

“Share- Part 2”

GO: You Have What It Takes- Part 6

November 6, 2011

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### **Introduction:**

Kate Ward Interview...

1. How did you meet Nichole?
2. How did the relationship move to a level where you could discuss spiritual things with your friend? (Any stories around this?)
3. You and John invited Dave and Nicole to read the Bible with you. Tell us about this and what happened? What did you read? Discuss?
4. Tell us what Nicole shared with you about a decision she made this summer. How did that happen?
5. What did you learn from this experience about living as a missionary in America?

Our text is...**Colossians 4:2-6**

### **Big Idea:**

*God asks me to advance the Gospel through my prayers, my life, and my words.*

### **How should I pray?**

#### **Colossians 4:2-6**

*2 Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.*

#### **1. Pray PERSISTENTLY**

*2 Devote yourselves to prayer*

#### **Who are you praying for...in a devoted way... in a persistent way?**

#### **2. Pray ALERTLY**

*with an alert mind*

Prayer is a weapon against temptation. The reason this is so important is that publicly falling into sin destroys our ability to effectively witness.

Let's face temptation head on and deal with our enemy the devil. The best way to deal with temptation is through praying...*with an alert mind.*

#### **3. Pray with THANKGIVING**

*and a thankful heart...*

A thankful heart leads us to want to share God's blessings with others. We are so excited about what we have that we want to share it with others.

Thanksgiving will open doors for witness.

#### **4. Pray for OPPORTUNITIES (TO SPEAK)**

*3 Pray for us, too, that God will give us many opportunities to speak about his mysterious plan concerning Christ. That is why I am here in chains.*

**Do you ever get up in the morning, swing your feet over the side of the bed, and just say something like, “Good morning, Jesus. Would you please give me an opportunity today to share about You with someone else.”?**

Have you ever asked someone else to pray for YOU that you would have opportunities to share God’s love and grace that day?

**We should pray that God would give us and others opportunities to share the gospel with others.**

**We have to match living a godly life with spoken words (Romans 10) to explain the Good News to those we are trying to reach.**

**Pray persistently for your ONE. Pray for opportunities.** Step into them. Just go for it (like a cold shower- it doesn’t get easier by sitting around and fretting about it...get in and feel the exhilaration)! Speak! **This is a powerful combination: A Christ-follower that has prayed for a friend...then prays for opportunities with that friend!**

#### **5. Pray for CLARITY**

*4 Pray that I will proclaim this message as clearly as I should.*

When we have clarity- we are more prone to be confident in sharing others with Jesus. Clarity leads to boldness.

Perhaps we are not ready to clearly share the Gospel- simply because we have not prayed about being ready to clearly share the Gospel!

**How should I live?**

##### **1. Live WISELY**

*5 Live wisely among those who are not believers,*

We are to live in such a way that people can see our good deeds and actually give glory to God because they have been around us! When you know Jesus- we have light. We must let that shine by good deeds...by living wisely!

**Remember that people are watching you. Don’t give people an excuse to reject the gospel.** When we pray, God will give us open doors. Let’s not shut them by our

behavior.

## **2. Live with a sense of URGENCY**

*and make the most of every opportunity.*

Illustration Of Urgency...

*If we live every day like it could be our last and our loved ones last... we feel a sense of urgency to share...*

Greg- *he'll get you going to church* Kim- husband going through pain...angry at God...won't go to church.

### **How should I speak?**

#### **1. Speak GRACIOUSLY**

*6 Let your conversation be gracious and attractive...*

To be "gracious" basically means to be pleasant. Before we can make disciples, we need to make friends and build rapport. Remember that we are to be witnesses, not judges or prosecuting attorneys! Concerning Jesus, Luke 4:22 says, *"Everyone spoke well of him and was amazed by the gracious words that came from his lips."* Ephesians 4:15 talks about "speaking the truth in love."

Think about Jesus. Who did He argue with? Who was He harsh with? He argued and pointedly challenged the prideful RELIGIOUS leaders He encountered. He argued with pious people that said one thing and acted another. He challenged those that thought they knew the Scriptures but didn't know God.

On the other hand, when Jesus encountered sinners- those that knew they needed Him- those that were open to hear what He had to say- those that responded to His message—He was kind, compassionate, gentle, non-threatening. He challenged people, He shared His message clearly, but His words and tone and body-language were full of love.

I think sometimes we're afraid to enter into conversations of a spiritual nature with people because we're afraid the conversation will turn into an argument.

Take this pressure off of yourself. The Bible teaches us we must pray for opportunities and be ready to take advantage of them when they are there. But, the point isn't to argue or get into a heated debate.

#### **1 Peter 3:15-16**

*"<sup>15</sup>...you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. **And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it.** <sup>16</sup> But do this in a gentle and*

*respectful way.<sup>[a]</sup> Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. ”*

Any conversation about spiritual things...sharing what God has done in your life...sharing the message of Jesus' forgiveness with others- is always to be done in a gentle and respectful way...*our conversation must always be gracious and attractive.*

Think of it this way- **what you are doing in talking with people about Jesus is “holy probing”**. You're using conversation to probe someone's spiritual sensitivity. As you talk about God, what He is doing in your life, something you are learning from the Bible, your experience at church the previous Sunday, how God has answered a prayer request—you are simply trying to gauge people's openness to talk about Jesus. The point isn't to start an argument- the point is to search for open doors.

You may have to try a few doors over time before you find the one that will open for a rich conversation about faith. If someone is hostile, you pull back and wait. You keep loving, you keep praying, you keep living a life of light and love, and you keep probing. By prayer, a door will open sometime. God is with you on this journey. 1 Timothy 2:3-4 says: <sup>3</sup> *...God our Savior...wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth.*

Here's the truth when you are sharing Jesus with a friend:

1. God is always with you in that moment because you are working out His will. He **wants you friend to follow Jesus more than you do!**
2. You are doing the most loving thing you can ever do for your friend. You are not loving your friend by backing away because you are afraid of what they will think or that they won't want to talk to you again. The most loving thing you can do is tell them about Jesus.

Paul Little, in his book *How to Give Away Your Faith*, defines witnessing as “*that deep-seated conviction that the greatest favor I can do for others is to introduce them to Jesus Christ.*”

When that door is open (even if we have to give it a little kick...), we need to:

## **2. Speak INTELLIGENTLY**

(vs. 6 cont.) *so that you will have the right response for everyone.*

So- imagine you have devoted yourself to prayer. With an alert mind you have prayed for opportunities to share with your ONE person you know God has appointed for you to impact. You taking seriously the fact that as a Christ-follower God has SENT you to your friend so that he or she can hear about Jesus. As we read from Romans 10 last week- *faith comes through hearing*- and you know God has sent you to tell. You've prayed for opportunities and are living a life of light in front of your friend, probing spiritual conversations, and looking for opportunities to share.

Let's assume that God answers prayer. Let's take God at His Word that He wants your friend to follow Jesus and that He wants to use you. The opportunity finally comes... *what do you say?*

We have to be ready. We have to be prepared. We want to speak intelligently. We need to have their answers ready for those who challenge or are curious about their faith.

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*Are you ready?* Think about how much time in life we spend preparing for all kinds of things. I spent several hours preparing for this morning. You spend time preparing to present presentations or sales pitches at work. All of us have prepared to do well on a test at some level of school. ***Have we ever spent time preparing so that we can be ready to do the most important thing we can ever do- alter someone's eternal state by leading them to accept Jesus as Forgiver and Leader?***

Have you ever spent time researching answers to common objections to faith? Have you ever spent time writing out your testimony so you can share how God worked in your life to draw you to Himself? Have you ever spent time memorizing important Bible verses that explain the Good News and help you share it with others? ***If someone asks about your Christian hope, (are you) ready to explain it?***

Here are three things you can do to be ready to explain your hope in Jesus:

1. **Pray... *this is the most important thing.*** God knows your fears, He knows your strengths, and weaknesses. He made your mouth- He can help you speak. He is there in the midst of any conversation about faith. He wants to help you. He also knows your friends' heart. He wants to draw them to Himself. Prayer is our key resource for witness. Pray before you encounter your friend. Pray during the encounter. Get other believers praying for you.
2. **Be ready to answer common questions:**
  - How can a loving God allow evil and suffering to exist?
  - How could a loving God torture people in hell?
  - Isn't it logical to just assume that this is all there is—when you die, that's it. Right?
  - Isn't it offensive to claim that Jesus is the only way to heaven?
  - I've lived a pretty good life. I've never murdered anyone or anything. If there is a heaven- God would have to let me in, right?

- How can you be sure that you can trust the Bible?

It's sad when people who have been Christians for years cannot give anything more than a pat answer to these kinds of questions. Howard Hendricks once said, *"In the midst of a generation screaming for answers, Christians are stuttering."*

Resources:

Tim Keller's *The Reason For God: Belief In An Age Of Skepticism*

Mark Driscoll's *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*

### **3. Memorize points of Jesus' Good News and key verses to corroborate each point.**

What should we share?

#### **1. We have a sin problem.**

Romans 3:23-25

**23** For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard

#### **2. Jesus is the solution to our sin problem.**

Acts 4:12

**12** *There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved."*

Romans 5:8-9

**8** *But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.* **9** *And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation.*

Romans 6:23

**23** *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

#### **3. Salvation is a free gift accessible by faith.**

Ephesians 2:8-9

**8** *God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God.* **9** *Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*

#### **4. One who acknowledges Jesus as Forgiver must also follow Him as Leader (our actions must mirror our beliefs).**

1 Peter 1:22

**22** *You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.*

James 2:14-17

**14** *What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone?***15** *Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing,*

**16** *and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?*

**17** *So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.*

### **What are the best verses to memorize that give key elements of the Gospel?**

#### **Titus 3:3-7**

**3** *Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other.*

**4** *But—"When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love,***5** *he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.***6** *He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior.***7** *Because of his grace he declared us righteous and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life."*

#### **Romans 3:23-25**

**23** *For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.***24** *Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.***25** *For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood.*