

## TOO GOOD TO KEEP IT A SECRET

Young children love secrets. Maybe I should say that young children love to *tell* secrets. The only problem is that they love secrets so much that they soon share them with everyone they know. Bobbi and I have learned that it's unwise to tell our youngest sons what we are getting someone for a birthday because the secret is so good they almost cannot help letting it out.

In the Bible, the crowd in Decapolis that witnessed the healing of the deaf man with a speech impediment could not keep quiet even though Jesus told them to tell no one (Mark 7:31-37). The idea of a man who could heal with a touch was just too good to keep quiet. The cleansing of the leper in Luke 5:12-16 was supposed to have been kept quiet also. But, again, the story was just too good to keep it a secret. The Messiah had come and was confirming his authority through fantastic miracles and teachings. The story could not be silenced.

Peter and John had the same problem. After preaching and healing in the Temple (Acts 3:1-26), they were arrested and brought before the Jewish ruling council. There, the Apostles kept preaching, calling upon even the Jewish rulers to come to Christ. The council warned Peter and John not to teach of Jesus anymore (Acts 4:18). But there was a problem the rulers hadn't counted on; the message of Jesus was too good to keep it a secret. Peter and John answered and said to rulers, "*Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard*" (Acts 4:19-20, NASB, emphasis added). Peter and John could not obey the Jewish leaders because the message of Jesus was too magnificent. Peter, along with hundreds and thousands more, would give his life for the precious message of the Savior while John would spend the late years of his life on a prison island, also for the cause of Christ.

It is both exciting and sobering to think that we have the very same reasons as Peter and John to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Like these two Apostles, we should be unable to contain our excitement over the salvation we have found in Jesus. Our friends, neighbors and family members should know of our commitment to Christ because they should be able to see him living in us.

Our concern for the lost ought be evident and our evangelistic work should be unending. Sharing the Gospel must become a top priority just as it was in the days of the early church.

Perhaps the key to awakening a desire for personal evangelism is to fully appreciate where each of us would be without the saving power of Jesus. Having then considered the dark, frightful deeps of condemnation we can then joyously shout of redemption to the world. Jesus commanded that we share the truth with the world and make disciples of them (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16). It was Paul who said that the Gospel was now committed into "*earthen vessels*" (2 Corinthians 4:7), i.e. mankind. In the same chapter he speaks of the need to let the light of "*the glorious gospel of Christ*" shine to those who are lost (2 Corinthians 4:4). Likewise, in the sermon on the mount, Jesus speaks of disciples who must be the "*light of the world*" (Matthew 5:14, 15,16) and let their light shine.

Will we now begin to let our light shine forth in Daphne and throughout the Eastern Shore? The news that Jesus saves lost people is simply too good to keep to ourselves!

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