

Is It Possible to be Afraid Of Sharing the Gospel?

Tim Conway | illbehonest.com

Tim: If you're able to live your life in some college or high school or in a workplace or among your family and nobody knows you're a Christian, it's because you're not one. Lay it down. Listen, the Spirit of God does not take up residency in a human being, Christ does not come along and save an individual, the power of God does engulf a man or woman or a child, and nobody can tell that anything happened to them. That just doesn't happen.

Question:

Chung Man Le, he says, "Is it possible for the true born again Christian to be afraid of sharing the Gospel to strangers? My personality doesn't allow me to do it. What I do is just live out a lifestyle of Jesus Christ so that people around me that I know can turn to God. Can that be a right excuse to say, or does it mean that he or she is not truly saved? Is that why I cannot share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to strangers?"

Discussion:

Tim: So basically, Chung believes he lives his lifestyle of Jesus Christ. But I would say this: Is that really imitating Christ if you don't speak the truth of Christ? Because what I find Christ did is He went about doing good. He also went about speaking like no man ever spake. He declared more truth than any other human being ever declared. He spoke of Himself. He declared Himself. He declared salvation. Can you really say that I'm living like Christ? Can you really say that I'm living the lifestyle of Christ if you're not speaking the words of Christ? I would probably say that would not be a good, accurate estimation. Christ went about constantly using His mouth to proclaim His own coming.

Now you guys know the verses. I can just shoot some off at you. Mark 8:38 - "Whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." 2 Timothy 1:8 says, "Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord." That's Paul speaking to Timothy. 2 Timothy 2:12, "If we deny Him, He also will deny us." 1 John 2:23, "whoever has the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also." 1 Peter 3:15, "Be prepared to give an answer to every man for the reason for the hope that you have."

Look, I would just say this, Timothy seemed to be wavering a little bit at one time for Paul to have to give him the kind of exhortations that he did there. Is it possible for true Christians to be afraid? Yes. Is it possible for them to fail sometimes? Yes. There's no question about it. But over all, the pattern seems to be, look, if you deny Him, He's going to deny you.

I would just say this: If you're able to live your life in some college or high school or in a workplace or among your family, and nobody knows you're a Christian, it's because you're not one. Lay it down. Listen. The Spirit of God does not take up residency in a human being, Christ does not come along and save an individual, the power of God does not engulf a man or woman or a child and nobody can tell that anything happened to them. That just doesn't happen.

And the thing about it is, one of the things the Spirit of God does is gives us a love for Christ. Think about a man who's super, super, super shy. And some bold, wicked, loud mouth guy comes along and he just starts saying all sorts of wicked, nasty, ugly things about the first guy's wife. No matter how shy that guy is, if he really loves his wife, guess what? He's not going to keep his mouth shut, is he? He's going to make a stand for her.

The same thing is true of Christ. The chief fruit of the Spirit of God is love. And the greater love is not for our brother and sister in Adam, for our kindred human beings. The greatest love that the Spirit of God gives us is for God Himself, for Christ Himself. If you're able to go through your life, and listen, one of the things too that we're given. Do you guys remember this? From Jeremiah 32? God says, "I will put My fear within them that they not depart from Me." Guess why people don't proclaim Christ? Fear of man, right? Men are afraid of other men. That's why they stay quiet? But you know what God says? "I'm going to put My fear within them." So even though a true Christian may still have a measure of fear for men, God has put His fear - a fear for Him - in them. And I guarantee, God's fear that He puts in them will be greater than the fear that man has for human beings. Why? Because it's a fear that is so intense, and so large, that no matter what men may do to him, he won't depart. Right? It's a fear that will keep them from departing from the faith.

So, I would say that. Look, I know when I was first saved, that was difficult. Some of you guys have seen that movie "Faith Like Potatoes"? That's a true story. His pastor told him, now what I want you to do is go find three people and tell them what Christ has done. And if you've seen it, he's like on the sidewalk and he sees some guy he knows and he turns the other way real fast. But I know that! I can remember when I was first saved, and I went with the Youth for Christ guy to a Denny's or something, and we're eating breakfast, and he bows and he's praying and I was traumatized! He was praying in public and it was like the devil came upon me... You know, I can pray in a restaurant now and I won't even bat an eye, I don't even think about it. But at that time, I was just seized with fear. But you know, if you're truly a child of God, what you're going to find is God will give you a boldness. You may waver at times, but He's going to give it to you. That doesn't mean it's easy, but God gives us the grace to have an answer.

To stand for Christ. If you love Him, you've got to stand for Him. If you love Him, you're not going to deny Him. You can't walk around in this world too long and you hear somebody take His name in vain, and that ought to give you opportunity, if nothing else, that ought to give you opportunity right there to say, "You ought not to blaspheme the name of My Lord." Take the open doors. You can talk to people. Part of it is - have an answer. That's what Peter says - have

an answer for the hope. You know what? Prepare an answer. Just get a little spiel. Sometimes what makes it hard is you just don't know what to say.

Sometimes, one of the ways to break the ice there is just, "do you know where you're going to go when you die?" That's a good way to start. Everybody's going to die. Everybody thinks about dying. So, it's definitely not a useless question that doesn't have anything to do with the person you're talking to. It has everything to do with them. But yeah, you don't want to deny the Lord. If that's the pattern and the habit of the life, that's the habit and the pattern of a lost life. What an honor we have! You know what Christ said? You will be My witnesses. If your mouth is shut, look, there's a lot to be said about living a godly life before people, and I don't knock that at all from Chung's question here. But the church - Jesus Christ said, "You're going to be My witnesses." We're the witnesses. We're the witnesses of Christ. What an honor we have. We're the pillar and ground of truth. If we don't proclaim it, nobody else is. And it's an honor to do it. We have that privilege to carry on Christ's work. He spoke. Now He speaks through His church, through His Word. Well, that's it for tonight.