

What Does It Take To Lead Others To Jesus?

Acts 17:1-10

Introduction:

1. One of the greatest thrills in the Christian life is to have a part in bringing another person to Jesus Christ. To see a person's eternal destiny completely changed and to know you had a part in it is beyond words.
2. When Paul traveled to the capital city of Thessalonica he was able to have a part in bringing many of the people in this city to Christ.
 - Thessalonica was 100 miles west and south of Philippi, the capital city of Macedonia.
3. Paul entered into the Jewish synagogue and began to share Christ with them, and many of the people believed and trusted Christ. vs. 2-4
4. This would be the foundation of a great local church to which Paul would later write the books of 1 & 2 Thessalonians.
5. According to 1 Thessalonians 1:5, the Thessalonians heard the gospel of Christ from Paul, but the life that Paul and his companions lived had a profound impact on their lives.
6. Did you know that God could use you to bring other people to Jesus Christ? If you are saved, you have God's Spirit inside of you, and as you yield to Christ in you, Christ can live through you and use you to impact other lives for His glory.
7. What exactly does it take to lead others to Jesus Christ?

First, it takes a person who is bold. vs. 3

1. Paul found the synagogue, used his past credentials in Judaism, and began to speak (vs. 2). Paul didn't beat around the bush. Jesus is Christ! vs. 3
2. Paul knew who Jesus was and wasn't afraid to proclaim it. 1 Thessalonians 2:2
 - The word "*bold*" means "to be frank in utterance; confident in spirit."
 - Paul was no wimp for Christ. He was bold for Christ!
3. In 1 Thessalonians 2 we learn a few facts about their boldness:
 - They were honest and forthright with their message. vs. 3
 - Their desire was to please God, not people. vs. 4
 - Their boldness came from the Holy Spirit. vs. 5
4. You may be thinking, "I could never be bold for Christ that way. I am too shy and backward." This is why God gave you the Spirit of Christ. The Holy Spirit empowers you to do things you normally could or would never do in your own flesh. Acts 4:31

Second, it takes a person who is prepared. vs. 2

1. It states that Paul "*reasoned with them out of the Scriptures.*" vs. 2
 - "*Reasoned*" simply means that Paul conversed with them. He had dialogue with them.

- Paul would declare a truth, and then the people in the synagogue would ask questions. Paul would then support the truth from the Scriptures. It required that Paul be familiar with his Bible.
2. What was the center of Paul's message? It was none other than Jesus Christ. vs.3
 - Paul proved that Christ had to suffer and die. He then taught them of Christ's resurrection. He proved that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah.
 - It says that Paul was "*opening*" (explaining; letting in the light) and "*alleging*" (to bring proof) these things. Paul brought forth proof from the Scripture to support his teaching.
 3. Could you prove to someone from the Scriptures what you believe about Jesus Christ? Are you prepared? It is essential because you will not be bold if you are not prepared.

Third, it takes a person who is caring. vs. 4

1. After these people believed, Paul began to spend time with these new converts.
2. It says they "*consorted*" (associated; fellowshiped) with Paul and Silas. It was apparent that Paul really cared about these people and their eternal souls.
1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 11
 - Paul said, "*Ye were dear unto us.*" This brings balance to our point about boldness.
 - If we are brash and brazen with people and they do not sense that we really care, we will not lead others to Jesus. In fact, it can serve to harden them towards the gospel.
3. Several times the Bible refers to Jesus having compassion on the multitude.
cf. Jude 22-23

Fourth, it takes a person who is sacrificial. 1 Thessalonians 2:9

1. Paul worked a job to provide his living expenses while he witnessed to people and planted this church. He did not want to be a financial strain on the people.
 - Paul was willing to sacrifice personally in order to minister to these people.
2. Let's apply this to our lives. What can we do to sacrifice some of our time or resources in order to be a testimony to someone else? What are some tangible things you could do for those at work, or in your neighborhood, or some other person you know without Christ?
3. When people see you willing to sacrifice for them, it endears you to their hearts and makes them much more open to the message of the gospel.

Fifth, it takes someone who is real. 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 2:10

1. The Thessalonians were watching Paul's life to see if his walk matched his talk.
 - They found no discrepancies between the two. 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 2:10

2. People carefully observe your life to see if you truly practice what you tell others. A person who lives a hypocritical life will never impact others and reach people for Christ.

Sixth, it takes a person who is not easily deterred by criticism. vs. 5-10

1. You will never be an effective witness for Christ if you live in fear that someone might criticize you or get upset with you. In other words, it helps to have thick skin.
2. Paul mentioned how he was shamefully entreated at Philippi, yet spoke the gospel boldly in Thessalonica. 1 Thessalonians 2:2
3. In Thessalonica the criticism started up again (vs. 5). It ended up that some of the believers were arrested, and Paul and Silas had to sneak out of town at night. vs. 6-10
4. But Paul never allowed criticism to deter him from speaking the message of Christ. In fact, when Paul arrived in Berea, he got right back up in the saddle and began to testify for Christ again. vs. 10
5. Yes, they succeeded in running Paul out of town. But the impact had already been made. Paul would leave town, but his converts and this newly formed church stayed!