

Can You Bake A Cherry Pie?

intro: are you busy enough? Do you sit around at night wondering how your life got so leisurely? Rumor has it that the one who ends up with the most toys wins. Pile up enough things, deep six all competition, network the movers and shakers... and power, position and status are yours to enjoy. Unfortunately, that's just a rumor.

- more often, upward mobility is a downer. No amount of Tums can relieve eternal heartaches. *People need the Lord!*
- in fact, some of *your* people need the Lord – those who pump your gas, cut your hair, live next door, work at the next desk. God is asking you to “reach out and touch someone.”
- oh no! Not a sermon on evangelism? I've tried all the popular methods and fallen flat on my face. I'm just not gifted in evangelism.
- Good news: we won't be singing “same song, second verse” approaches to evangelism.

I. The Nature of the Call

A. God is aware of your gifts.. and what gifts you lack. He wants to use your gifts to reach out and bring in the people you know.

B. God is not asking you to tell your people what a friend they have in Jesus. He wants you to show them what a friend they have in you. Love them, He tells us. Love them until they ask us why. (the testifier in the turbulent airplane)

1. the Asian Indian professor who has converted many to Christ. He invites between thirty and fifty students each Sunday. It is impossible to speak of Jesus, so he just loves them until they ask him ‘why.’
2. We are never, he reminds us, told to evangelize our neighbors. We are told to love them. “Through loving them, they meet Jesus Christ, even though they don't know whom they've met. Once they've sensed the reality of his love through me, they're open to discuss the reason for the love and acceptance they've experienced.”

C. Can a well cooked meal sprinkled with lots of love start a people flow towards Christ? Can you bake a cherry pie?

D. Have you ever examined how God draws people to Himself? What tools does He use? If we are trying to reach everyone in our block or our office suite, what plan could we follow, what tools would we use?

1. the Bible? Sure, it's a great tool, but it's not the only tool we have. You wouldn't try to build a house with only a hammer... or only the blueprints.
2. we can reach people through a meal, a listening ear, a serving heart.
3. are you scared? Most of us are! Research indicates that only about 10% of believers are gifted to share Christ using the methods presented in about 100% of evangelism classes. It is time to unleash the other 90%.

II. The Seventy

- A. let's call them Amos and Zechariah; two ordinary, unremarkable, first century followers of Jesus. They have been told that they are being sent into the world to bring it to Christ.
 1. they are so scared they can't even spit. They have the pre-trip jitters. They have no quarrel with Jesus' desire to save the world through the Big Twelve, but those guys are super stars. They are heavy weights with a big S or C on their chests.
 2. Amos and Zechariah are one syllable, one cylinder type of guys. Bench warmers, really. They would be happy to help Jesus by sweeping the synagogue, cutting coupons, pushing the grocery carts and passing out bulletins. But that wasn't what the Lord had in mind.
 3. But what could they do? Burn their draft cards and run? (Jonah's sea cruise) So they stand, knees knocking under shaking togas. They agreed with the mission statement: those without Jesus Christ were going to hell. Period. The mystery was in how he could use amateurs and underdogs like them. Wonder what was going through their minds... and if it might sound familiar? (excuse sheet) They had no idea that Almighty God would use the Holy Spirit to write down their exploits.
 4. How did they do? Read Luke 10:17. You can do it, too, right where you are.

III. Pack Light

- A. Jesus told the 70 not to overpack. "Do not take a purse or bag or sandals." Tough? Yes, but he had been tougher on the 12 in chapter 9:3. "Take nothing for the journey, no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic."

1. Something seems odd here. In sending out the 12 and then sending out the 70, there are very few instructions given them. You can read all of them in about seventy seconds if you are an average reader. However, in these two short sections, the rules on packing are mentioned twice. Why?
 2. Note that they are not told what to take but what NOT to take.
- B.** [Here Patrick will call for the slides in this order: Lake Charles downtown, Holly Beach before, Holly Beach after. Wait until he tells you to change the slide]
- C.** Having everything taken away from you changes your priorities very quickly. Those who lost everything often speak of what they found they could live without. It seems that our stuff, our precious, valued, dearly loved stuff, can cripple us without our even knowing it.
- D.** We would evangelize a lot more if we had a lot fewer security blankets. (Nagaland evangelism – 60% Baptist) The 70 had to leave behind everything at home that they would normally carry and rely on. They had to learn to rely on Jesus and nothing more.
1. Kami and rose bushes.
 2. If you have money, food, and clothes you don't have to rely on the Lord... so leave them behind. We are not to lord it over others – which is easy to do when you have lots of stuff to fall back on. We are to approach others with humility and grace.
 3. We are clay pots with a great treasure inside. Our job isn't to decorate the pots, but to call attention to the treasure.
- E.** We were not sent out as wolf-catchers or wolf-tamers, but as sheep. God didn't send us out with sheets of instructions and methods. He sent us with a story.
- F.** If our goal is to make a lot of people get baptized, then methods are everything. If our goal is to help people become disciples of Christ, then methods are nothing and Christ is everything. God does not call us to method but to sacrifice; to a lifestyle of openness and personal involvement in the Lord's work around the people in our circle.
- G.** God will supply our wages later.
- H.** Pack light. What is holding you back? If you have nothing... remember that Jesus had just proven he could feed 5000 with what was in your sack.