

The Christian and Work Session 3: Witness

As well as presenting real challenges, the work place also provides fantastic opportunities to share the gospel.

Why does the work place provide such a great context for Christian witness?

- Spend large amount of time with work colleagues - often over many years - in the ups and downs of life (during the week spend more time with work colleagues than friends or family)
- Time is built into the working day for relaxed/natural conversations - coffee break, lunch, travelling - often about big issues e.g. terror attacks, fire tragedy....
- With neighbours everyone puts on a respectable front, but in the pressure and stress of work - provides a great opportunity to model distinctive Christian character

It's really helpful to remind ourselves that it is not by chance that we find ourselves in the particular situation we're in. God has determined the exact times and places where we would live and work. In His providence God places us in our office, home, hospital or school to be a witness for Him.

We're going to look at 1 Peter to see what this witness should look like.

1 Peter 2:9-12, 18-21, 3:13-16

⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.....

¹⁸ Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. ¹⁹ For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. ²⁰ But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹ To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.....

¹³ Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." ¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

How does Peter describe Christians in 2:9-10?

What evangelistic strategy does he commend in 2:12?

How does this apply in the workplace (2:18-21)?

How does the call to abstain from sinful desires 2:11 apply in your workplace?

What evangelistic strategy does he commend in 3:15-16?

Living the gospel

The attitude of Christians to their work and their conduct at work, have a huge potential to commend the gospel to others. Our attitude to authority, the way we treat colleagues and clients, our kindness (especially those on a lower scale), our conscientiousness and our integrity - all will commend our saviour. In all of our work we are to demonstrate the triumphant rule of King Jesus in our lives to all.

- 1 Peter 2:12, 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, Titus 2:9-10

Sharing the gospel

Lives that commend the gospel are absolutely essential, but not enough on their own. We need to be ready to give an answer for the hope that we have (1 Peter 3:15). If we never explain the gospel, then people will probably assume we live a good life so we can earn our way into heaven.

Graham Daniels Evangelism Training Video

www.clayton.tv (Graham Daniels JPC Men's Conference '15: Session 2- The Method of Jesus) **10:50min - 31:36min**

The Method of Jesus Matthew 10:2-15

Go and speak vs7-8

- We have a message to proclaim

Be generous vs8-10

- Be vulnerable
- Be normal

Look for the right person vs11-14

- Your story - my story - his story
- Jesus and question

Don't negotiate for people

Ideas for action (taken from Gospel Centred Work by Tim Chester)

Here are some tips for workplace witness.

- Let everyone know you're a Christian as soon as possible in a new work situation
- Take a genuine interest in people and their families
- Lasting workplace friendships nearly always have a life outside the workplace itself, so look for opportunities to spend time with people outside work
- Pray for your colleagues by name. pray that the Holy Spirit would create opportunities for you to talk about Jesus - and give you the boldness to grab them
- Get involved in lunchtime Bible studies or after-work events

Have a good answer ready for the Monday-morning question: what did you get up to this weekend?

- Try to think of something a bit more intriguing than simply: I went to church
- Talk about how you saw God at work or what you discovered in the sermon

Activity: Think about last weekend. What answer could you have had for the question: “What did you do at the weekend?”

Tomorrow morning as you head into the office, or school, or the school gates - will you go with that missionary mind set? Will you be more intentional about speaking about Christ? Praying that God would help you to make the most of the mission-field in which you find yourself in - the workplace.