

Talking about Jesus with others - #5/5 WILL WE speak? (Crossing the painline when opportunity comes)

OPTION A. For growth groups 2/9/24

Warm up: What are some normal hesitations Christians have in talking about Jesus with others?

(if needing a prompt: do you think the Apostle Paul ever had hesitations in speaking about Jesus?

– he almost certainly did! In Colossians 4:3 he requests prayer to speak because he's been jailed for doing so).

Through this series we've been looking into those things that help and hinder talking about Jesus with others. In this final week, our focus is the hesitations we feel because of how Jesus might be received.

Today we have two passages to that help us think about both hesitations and response.

Read 2 Corinthians 2:12-17

1. How is it that a message has a smell? (v14b)
The aroma is the spreading (ie speaking) of 'the knowledge of Him', that is Christ.
2. Does Paul change his message for his hearers– is that why there is such different responses in v16?
no. its all about how the hearers receive it.
3. Can the different ways of hearing the message be resolved by the speaker of the message?
Can Paul change how they might respond?
*Yes and No! He can peddle a message they want. But he won't out of faithfulness to God.
He can't change the hearts of hearers – only God can.*
4. What can be done to help hearers? (i) speak; (ii) pray; (iii) repeat point ii; (iv) wait on God.

Romans 10 is a passage that responds to our hesitations with help.

Read Romans 10:9-15

5. Verse 9 starts with the hearer. What is the thing for hearers to do with Jesus?
It's receive him as Lord. Treat him as the king he is, and as the one God has installed as ruler as proved by raising him from the dead.
6. Verse 14 moves to the speaker: What is needed for hearing to happen? Why make such a big deal about feet?
Because God's message doesn't ordinarily drop out of the sky – it comes through the lips of a speaker, who has feet, and who has made a decision to come and to speak.
7. How does v15 encourage speaking?
The feet that bring the message are 'beautiful' to God, even if not to everyone.
8. What are your hesitations in talking about Jesus with others?
e.g. What if I muck it up? What if it wrecks the friendship? What if they don't want to know? Isn't there someone better placed to speak? What if they ask questions I can't answer?
9. How do today's passages meet our many hesitations?

Pray

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OPTION B. For growth groups 2/9/24

Warm up: What are some normal hesitations Christians have in talking about Jesus with others?

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– he almost certainly did! In Colossians 4:3 he requests prayer to speak because he's been jailed for doing so).

Through this series we've been looking into those things that help and hinder talking about Jesus with others. In this final week, our focus is the hesitations we feel because of how Jesus might be received.

Today we have **three sections** that help us think about both hesitations and response.

Read **2 Corinthians 2:12-17**

1. How is it that a message has a smell? (v14b)
The aroma is the spreading (ie speaking) of 'the knowledge of Him', that is Christ.
2. Does Paul change his message – is that why there is such different responses in v16?
3. Can the different ways of hearing the message be resolved by the speaker of the message? Can Paul change how they might respond?
Yes and No! He can peddle a message they want. But he wont. He can't change the hearts of hearers only God can.

Rico Tice in his book *Honest Evangelism* speaks honestly about his own experience of talking about Jesus with his grandmother. In short he didn't. Why? [**read** through his paragraph and hear his response – for himself and for us]
He writes... (see last page)

...in response Rico urges Christians to 'cross the pain line'. By which he means...

[**read** through his paragraph and hear his response – for himself and for us]

4. How do you feel about this?

Romans 10 is a passage that prompts us forward

Read **Romans 10:9-15**

5. Verse 9 starts with the hearer. What is the thing for hearers to do with Jesus?
It's receive him as Lord. Treat him as the king he is, and as the one God has installed as ruler as proved by raising him from the dead.
6. Verse 14 moves to the speaker: What is needed for hearing to happen? Why make such a big deal about feet?
Because God's message doesn't ordinarily drop out of the sky – it comes through the lips of a speaker, who has feet, and who has made a decision to come and to speak.
7. How does v15 encourage speaking?
The feet that bring the message are 'beautiful' to God, even if not to everyone.
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9. How do today's passages meet our many hesitations?

Pray

Talking about Jesus with others - #5/5 WILL WE speak? (Crossing the painline when opportunity comes)

OPTION C. For growth groups 2/9/24

Warm up: Have you ever had to give news to someone when you knew it would be hard for them to hear?

OR What are some normal hesitations Christians have in talking about Jesus with others?

Through this series we've been looking into those things that help and hinder talking about Jesus with others. In this final week, our focus is the hesitations we feel because of how Jesus might be received.

Today we have **four sections** to help us think about both hesitations and responses, starting with Paul's request for prayer from Colossians 4.

Read **Colossians 4:2-6**

1. Focusing just on Paul here. He is experienced in talking about Jesus, yet he still asks for prayer. What in particular does it want prayer for?
2. What are some of his likely hesitations to speaking about Jesus?

Let's turn back to 2 Corinthians ch 2. This passage helps us understand his request for prayer.

Read **2 Corinthians 2:12-17**

3. How is it that a message has a smell? (v14b)
The aroma is the spreading (ie speaking) of 'the knowledge of Him', that is Christ.
4. Does Paul change his message – is that why there is such different responses in v16?
5. Can the different ways of hearing the message be resolved by the speaker of the message? Can Paul change how they might respond?
Yes and No! He can peddle a message they want. But he wont. He can't change the hearts of hearers only God can.

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He writes... (see last page)

...in response Rico urges Christians to 'cross the pain line'. By which he means...

[read through his paragraph and hear his response – for himself and for us]

6. How do you feel about this?

Romans 10 is a passage that prompts us forward

Read **Romans 10:9-15**

7. Verse 9 starts with the hearer. What is the thing for hearers to do with Jesus?
It's receive him as Lord. Treat him as the king he is, and as the one God has installed as ruler as proved by raising him from the dead.
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9. How does v15 encourage speaking?
The feet that bring the message are 'beautiful' to God, even if not to everyone.
10. What are your hesitations in talking about Jesus with others?
e.g. What if I muck it up? What if it wrecks the friendship? What if they don't want to know? Isn't there someone better placed to speak? What if they ask questions I can't answer?
11. How do today's passages meet our many hesitations?

Pray

Rico Tice writes in his book, *Honest Evangelism*:

“My grandmother died absolutely convinced that God would accept her because she was a good person. She had no faith in Christ. She had died without Christ.

And here's what I regret. In the week before she died, I did not speak to her about Jesus. I loved her, but I didn't say anything to her. When my other grandmother had died, I'd taken her hand and prayed with her. But not this grandmother. I just let her go.

Why didn't I tell her about Christ? I came to understand I was afraid of what she'd say, and I was afraid of what my family would say, because I knew they'd think it was inappropriate and unhelpful. I was afraid.

I loved my grandmother, and she loved me, but the hard truth is I loved myself more than her. I wanted my family to think well of me more than I wanted her to think of Christ as her Saviour. That's why I didn't speak to her. I loved myself more than I loved her and more than I loved my Lord.

Rico thought long and hard: why is it that many Christians – like himself – who know from the Bible about the new creation and about the reality of hell – why are so many half-hearted at best when it comes to talking about Jesus with others?

Here's what I came to conclude: we love and obey something else more than God. This alternative love is what keeps us quiet about Jesus in order to serve what we love most.

The way forward involves at least three things: identifying what I love most (ahead of God) and start to confess this to God; To remember that God is in charge, gracious and able to use weak and fearful people. And to be prepared to cross the painline personally (getting over our hesitations) because of the great importance Jesus is for the person we're talking with.

[Rico Tice, *Honest Evangelism*, Good Book company 2015]