



KINGDOM CULTURE VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

WEEK SIX

Teaching Video Transcript | Week 6: Kingdom Culture Shares the Gospel

In the book, *The Rise of Christianity*, sociologist Rodney Stark seeks to answer the question: "How did a tiny and obscure messianic movement from the edge of the Roman Empire dislodge classical paganism and become the dominant faith of Western civilization?" (Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, Princeton University, © 1996, p.1)

I. (Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, Harper Collins, NY, © 2011, pp.39-40) In another one of Stark's books he points out Christianity grew as it appealed to people of all circumstances and particularly women. He also points out how the mercy and care given by Christians to those suffering the harshness of the first centuries helped Christianity grow and that the Roman persecutions didn't make the early church weaker it actually made it stronger. (Rodney Stark, *The Triumph of Christianity*, Harper Collins, NY, © 2011, p. 5) But ultimately, Christianity spread from person-to-person as people shared that they believed in the Son of God who came and died for them so they could know God now and be with him forever. And that was the motivation for them sharing the Gospel, so others would know; and because Jesus called his followers to serve others, they served people who were suffering and they willingly endured persecutions. Through that conviction, and because Jesus commanded his followers to make more followers of Jesus, the message spread; usually from person to person but sometimes it spread to larger groups at a time.

With that in mind then we know that every single Christian, including you and me, decided to believe in Jesus because someone shared the Good News of what Jesus has done for us and offers to us. Maybe it was your mother or father, maybe a brother, sister or other relative. Maybe it was a teacher or a pastor or a neighbor, but somewhere in your life you heard what Jesus did for you and decided to believe in and follow Jesus. In other words, someone shared the Gospel with you, and you believed.

And in fact this was Jesus' plan. He gave his first followers a command that included his plan to share the Gospel with people over and over. Jesus said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20, NIV) That's a command for every Christ-follower. It's how the good news of faith in Jesus spreads. When something changes our life that's good news we want to share it, and that should be the same for believing in Jesus.

Sharing with people about their faith makes many of us nervous. Rebecca Pippert shares her own nervousness with this reality. She was a junior in college doing a year abroad in Barcelona, Spain and she truly wanted her friends to know God, but she writes: "... every time I got up courage to be vocal about Jesus, an image leapt into my mind of an aggressive Christian buttonholing an unwitting victim. There was a part of me that secretly felt evangelism was something you shouldn't do to your dog, let alone a friend. To evangelize, it seemed, required insensitivity and an inclination to blurt out a memorized gospel outline, without inhaling, to every stranger you met. I knew Christians were called to do hard things. And because it was so hard to do, I thought ...evangelism had to be spiritual. I also knew that unless I really cared for my friends, they would never be interested in the gospel. I was deeply moved by the way Jesus demonstrated compassion to the people he met. I wanted to do the same, although it didn't occur to me that this had much to do with evangelism. So I approached my year abroad in Spain seeking to establish caring relationships with students and asking God to touch their lives. I also asked him to teach me how to share my faith and to free me from fear." (Rebecca Pippert, *Out of the Saltshaker*, IVP, © 1999, pp. 15-7)

In her book, *Out of the Saltshaker and into the World*, Rebecca shares what she learned about sharing the Gospel. In her book she points that to share the Gospel in a way that connects with people requires that we do three things. First, we have to share the truth about Christ; people have to hear it. Second, we have to display the love of God in our relationships with all people. And third, we have to live and do all of this through the power of the Holy Spirit. (Ibid. pp. 134-6) Sharing the Good News about Jesus requires that we communicate a message with our words and our lives.

This is what Jesus tells us. He says: 13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can

it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. 14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16, NIV) In the ancient world salt was a preservative. The message of Jesus is a spiritual preservative saving people for eternity with God. In telling his followers they are the salt of the earth he's telling them they have to communicate the message of the Gospel. When Jesus tells his followers they are the light of the world and they must let their light shine by the Godly and good ways they live their life, he's saying that his followers have to live in ways that point people to God.

Obviously communicating this message doesn't just happen. It requires both prayer and thought. We need to know how Jesus calls us to live as we follow him and we need to know the message of good news so we can share it. As the Apostle Peter says: 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... (1 Peter 3:15, NIV) To be prepared means we need to be students of the Bible, and especially the teachings of Jesus, so we can live a life that honors him and that is good witness to others. And it means we need to know the Gospel message so we can share the reason that we have hope in this life. That message is powerful. It starts by telling people that God loves them and that he wants to know them. This is followed by the stark reality that we are all sinful and our sins separate us from God. The good news to our sin problem is that Jesus Christ paid the price for our sins and if we accept him as our savior our sins can be forgiven and we receive the promise of eternal life. And anyone who believes in Jesus will follow him as our Lord. That's the message of the Gospel. It's the message we need to know so we can share it relationally with others. What will you do to learn that message so you can share it? It's the most important message in the world and we've heard it and responded to it. And Jesus commissioned his followers to be the messengers of the Gospel. It's a commission that every Christ-follower is given through the word of God. We've seen how our lives are supposed to witness to the life-changing power that Christ has in the way we live our lives. While we too may be nervous to share the gospel like Rebecca Pippert we need to be prepared to share the Gospel through words.

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¹Louie Giglio, *The Air I Breathe*, Multnomah, © 2003, pp.9-10

²<https://www.crosswalk.com/church/worship/song-story-matt-redmans-the-heart-of-worship-1253122.html>

