

Pushing Back the Darkness!

Part 15: "It's Never Been Easy but It's Always Been Worth It!"

Last week on PBTD... Fruitlessness is not acceptable! "I am the Vine, you are the branches, every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away... *every branch that abides in Me bears much fruit...*" **John 15.1-7** "A certain man had a fig tree and came looking for fruit *and there was none...*" **Luke 13.6ff** "Herein is My Father glorified, *that you bear much fruit!*" **John 15.8**

We are not going to live a vain life passed on by the traditions of men!

There is a right and wrong way to "work thru" life! Wrong way is the "right enough" way of human reasoning! "End of it is death..." **Pr 14.12 16.2,25** Right way is God's way! According to His voice! **Ps 25.12** Rightest way, since "we see thru dark glasses," is to submit ourselves to the Lord, anointed to open the eyes of the blind! **Luke 4.18, Mk 10.46ff**

There is a "look" we want to achieve! "We are now the sons of God but it doesn't yet appear what we will be, but we know that when He appears we will be like Him for we will see Him as He is and every man that has that hope in him purifies himself to be even as He is!" **1J3.2** "having the promises of God let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God!" **2C7.1** ***To be a person willing to lay down our lives for a friend!*** With all He was facing, Jesus could still hear the beggar! ***To be a person of compassion since life is about people!*** Only thing eternal leaving the planet, bring them close! ***To be a person of interest in others!*** "Where are you? What do you need?"

So if we begin living like that, like Him, in our world... people will be coming "to ask..." And that is your moment to push back the darkness and open the way for them!

And remember... Matthew 10.16 ***"I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves..."*** Serious, sobering, sometimes adversarial business! ***"So be wise:"*** using your practical, intellectual acumen: quickness, insights and accuracy... Watch for "blocks" and keep moving forward... ***"And harmless:"*** unmixed (pure, simple, noble) and innocent!

That's a 2,000 y/o perspective on your *voluntary ministry* to God! From the beginning, rending the darkness for the people God loves has not been without struggle! Ministering in hard environments is nothing new because our enemy does all he can to silence "ministers!"

Anti-Christian values, laws, rules, bosses can keep you from preaching the gospel in the workplace or hallways... But no one can keep you from sharing your compassion and stories and giving people assurances of God's love... And no one can stop the power that flows thru faith drenched prayer, validating the reality and nearness of God!

Last week... I asked a gal how she was doing. She answered by telling me she had been struggling for a couple of weeks. We prayed. She sent me this message: "Healed!" Two minutes to listen and to pray. Standing next to the TV stand... **No big interruption of the environment! Two people connecting over a need!**

Standing in the office when one of our cooks said she was struggling with dizziness, slurred speech. Three of us gathered around her... Simple prayer... Saw her about an hour later. Clear as a bell. Feeling strong! **No rules can stop a person praying by permission of someone with a need... And nothing can stop faith employed...**

Gal came up after service... She had come up for prayer about a month ago... Diagnosis: toxic... from offenses, disappointments, emotional pains! Prayed. Gave her a prescription. She came back – LOOKING LIKE A NEW PERSON! Her story: I didn't have to do anything, "it just lifted! It's all gone!"

No one can keep you from rending the darkness at work or school or the marketplace because... No one can stop God working thru a person whose mind is made up to take His objectives by force!

There is rightful resistance to abuse and abusers of faith... immaturity mostly... but the power of God is all the permission you'll ever need!

Open the Way... Look for ways to demonstrate the power of the gospel in your life! Acts of kindness and love... Prayers for healing, comfort... Stories of your adventures... STABILITY/PEACE IN YOUR TRIALS! Any and all of those are *lights* that get the attention of others!

Be alert for opportunities to serve their needs! Use your practical and intellectual skills to know when something is happening to them... **Matt 10.16** Stress, tears, changes in mood, distractions, overreactions, etc. "Is there anything I can pray about for you?" They may say "no" today, but the time will come when they will try you out!

Once the need is met, point the way to Jesus! Blind, deaf, lame, leper, lost and possessed all followed Him once they could see Him as Savior! "Why do you look at us as though by our own power or holiness we did this? This is God, glorifying Jesus!" **Acts 3.12,13** Tell them the story of salvation! Pray with them for salvation!

Give them a Bible! It contains everything that pertains to life! **2Pet 1.3,4** It is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness! **2Tim3.16** It's the discerners of their thoughts and intents of heart! **Heb 4.12** We are your source! You get them saved, we will supply you with discipleship resources!

Invite them to Church, Bible Study, a special events! We are a source of continuing help and education! Alpha, Truth Project, Bait of Satan, Divorce Care, Grief Share, Growing Kids God's Way, F.P.U.... Offer to come with them! Practical/spiritual kids programs to help bring them up... CD's, DVD's, Building Blocks, Light in the Darkness, End Times...

To Push Back the Darkness...

Establish yourself! Let them see your good works which glorify God!

Be a "watchman!" "Oversee" the place where you work/study/play

Do the work of the evangelist!

Be an encourager of their faith!

Get them integrated in the Body of Christ!

In doing that you will bear much fruit... and glorify God!

You may not be able to preach a sermon anywhere you want, but you can be a "living epistle" wherever you are!