

A Man Called David

© 2021 Wayne J Vasilenko / Selah Life Ministries

www.selahlife.net

I suppose many of my readers assume that I am about to embark on a study of the famous King David of the Bible. However, I am about to tell you of another man called David. He wasn't famous at all, at least not at the time I knew him. Most people knew him simply as Dave. Dave had his own business detailing cars for many of the new and used car dealers in the area with a reputation for superior quality workmanship getting cars ready for delivery at the various dealerships, as he was meticulous. Another thing he was known for was his personality; he was just a real nice person, always friendly - always smiling. I met Dave about a year or two before I received the Lord Jesus as my Savior, so he experienced both the "Old Me" and the "New Me" after I came around to the Lord. After I was saved and started to get the confidence to do some witnessing, Dave was one of the first people I shared the Lord with. I began to make a point of sharing something about the bible with him every chance I could, be it giving him a Bible Tract, (a small booklet with a scripture based story) or just simply trying to steer the conversation to the bible. Although he was always cordial, I could sense that he really didn't want to discuss the Bible. He responded occasionally, but never sounding sincerely interested. As time went on Dave moved his business about a mile or so down the road, so I no longer had opportunities to talk with him. I felt bad that he rarely gave me any hint that he was hearing or understanding what I was trying to share with him and I often wondered what became of him.

Over the years, I have interfaced with many people who have engaged in similar witnessing scenarios and as it went with Dave and me. Many lost contact with the people with whom they shared the gospel, never knowing what affect their witness may have had. Many evangelical churches hold classes on how to be a witness, some using books which are well written and informative, others advocating extreme tactics, boarding on manipulation! However, one aspect of witnessing often neglected is the harvest. Most neglect to tell you that sometimes you do not get to see the harvest. Many teach to "lead people to the Lord," therefore when they engage in witnessing many are taught to see it through to the end, to keep at it until you get them to recite a prayer of acceptance of some sort. Some organizations and churches even keep score as to who among them is the most effective witness as if there is a "Heavenly Quota" that must be met! How do you define an effective witness? Jesus commissioned all who believe in Him to proclaim the gospel.

Matthew 28:19-20 (New King James Version)

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even to the end of the age.*" Amen.

However, it's not about numbers, it's really about putting the Word of God in front of people so that they can make an informed decision of their own, in their own time, concerning their relationship with the Lord Jesus. Yes, we are living in a time in which there is a growing sense of urgency, but remember this promise in the Bible, "Those who seek Him, will find Him." So, it is important to be sensitive of the reactions of those you witness to so as not to turn them away with over-zealousness.

Some might argue that this commission was given only to the disciples, but further study reveals that this applies to not only them, but to *All* those who would accept Jesus in future... "Even to the end of the age."

A Man Called David

© 2021 Wayne J Vasilenko / Selah Life Ministries

www.selahlife.net

The “teaching,” as mentioned in verse 20 in the above passage, would obviously involve some knowledge on the part of the teacher. Therefore, in this case you would have to concede that there should be some preparation on your part before you go out trying to make disciples. It would also indicate that some would be better at it than others might be, as some are “Called” to be evangelists. However, even less learned disciples can indeed be an effective witness by simply, “Walking the walk,” as illustrated by the following:

Matthew 5:16 (King James Version)

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

This passage is implying that our actions can be a much more powerful witness than one’s knowledge, and it usually is. When you make it known you have accepted the Lord Jesus as Savior trust me - people will be watching your every move, action, and reaction! Once again, how you live out Christianity in front of your peers can be, *and often is* the most powerful witness for Jesus you can give to anyone. We all like to have some feedback when we say something to people, especially when we talk to them about something as exciting as eternal life, so how do we gage how we are doing when it comes to witnessing to people? Sometimes you will get enthusiastic response, sometimes a hostile response. With some, like my friend Dave, you'll get little or no response, you may get the feeling that they really just want you to go away. While this can be very discouraging, don't take this personal... Jesus gives us a detailed explanation as to what is going on. Jesus told His followers the Parable of the Sower, and then He even goes on to explain it in detail, just to make sure everyone understands.

Matthew 13:1-9 (New King James Version)

¹ On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. ² And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. ³ Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶ But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸ But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Matthew 13:18-30 (New King James Version)

¹⁸ "Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²² Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³ But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

A Man Called David

© 2021 Wayne J Vasilenko / Selah Life Ministries

www.selahlife.net

Every time we share the gospel we are like the sower in this parable. The seed is the word of God, the "Good News." God provides the seeds we sow through His Holy Spirit working in us and through us. It could be what we say, or it could be our actions in a given situation that plant a seed in someone's heart.

2 Corinthians 9:10 (Amplified Bible)

And [God] Who provides seed for the sower and bread for eating will also provide and multiply your [resources for] sowing and increase the fruits of your righteousness [which manifests itself in active goodness, kindness, and charity].

I mentioned earlier that some keep score as they witness, a practice that can lead to pride, and arrogance. This is ultimately counter-productive, as we are not only to sow seed, but also, to act in a way that is pleasing to God. We may see results, and we may not.

Galatians 6:3-10 (New International Version)

³ If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴ Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, ⁵ for each one should carry his own load. ⁶ Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. ⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

This can also apply to witnessing... Keep sowing seeds and there will one day be a harvest.

So What Happened to Dave?

As I mentioned before, after Dave moved his business down the road I rarely saw him and I never again had the opportunity to share the gospel with him. I thought of him from time to time but as I never had the opportunity to engage in conversation with him again. I chalked it off to a failure on my part as far as being an effective witness. Nevertheless, It was about five years after I last spoke to Dave; I was at work when a smiling man walked in saying "Hi, Remember Me... you used to talk to me about the bible and Jesus?" It was Dave! He continued on, sharing something I will never forget. He said, "I just wanted to stop by to tell you that two weeks ago I accepted Jesus as my Savior and you (meaning me) had a lot to do with it!" That was not all... he went on to say that the following week, after he accepted the Lord, his wife accepted the Lord also! I still get tears in my eyes and a lump in my throat every time I think of that day. Some of the seeds I planted in Dave eventually found fertile soil and took root. I hadn't taken part in the harvest, but ultimately I apparently had a lot to do with it! The Moral of the story is not to give up witnessing because you don't see immediate results, keep sowing seeds. It might be someone else's task to water them and yet another's to fertilize them. You may not see the harvest but that doesn't mean you didn't have a part in the process that led to the harvest. When you get to Heaven, you may be pleasantly surprised when people you may have given up on, come up to you and say, "thank you" for your part in leading them to where you will be together with them for eternity.