

How to Talk to Others About Jesus Christ **Acts 9:19-29**

Introduction:

1. As we learned last week, when we trust Christ to be our Savior, Christ's Spirit comes to live within us, and our life changes. When salvation occurs, there is a natural, internal desire to want to share our faith with others.
2. We want our friends and loved ones to also know that forgiveness, that joy, and that peace with God that comes through Christ. We want them to one day be in heaven with us for eternity.
3. But there is one major roadblock that keeps us from telling others about Jesus Christ – FEAR! Our faith says, "GO," but our fear says, "NO!"
 - We are afraid that if we speak to others about our faith in Christ they will ridicule us, or get angry with us, or look down upon us as some sort of religious fanatic. We are fearful that we may offend them and that they will ostracize us.
4. So there is an internal struggle. One part of us wants so much to tell others about Jesus, and the other part of us wants to keep our mouths shut and keep it to ourselves.
5. How do we overcome our fears and actually open our mouths to talk to other people about Jesus Christ? This morning we will answer that question by looking at the apostle Paul. After Paul's conversion to Christ, he immediately began to speak for Christ and become a powerful witness for Him.
6. How did he do it? After all, Paul was a new believer. He had just trusted Christ. There are three action steps that we can take in order to effectively talk to others about Christ.

First, you must prepare yourself to speak for Christ.

1. If you had to give a speech in school, or college, or at work, do you think you would prepare yourself and know your material? If you were responsible to do a training session for people at your workplace, would you prepare? Of course you would.
2. It is no different in our Christian lives. If we don't prepare ourselves to speak for Christ, we will never do it – it is that simple. There may be a desire, but it's not happening.
3. Paul didn't get saved and immediately begin witnessing to others about Christ. Paul received training and instruction. vs. 19
 - Paul spent many days with the other disciples in Damascus. Many churches (like ours) have what they call a discipleship program. This is where one disciple takes another person who has been saved and gives him spiritual training and instruction.
 - We learn in Galatians 1:17 that God sent Paul into Arabia. Luke never records this in Acts, so we do not know how long Paul was there (possibly the greater part of three years), or any details about what happened. Most

likely, God took Paul away into a place of solitude to begin to reveal to him the incredible truths of the mystery for this dispensation of grace.

- The disciples were taught by Christ for three years on earth. Paul would be taught for three years by Christ from His glorified position in heaven.
4. After this training, what did Paul do? He began to speak out for Christ. vs. 20, 22
 5. Many people do not witness for Christ simply because they don't know what to say. They do not know how to take their Bibles and show a person how to be saved. Until this knowledge is gained, a person will be reluctant to witness to others.
 6. In other words, if we are going to speak out for Christ, we have to be prepared and ready (Colossians 4:6, 1 Peter 3:15). We can help you here at CrossRoads.

Second, you must create and seize opportunities to speak for Christ.

1. Paul did not wait for opportunity to come knocking at his door. He went looking for opportunities to witness at Damascus (vs. 20) and at Jerusalem. vs. 28-29
2. Wouldn't it be wonderful if, about once per week, a knock came at your door and the person said, "I heard through the grapevine that you are a Christian, and I was wondering - can you show me how to be saved?" Do you know I have never had this happen, even once?
3. Somebody **may** approach you and **may** inquire about your faith in Christ. But most of the time **you** must approach people with the gospel of Christ and create opportunities to talk about Christ.
4. You can't expect a lost person to freely talk about Jesus Christ and spiritual topics. It is, many times, the furthest thing from their minds. You must find ways to turn the conversation toward Christ. You bring it up and open the discussion.
5. Many times, opportunities fall right into our laps, and we fail to seize these opportunities (car breaks down, we're in the hospital, at work, with the neighbor).
6. The apostle Paul had an eagerness to take every opportunity to share Christ with others (Romans 1:15-16), and we must possess this same attitude.

Third, you must pray to God for boldness to speak for Christ.

1. As soon as Paul trusted Christ, he learned to become a man of prayer. Acts 9:11, 22:17. Prayer is simply talking to the Lord. Paul's prayer enabled him to possess boldness in his witness for Christ. vs. 27-29
2. Boldness does not come naturally to most people. The Holy Spirit supernaturally imparts unto us boldness in our witness, and He does this in answer to prayer. Ephesians 6:18-20
3. Obviously, Paul was not naturally a bold person for Christ. He knew he needed people's prayers if he was to overcome his fears and speak boldly for Christ.
4. If you desire to be a better and more effective witness for Christ, make this a matter of prayer and pray specifically for God's boldness (this doesn't mean rudeness and harshness).

In Conclusion:

1. I think there is one other thing that we learn from Paul concerning speaking to others about Christ. You can expect various reactions from people!
 - Some were amazed. vs. 21
 - Some were confused. vs. 22
 - What you say from the Bible may go against what religion has taught them.
 - Some were angry. vs. 23, 29
 - Some of the Jews wanted to kill Paul, and if his fellow disciples wouldn't have helped them, they may have succeeded. vs. 24-25
 - People may respond to you in a negative way, but don't let it shock you or upset you. John 15:18-20
 - Paul saw many people turn to Christ and have their lives changed like his. Some people may get angry, but after they have had time to think about your words, they may soften their heart and be more willing to listen the next time.
2. God can use you to influence and impact others for Christ. Remember, you are not responsible for making people drink God's living water. Your job is to simply lead them to the well (Jesus)!