



Winning Friends for Christ

Prayer Power



Opening Prayer

Key Points From Last Week - *Plan Ahead*

All people need faith in Jesus Christ to be saved. What is God's plan to get the news to everyone?

John 20:21 = He sent US to spread the good news - He has NO OTHER PLAN

Do we need to be prepared with sermons to spout off when we recognize opportunities?

Acts 1:8a = No, just be witnesses - Give honest testimony of what we know to be true

How large is the harvest field? What help do we have in this endeavor?

Matthew 28:19-20a = All nations; He is always with us

How are we to systematically make disciples of all nations?

Acts 1:8 = Trust in Spirit's power; Work from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria to the ends

What is our world? Where is our Jerusalem?

Luke 5:27-32 = The field where we live. To the people around us

How should we consider the relationships we have with unchurched people?

Esther 4:14b = We may be here as THE opportunity for our friends to get the gospel

How do we respond to our calling as God's way for our friends to hear His saving message?

Acts 4:20 = *We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard*

Gallup Poll of US population: = Dechurched is usually open to nurturing by a Christian friend

12% actively involved; 28% just members; 44% dechurched; 16% unchurched

Jerusalem - Family and close friends = See weekly or daily, Share confidences, Discuss things

Judea - Regular acquaintances = Coworkers, neighbors, parents of other kids on a team

Samaria - Under the rug = Cross paths regularly but find little in common, May dislike them

Ends of the Earth - Within your heart = Others you know, Expect it to be tough to witness to

Buyer's Remorse

Have you committed yourself to Win Friends for Christ? If so, have you been wondering:

What have I done?

Why have I agreed to do this?

How can I do this?

Can I back out?

You may have a _____ = spiritual buyer's remorse

Have you thought up any excuses like:

I'm too busy.

I don't know enough about religion.

No one would listen to me.

I'm not a good talker.

I don't know who to choose.

I hate to get involved.

Someone else could do it better.

I wouldn't know what to say.

I'll think about it now and do it later.

Maybe I should go to a different class.

If you have had any of these feelings, good. You are taking this seriously.

You are preparing by _____ = counting the costs

Winning Friends for Christ

Prayer Power

Page 2

Common Reluctance

Has anyone else ever been as unresponsive to the importance of the gospel as you may feel?

Mark 16:9-14 = The disciples doubted that Jesus even rose (also John 20 - Thomas)

Did Jesus decide that He needed to find someone better for His Great Commission?

Mark 16:15-16 = No, He immediately called them and us despite our doubts

Did the disciples take their calling more seriously than we have?

John 21:3, 12, 15 = No, they went fishing - Jesus reminded them to fish for men

Did the disciples ever take their calling seriously? = Is the Spirit convicting you?

Mark 16:20 = Yes, but not until they received the power and conviction of the Spirit

Paul's Confidence

Who gives us one of the best examples of seriously and boldly sharing the gospel of Christ?

Acts 28:30-31 = Paul went everywhere spreading the gospel regardless of risk to himself

Why did he do this? = Exact same reason we are to share our faith with others

Acts 22:14-15 = God called him to witness of what he had seen and heard

Surely it was easy for Paul. He was a top orator and full of self-confidence. Right?

Ephesians 3:7-9 = No, he felt he was the least of all, Relied on God's power

How did Paul look for God's power to enable him to fulfill his calling to be a witness?

Ephesians 6:18-20 = Through prayer

Did Paul count on a yearly, monthly, weekly or daily prayer to receive this power?

Ephesians 6:18 = All kinds of prayers & requests on ALL OCCASIONS, always keep on

Did Paul rely on his own prayer life to call on God's power?

Ephesians 6:19a = No, he counted on others - Do you pray for others?

Flap Those Lips

WHEN did Paul feel he needed God's power and help that comes through prayer?

Ephesians 6:19b = WHENEVER I open my mouth - he still needed to open his mouth

How did Paul, and how can we, get help opening his mouth?

Psalms 51:15 = By asking God to help open our lips

Let It Out

HOW did Paul look for God's power whenever he opened his mouth?

Ephesians 6:19c = For words to be GIVEN to him - What to say and what NOT to say

Can you be prepared with the right words for every opportunity you may have to witness?

A police car brings your neighbor's son home in the middle of the night.

Your co-worker's medical tests show a suspicious shadow on her lung.

Your barber asks, "Just what goes on in that church of yours, anyway?"

How do you usually respond to situations like this? = unprepared, stammering, foot in mouth

Looking back, do you ever think of better ways you could have responded? = we all do

Winning Friends for Christ

Prayer Power

Page 3

Be Careful What You Let Out

Mark made a thoughtless comment when he read an article about AIDS to his colleague, Fred, in the lunchroom, "Those people get what they deserve." Later he found out that Fred's brother had died of an AIDS-related illness.

Mark was tempted to let the matter rest and chalk it up to experience, but later he saw Fred sitting alone and joined him.

"I'm sorry for the remark I made the other day," he began. "I never meant to hurt you; it was really insensitive of me. You must miss him a lot."

Fred began to talk about his brother and the pain his illness and death had caused his family. God used Mark's initial blunder to open the door to further intimacy. Mark's acknowledgement of his own fault allowed Fred to speak of his own mixed feelings and fears.

Mark became a trusted confidante who later had earned the right to speak about God's unconditional love for Fred and his family.

Have you found yourself guilty of blunders like this?

Have you experienced God opening doors as you later own up to your blunders?

What are some examples we have of blunders by Jesus' original called witnesses?

Mark 10:13-14 = Disciples rebuked people for bringing kids to Jesus

Mark 14:29-30 = Peter said he alone would remain faithful, but denied Him 3 times

Luke 9:54-55 = James & John wanted to send fire from heaven on a Samaritan town

John 11:21-23 = Martha complained that her brother died because Jesus was too slow

God's plan prevailed despite the disciples' blunders. What should we remember in our blunders?

Genesis 50:20 = God can even work through our sins and errors to save lives

What is the only way we can be prepared with the right words at the right time?

1 Corinthians 2:10-13 = By letting the Spirit speak His truths through us

No Fear

HOW did Paul want to be able to respond to the opportunities God gave him to witness?

Ephesians 6:19d = Fearlessly

We hesitate because we are afraid how others will respond to our witness. Was this Paul's fear?

2 Corinthians 11:23b-28 = He had this, plus a lot more "worst-case" to fear

How can prayer help conquer our fears?

Philippians 4:6-7 = God will send His peace that is greater than all fears

Don't Be Mysterious With The Mystery

WHAT would God's power help Paul witness about?

Ephesians 6:19e = The MYSTERY of the gospel

What is this mystery of the gospel?

Ephesians 3:4-6 = That ALL people are heirs to the eternal promises of God

If this great news was kept a mystery for many years, how are people to learn of it now?

Ephesians 3:8-9 = Those who know it are to make it plain to others

What does this mean about the words we choose when we share the gospel with others?

Matthew 11:25 = Make it plain, USE YOUR OWN WORDS

Think of the friend you chose in Lesson 1. Would they really understand these words?

Justification

Sanctification

Redemption

Salvation

Sin

Grace

Faith

Resurrection

Winning Friends for Christ

Prayer Power

Page 4

Don't Be Mysterious With The Mystery

WHO did Paul consider himself to be in his witnessing?

Ephesians 6:20a = God's AMBASSADOR

What is an ambassador?

Funk & Wagnalls = A personal representative or messenger

As God's ambassadors, are we to give our opinions, ideas or feelings in our witness?

2 Corinthians 5:20a = No, we're to present God's words & truth - Stay with the basics

What to Pray For

Paul's request for prayers included a lot. What was his main desire for the prayers?

Ephesians 6:20b = That he would witness without fear - God would make it effective

Besides praying for God's help in witnessing, for what else should we pray?

1 Timothy 2:1-2 = For others - especially for those God has placed around us

How will God respond as we pray for those around us who need to hear God's saving message?

1 Timothy 2:3/4 = He will be pleased and will work through us to save others

Another View on Prayer

What does Paul tell the Christians in Colossae is the first step to reaching out?

Colossians 4:2a = Devote yourselves to prayer - Keep the lines of communication open

As we communicate with God, we will see His opportunities to witness. How do we respond?

Colossians 4:2b = We should be watchful and thankful for the opportunities

What To Pray For

Are we to pray only for opportunities for ourselves?

Colossians 4:3a = No, we pray for opportunities for others ALSO

What are we to ask God to do?

Colossians 4:3b = Open doors for us to witness - Provide opportunities

What else should we pray for besides opportunities to witness?

Colossians 4:3c = *That we may proclaim the mystery of Christ* - that we take the opportunity

How can prayer further help us as we respond to opportunities to witness?

Colossians 4:4 = We pray also for the words of the Spirit to make the message clear

What practical pointers did Paul give to help us become effective witnesses?

Colossians 4:5a = *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders* - Don't add obstacles

Colossians 4:5b = *Make the most of every opportunity* - Don't just try to get through it

Colossians 4:6a = *Let your conversation be full of grace* - Don't argue, but help thru it

Colossians 4:6b = *Learn how to answer everyone* - Respond with the Spirit, not a speech

Homework

Read Chapter 2 and answer the questions at the end of it