

“How Beautiful Are The Feet Of Them...”

A while ago I was walking down a main street in Coronado, USA on a rather warm, sunny afternoon. I passed by a fancy ice cream parlour. Inside, I noticed others enjoying ice cream. For a moment I sort of wished I was enjoying a cone myself. As I took a closer look, I noticed the price of around \$6 dollars for a small cone. “I don’t want it that bad.” I said to myself. “I’ll just eat my apple instead.” I soon forgot about the hunger I thought I had.

Have we ever had this attitude regarding sharing our faith? “I will do it, as long as it is not too inconvenient”. We may not say that, but we may believe that. To share our faith, we must have a conviction that it is important to do so. If it is important to us, then we will make the effort. The more important it is to us, the less likely the inconveniences will deter us. How important to us is the sharing of the Gospel?

The importance that the Lord Jesus placed upon this in His teaching and by His example was not lost upon His disciples. Though they had much to learn after His ascension, we never sense they lost sight of the importance of sharing the gospel with others. Though the historical accounts vary, it is evident that they travelled to India, Ethiopia, Greece, modern day Iran, Bulgaria, Turkey, and the list goes on. It is no wonder the apostle Paul could write to the Colossians, “the truth of the gospel, which is come unto you, as it is in all the world and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you...” (1:5-6)

It was important to them because they had been given a charge to keep.

- (Mark 16:15) “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”
- (Acts 1:8) “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

It has been estimated that there are more than 3,000,000,000 people who have never heard the Gospel. Is it important to us that they hear? It was important to the apostles in their generation.

The sharing of the gospel may be important to us, but we may somehow lack the courage or the ability to do so. Why is that? To help us find the right answer to that question we should consider the following:

- Though not everyone is called to be an evangelist, all *are* called to be a light. (Matthew 5:14-16, Philippians 2:15) Each believer can share how the Lord has worked in their own heart. Such a personal testimony is powerful.
- We may lack courage because our prayers are lacking. The Apostle made specific request for prayer, that he would have the boldness to speak the gospel. (Ephesians 6:19-20) Have we prayed for boldness? Have we asked others to pray for us that we would have boldness?

- Our prayers may be lacking because we do not have a burden for the lost. Our Lord and Savior Jesus was burdened for the unbelief of his people. (Luke 19:41-42) The Apostle Paul was heavy hearted for his brethren that were lost. (Romans 9:1-3). When the burden is great, we pray more earnestly. Do we pray with the compassion of the Lord Jesus? (Matthew 9:36-38)
- We may lack a burden for the lost because we have become too comfortable in this world. Is the love of pleasure and luxury drowning us? (1 Timothy 6:9) Are we afraid of what people may say about us? Are we afraid of losing friends? (Matthew 5:11-15, Mark 5:19)
- We may have become too comfortable because we have forgotten the coming judgment. John in the wilderness warned people to flee from the wrath to come. (Luke 3:7) Paul said he knew the terror of the Lord, therefore he persuaded men. (2 Corinthians 5:11) Do we know the terror of the Lord?

In spite of great adversity, the apostles persevered in sharing the gospel.

- (Acts 5:40-42) ...and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

Will we as a church, rise up and follow the zeal of our forefathers in taking the gospel out? Paul reasons with us in his letter to the Romans:

- (Romans 10:14-15) “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”

Do we thank God for those who have shared their faith with us when we were unconverted? We must have a servant’s heart and be a humble, godly example if we expect to bear fruit for God’s glory and honour.

After only a month of Christian life, nearly all of it upon a sick bed, a young man of nearly 30 years lay dying. Suddenly a look of sadness crossed his face, and to the enquiry of a friend he exclaimed: ‘No, I am not afraid, Jesus saves me now. But oh, *must I go and empty handed?*’

Oh, ye saints arouse, be earnest, Up and work while yet ‘tis day,
Ere the night of death o’er takes thee, Strive for souls while still you may.
“Must I go and empty handed”, Must I meet my Saviour so?
Not one soul with which to greet Him, Must I empty handed go?” *

* Quoted from the Gospel Hymns (Red Book), Published by Apostolic Christian Publications