

TITLE: MESSAGE DELIVERED?

TEXT: MATTHEW 28:19-20

INTRO: Before the days of the USPS, FedEx, email, etc., all mail was hand written and delivered by a messenger. “Lost in the mail” was a legitimate excuse then! Imagine their hesitancy in sending an extremely important message with even the best of couriers! Will your message be delivered?

God has many expectations of His people, not the least of which is evangelism. This word comes from the Greek word “euangelizo,” which means “to announce good news.” The noun form of this word is where we get our word “gospel.” The gospel message is indeed “good news!” There is no message that has been or ever will be given that can compare! And amazingly, God has given this task of evangelism to Christians. This is an amazing message we’ve been entrusted with.

I. WHY WE EVANGELIZE:

A. Sin Defined

1. **1 John 3:4** – “*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*”
2. **Romans 3:23** – “*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*” Therefore, **all** are amenable to God’s law.
3. **James 4:17** – “*Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*”
4. Therefore, sin is doing what God said not to do, **and** not doing what God said to do.

B. Sin Destroys – **Isa 59:2** – *any sin you commit separates you from God (there are no ‘weighted’ sins). Separated = Lost!*

1. Sin will destroy the “alien” sinner (the non-Christian; i.e., never has had his sins forgiven).
 - a. **Heb 5:9** – Jesus is the author of eternal salvation, but only to those who **obey!**
 - b. **2 Thess 1:7-9** – Jesus shall return “*in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.*”
 - c. This is serious! Surely we don’t wish this on anybody, even those that are considered to be the worst of the worst.
2. Sin will destroy the Christian too, if he/she does not repent.
 - a. Remember **Isa 59:2** – *any sin separates you from God.*
 - b. This includes failure to evangelize (**Jam 4:17**). We need to evangelize – for the lost, and for us!

II. HOW WE EVANGELIZE:

A. By Teaching (**Matt 28:18-20**–“*Go...teach all nations... Teaching them to observe (keep) all things I have commanded you....*”)

1. Teach them what sin is, and that **all** are sinful (as we’ve already discussed).
2. Teach them the plan of salvation – how to resolve this sin problem. This means *you* must know it! Memorize the basic verses. Remember how *you* became a Christian.
3. Teach them more than just the P.O.S. There are many Bible study methods available (Safety-Chain, Circles of Truth, Back to the Bible –Bobby Bates). Pick the one you’re most comfortable with, learn it, memorize it if you can, and then use it!

B. With Desire

1. God doesn’t want anyone to be lost. He wants “*all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*” (**1 Tim 2:4**). He’s “*longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*” (**2 Pet 3:9**).
2. Our desire should be the same, especially considering that we too have sinned and were in the same condition as the world.
3. Ex. of Stephen (**Acts 7:60**): While being stoned to death, prayed for his murderers, “*Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*”

C. With Boldness

1. We must believe we are right! This may sound arrogant, but if we’re following the Bible, then we know we’re right. Don’t be afraid to lovingly stand firm on what the Bible says, even when the vast majority of people disagree!
2. We must speak confidently (not pridefully). Who is going to believe & obey if we’re spineless? Fear God, not men (**Matt 10:28**)!
3. Ex. of Peter & John (**Acts 4:8-12, 19-20**) – “*Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*”
4. Pray for boldness, just like these men did immediately afterward (**Acts 4:29**): “*And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word.*”

D. With Perspective (a proper outlook going into it)

1. Know your soil! The sower scattered seed on **all** soils, even though most were unproductive (**Mt 13:3-8**). Give everyone an opportunity. Don’t assume someone doesn’t want to hear. You’d be surprised!
2. Know your audience. The gospel is the same to all, but can & should be presented in ways that will be easy to be received.
 - a. In **Acts 17**, Paul taught the Thessalonians, Bereans, & Athenians, but the approach was not the same with each. He recognized the difference in Jew & Gentile audiences. With the Jews, he reasoned from the Scriptures (**v. 2-3, 11**), but with the Athenians, he simply introduced them to the one, true God and what He desires. He never mentioned the Scriptures, but instead referenced some of their own uninspired, idolatrous poets! This obviously didn’t mean that Paul subscribed to everything these poets taught. But by mentioning them he was able to relate to these Athenians.
 - b. Most if not all false teachers still believe and teach some things that are Biblically correct. **2 John 9-11** teaches us not to have any fellowship with these men, but this doesn’t mean we can’t mention them like Paul did the Greek poets if it will help us relate to a non-Christian. Remember though that Paul also corrected their false assumptions (**Ac 17:28-30**).
3. Know that you will be rejected. In baseball, even the best batters accept that they will fail 60+% of the time! We need to understand that our message doesn’t have mass appeal, and few will want to obey (**Matt 7:13-14**). Don’t take it personally! When Israel demanded a king, God made sure Samuel knew it was *God* being rejected, not Samuel (**1 Sam 8:7**).

CONCLUSION: Evangelism is commanded of us. It is a good work, and failure to do it is sin. God has entrusted each Christian with the most important message ever given. Will that message be delivered? Will lost souls be given the opportunity to hear? It’s up to us!