

SHARE THE JOY. | JOHN 4:7-42

I. DOING THE STUFF

A. We are starting a new series called: **Doing the Stuff!**

1. ***“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”*** John 14:12-13

B. Our series theme is: Jesus isn't only someone we admire, He's someone we imitate.

1. If you admire Jesus, you'll do the stuff He did. What stuff?:
 - a. ***Sharing the joy of the kingdom***
 - b. ***Walking in supernatural signs and wonders***
 - c. ***Being an instrument of justice and mercy.***
 - d. ***Making space in our lives for people; Biblical hospitality***
2. We are going to be touching each of these **4 things**. Each topic is going to come with a practical challenge for us, as a church body to step out and ***“Do the Stuff”!***

II. SHARING THE JOY | JOHN 4:7-42

A. Our theme today: ***It takes joy to share joy.***

1. ***Evangelism isn't the act of convincing people that we're right and they're wrong.*** It shouldn't be an argument over whose morals are better. It should be an invitation to experience the God who has changed our lives.
2. The joy the woman at the well shared: ***Come see this man!***

B. Question: ***Are we experiencing the joy of Christ?***

III. SHARING OUR FAITH IN A WORLD THAT THINKS WE'RE CRAZY**A. Our American culture and its view of Christianity:**

1. **In the 40's and 50's** there was **social pressure** to be a Christian in our society.
 - a. Peter Drucker example.
2. **In the 70's and 80's** there was a **"live and let live"** mentality toward Christianity. Where society was growing in it's belief that Christianity was in the dark ages in many ways, but that Religion was basically good for people, that Christianity made people better people. They liked our ethics.
3. **In our time**, increasingly, our Christian views are seem to be so narrow and outdated with a progressing society that more and more Christianity is seen as being very bad for humanity. We now live in an era where being a Christian now has **a social cost** that comes with it.
 - a. They don't admire our ethics (views on marriage, sex, gender, abortion, etc)
 - b. Society has now started to be very vocal about the idea that evangelism is wrong. That we can be Christians, as long as we keep it to ourselves.
 - c. Like this quote from George Carlin: ***"Religion is like a pair of shoes....Find one that fits for you, but don't make me wear your shoes."***

B. Christian's might be crazy research:**C. All of this begs the question: *how do we share our faith in a society that views us this way?***

1. Answer: **the early church** was similar. There was a social cost to sharing their faith, yet Faith spread faster than any other time. Why? Because people saw that when people turned and worshiped Jesus they were transformed, lived different, the household "gods" didn't do that. ***Christians were living testimonies that Jesus was who he said he was.***

2. The early church didn't ask people where they were going when they died. In fact that isn't mentioned in Acts at all. Instead they declared **"Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand"** meaning **turn from the way you're living and look at what the kingdom has done to our lives!**
Transformation – a new way - is possible and here!
3. The early church was called **"The Way"** because it was a declaration that a new way of life was possible. And they invited people to come and see for themselves what this "new Way" offered.

IV. EVANGELISM IS AN INVITATION TO JOY: IT TAKES JOY TO SHARE JOY

- A. **How do we do it?** – its not a matter of training **but character**. Simple transparency about what the Lord has done for us. (ex: my debate with the rabbi)
1. **The woman at the well** points to Jesus and **invites them** to **evaluate and reflect** on Jesus.
 - a. She didn't present them with a doctrine or argument. She isnt trying to "win".
 - (1) I think we need to stop saying **"winning souls"**. Jesus is the one who compels hearts through the Holy Spirit. Our job is simply to be a flame, a light, a living testimony of What God does- **that flames spreads when we allow it to touch other wicks.**
 - (2) As a church we are a flame that we want to invite people in to touch and see that what God is doing here in our lives is the evidence that Jesus is real and worthy of our faith and lives.
 - b. If Jesus is who He says he is, then when they come and touch His presence, **they'll be transformed.**
 - c. The truth will set you free. **Let the power of the truth of Jesus** touch hearts, not our arguments, or provocations
 - d. The result, of the woman at the well's approach was, **they did evaluate**, and they found themselves having the same experience and reflected and concluded: **He is the Messiah.**

B. Why don't we share our faith?

1. The reason we often struggle with sharing our faith isn't because of the social cost, it's usually because **we ourselves lack joy**. We like that constant experience of Jesus in the place of prayer and worship and it tends to keep us silent.
2. **"Nothing shuts the mouth, seals the lips, and ties the tongue like the secret poverty of our spiritual experience"** – John Stott
3. We don't open our mouths to share the joy of our faith, if we aren't experiencing its joy.

V. **ARE WE EXPERIENCING THE JOY OF CHRIST?**

- A. Christianity isn't a duty, it's a delight. If at any point the call to make disciples, or the call share our faith feels like a chore or a duty then we have to return back to our first love and remember the joy of our salvation.
1. **"Never let your heart be so weighed down that you forget the joy of Christ risen."** – Mother Teresa