borrowed my mom & dad's camper

And took a trip out west as a family

We went to Mt. Rushmore & Crazy Horse

We went to Yellowstone and the Badlands

We went to Wall's grocery & the corn palace and the National Potato Museum in Idaho

We saw the sights

I remember

As we were heading across Wyoming

It was flat and painfully boring

But I just knew that the Rockies would pop up on the horizon at any moment

So I'm driving the RV

All by myself up front

No one is in the front seat – I'm all alone

You know... martyr

Amy and all of my girls are back making a charcuterie board

And playing parcheesie in the back

And I'm driving across Wyoming... alone

So finally, I see a few white peaks popping up in the distance

So I look around and one of my daughters

I won't mention which twin it was – you can ask them

But one of my daughters was close by

And I called her up to the front

"Come here"

"What"

"Just come here"

"...What"

"Seriously, come here"

...puts down phone...

...shuffle, shuffle...

“Do you see the Rocky Mountains coming up over the horizon?”

“Dad, I could have just googled that”

I let her out and had her walk home

So we saw all of the sights

And after a particularly long travel day

We were scheduled to spend the night

In a campground along the beautiful, Great Salt Lake

If you’ve not been there

The drive is gorgeous

We came down from Montana – into Idaho – into Utah

And the mountains were breathtaking

Provo held part of the Winter Olympics a few years ago

Stunning

So you’re driving down I-15

And you’re just blown away by the drive

And we were so looking forward to spending time

At this pristine campground along the lake

We noticed they didn’t have a lot of pictures online when we booked

But we weren’t deterred; it’s gonna be great

And then we drove through Salt Lake City

It's a beautiful city

Mormon theology is off

But their buildings are gorgeous

After this long, long day

We were just so ready to sit out by the lake

And soak in the beauty

Of Great Salt Lake Park

I don't think I've ever been more disappointed

It was literally right across the street

From a desalinization plant

So it constantly smelled like rotten eggs

I can't tell you for sure what my favorite stop was

There was so many good ones

But I have no doubt what my least favorite stop was

Great Salt Lake Park

But what made it so dreadful?

It was at the base of the Rocky Mountains

Fed with water running off down the slopes

Just outside a beautiful US city
How in the world could it be so dreadful?
It was dead
Water comes in from the Bear River
Comes in from the Weber River
Comes in from the Jordan River
Comes in running off from the Rocky Mountains
But it never leaves

The Great Salt Lake has lots coming in
And nothing going out
And now it's dreadful

Listen to me
If you are here this morning
And you don't know if you have been reconciled to God
Maybe you know you haven't
Maybe you're not sure
If you are here this morning
And you don't know if you have been reconciled to God

2 Corinthians 5:20b - We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

You are why we started WellSpring years ago
To persuade people to follow Jesus
If that's you – I'm going to call you group 1 this morning

We'd love to talk with you and listen to your story

Today

For the rest of us

I agree with Charles Spurgeon

"Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter."

The missionary will receive power from God

As they are witnesses of what and Who they know

The imposter will become increasingly dreadful

Receiving... receiving... receiving for decades

Without any outlet

If you're in group 2

I want to persuade you also

To follow Jesus

Be an apprentice of this friend of sinners

Go where He would go

Do what He would do

Be whom He would be

And you will receive power from on high

In ways that are just simply hard to describe!