

1 (0911) If... Then...

If... Then...

Series: Following Jesus: Sharing Hope With Others

Colossians 4:5-6 NLT (0911)

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March 29, 2009

Colossians 4:5-6 NLT ⁵*Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity.* ⁶*Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.*

I. Sharing hope with others ultimately hinges on two key questions

a. Do we really believe that people matter?

John 3:16-17 NIV ¹⁶*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.* ¹⁷*For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*

b. Do we really believe the message of the gospel?

Romans 1:16-17 NIV ¹⁶*I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.* ¹⁷*For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”*

II. Once these two questions are settled in our hearts and minds, we can more adequately deal with other questions

a. We come to understand the ultimate answer to the question, “What is my life really about?”

Acts 20:24 NLT ²⁴*But my life is worth nothing unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.*

Romans 15:18-19 NLT *...I have brought the Gentiles to God by my message and by the way I lived before them.* ¹⁹*I have won them over by the miracles done through me as signs from God—all by the power of God’s Spirit. In this way, I have fully presented the Good News of Christ...*

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b. We recognize there is an appropriate answer to the question, “How can you Christians be so “narrow-minded”?”

John 14:6 NLT ⁶*Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.*

c. We realize that there is a genuine, honest response to the question, “Do you really believe that other world religions are leading people astray?”

Matthew 23:13,15 NLT ¹³*What sorrow awaits you teachers of the religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven in people’s faces. You won’t go in yourselves, and you don’t let others enter either. ¹⁵...For you cross land and sea to make one convert, and then you turn that person into twice the child of hell you yourselves are!*

d. We gain insight into how to respond to the question, “Why should I listen to what you have to say?”

1 Corinthians 9:22-23 TM *Even though I am free of the demands and expectations of everyone, I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn’t take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. I’ve become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life. I did all this because of the Message. I didn’t just want to talk about it; I wanted to be in on it!*

e. We begin to understand how we are to respond to the internal question that sometimes plagues us, “Why even try—is anybody listening?”

Isaiah 55:11 NLT *I send [my word] out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.*