

Be A Light Bearer In The World

Rob Wiggins

As we review the world we live in today, we see a world full of envy and strife, pain and bitterness. So many groups of people feel a sense of abandonment, a lack of direction, an unknown disappointment in an unfulfilling life. Problems seem to defy solutions. The daily headlines in our media reveal endless distrust, discord and finger pointing. We can ask the question, “Can Christians be effective in such an environment?”

Perhaps the first order of the day is to recognize the perplexities that people today encounter in their struggle for existence. In Lamentations 3:1-18, Jeremiah shows us an example of how to assess and have compassion on a people in need. As he witnessed the total devastation left in the aftermath of Jerusalem’s fall, he reflected on the darkness and despair that covered the city. Yet when he had looked the harsh realities in the eye, he then turned to God. He clearly recognized that God was the only hope for his people. That would be the hope of God’s mercy, compassion, faithfulness, and goodness we read of in vs. 22-24. Just like Jeremiah, we as Christians in the world today can offer a message of hope to the world: the hope that is in Jesus Christ. We certainly do not pretend to have all the answers to all the problems of life, but we do have the Lord. **HE IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.** And we are called to bring this light into this dark world (Matt 5:14-16, John 1:4,5; 1 John 1:5).

As in days past, the Lord could have used angels, prophets, and miracles to announce his message. Instead, He has chosen every day, ordinary people like us to carry his message to the lost. Working through ordinary people who understand the complexities of life, the Lord wants people to realize there is hope beyond the problems and frustrations of the here and now. We can ask the question, “Are we fulfilling this calling in our lives?”

Practically, how do we go about teaching people the word of God? One of the first lessons we could apply is this: **TEACH IT TO THEM ON THE VERY FIRST DAY YOU EVER MEET THEM.**

I always had the idea that it would be good to befriend a person first, get to know their strengths and weaknesses, what their motives are, how receptive they might be, considering the type of life situations they might find themselves in, etc., etc. Once I had assessed all that, I might slowly advance the cause, and slowly introduce the scriptures to them, or demonstrate aspects of godly example and or purpose that might reflect in me and my life to show them a better path to a contented soul.

I regret to say this does not work very often. Far better is the direct approach on first meeting of educating strangers that you are a Christian in some shape or form without coming across as dogmatic or a “Bible thumper” so that from the beginning, you have set the stage as to who and what you are and what you stand for. At no point later on in that relationship, if it does in fact progress, do you need to second guess yourself, or have doubt in the power of the Word.

At no point later on in that relationship will you feel the pressure of, when in that person’s presence, having to conform to this world or other expectations due to a fear of alienating one’s new found friend, hurting their feelings, or having to make tough choices. Nailing your body on the cross (if we could even be so bold as to use that analogy) from the very beginning by defining who you are and what you stand for in Christ, makes your ability to teach someone so much easier. It takes away misunderstandings, misconceptions, and hurt feelings. More importantly, it gives you the best opportunity for success in planting the seed that our Lord may offer the increase.

Another benefit of this offensive approach is that you personally will come away emboldened, gratified, strengthened and encouraged to have the courage of your convictions, to strive to “be Holy as He is Holy”, to be a better Christian in His service. I believe you will reach more souls sooner, too.

What a sad epitaph it would be that a friend might approach you years later and to hear him or her say, “I had no idea that you were a Christian, Rob, or that you were a member of the Lord’s Church”.

I would like to close with the words of Christ in Matt. 10: 32-33.

“Therefore, whoever confesses me before men, him I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies me before men, him I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven.”