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Peacemakers! God's Perfect Example

550-A

Series: The Beatitudes

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Note: Russell wrote each of these lessons in a manner that would enable him to clearly communicate them to his weekly class. The grammar or punctuation you encounter may not be technically perfect, but you will certainly “hear” his unique gift for making the message applicable to the common man in everyday situations.

It’s been said of him that he was really a writer who read his stuff. And that’s a very accurate statement!

May you be richly blessed as you “hear” as you read.

Peacemakers!

God's Perfect Example

What is an ambassador? We saw in the last lesson the duties of an ambassador and how he is strategically placed where there is a need for peace. Our goal was that we might recall the four-fold calling of God in our lives and re-examine the world in that light.

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
(Acts 1:8 NKJV)

The world we examined includes our Jerusalem. Our Jerusalem is our family, those to whom we are sent by way of close relationship. They are our first priority. Our Judea can be our job, our school, or wherever God chooses to place us. Our Samaria is those to whom we are sent to by our calling, that is our individual ministries. The last is the outermost parts of the world, those to whom the message goes as the end result of our ministry or the end result of our involvement. In the last lesson, we reconsidered our responsibilities, at least, in terms of being faithful to our witness where we are placed.

In this lesson, I want to look at the more practical side of ambassadorship. If, indeed, we are the sent ones and we all are sent in four phases as witnesses, how do we become the witnesses we were meant to be? Never have I wrestled so with how to present this lesson. There are several reasons.

1- I am sharing from a point of personal weakness. I think there are those people who possess a sort of natural boldness that allows them to look a person in the eye with a “John the Baptist look of fire” and say, “Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” They seem to have long, bony fingers that point right to a man’s heart and say, “Sin!”

My “John the Baptist” boldness through the years has

sounded much more like Minnie Mouse apologizing for being alive. My short, bony finger shakes so much in such an encounter that no one knows whether it is pointing or not. I have, through the years, attended seminars, do-it-yourself clinics, gone door to door, visited others by cards, calls and by sheer acts of the flesh. I have been trained and have taught training seminars. I have witnessed at movies, fairs and evangelistic crusades. It has never been easy for me. Regarding witnessing, my day-to-day walk can best be characterized as a barnyard bust. In other words, I am a big chicken. But they say that honesty is the best policy, and God's strength is made perfect in weakness. So, therefore, I press on.

2- This lesson is hard for me to teach because I know that God is so intensely personal. I have always had a little bit of a problem with what I call "planned evangelism" or "rubber stamp evangelism". I think that we can take the view, for the most part, that everyone's witness is, at least to a degree, developed in the framework of their life's message. Everybody's life message is different. The basic message is the same. Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture. He was buried according to the Scripture. He rose again the third day according to the Scripture. As many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become the sons of God. That is the message. It never changes.

But, the people to whom we take the message and the manner in which we present the message is not always the same. God has different parts of the body designed to reach different parts of the world. I think that you can see from your life that the basic message is the same, but your religious heritage is different from mine, much different than most of you. How you came to Christ is much different, possibly, than how I did. If you came to Christ through personal evangelism, you probably have a greater bent or calling or freedom in the area of personal evangelism. If you were to analyze the kind of evangelism that means the most to you, you could go back and trace it, in part at least, to how God first worked in your life.

There are those who are ministered to through the church. There are those who are ministered to through outside groups,

interdenominational groups. There are those with different spiritual gifts and personalities. All of these factors go into the making of a unique message. Through that message, your ministry blossoms forth. It involves your witness, your means of discipleship, the kind of service you do and the way you are involved in the body of Christ.

But, we all have the same responsibility. We all have the same calling. It is the way we express that calling that will be different depending on our life's message. God is so intensely personal and our message is so intensely personal that I threw out the idea of teaching a step-by-step process that everybody can use. God uses His Word in whatever way we use it.

3- This lesson posed a problem for me because there is so much good material available already prepared by those whose lives and ministries reflect success in this area. Campus Crusade for Christ, the Navigators, Intervarsity, the Billy Graham Association and others are organizations that have some of these prepared plans. Through them you can get the Four Spiritual Laws, the Four Steps to Peace with God and the Bridge Illustration to name a few. You can get the Deeper Works of Torrey, by G. Campbell Morgan. You can find tracts, books, booklets, seminars and charts for your use. Yet, we all know that these techniques are a means to an end and not the end in themselves.

What God convicted me to do for this lesson was to look at the one perfect witness and learn from Him. For this lesson, I think we will for the most part, just watch Jesus. We are going to watch Him as He approached and shared Himself with three unlikely prospects. We are going to observe His perfect witness.

1- We will look at His perception. What went on in the eyes of God as He saw the throngs and then singled out the few?

2- We will look at His prospects. We will look at the unlikely crew of three that God decided to bring across His path in these three chapters of Scripture that we will look at. These people are not in reality unlike those He brings across our paths.

3- We will look at His presentation. We will discuss the questions He asks, the illustrations He used and the invitation He gave to find peace with God.

4- We will look at His testimony, His trust and His team.

Now I want to begin by reading three passages of Scripture back to back. Our goal is not so much to analyze these three encounters in depth, but to look down upon the three of them as an overlay of the day-to-day witness of Jesus Christ. We will look for the common threads and their dynamic distinctives. We are looking for patterns. We want to be effective fishermen, therefore, we will look at the greatest fisher of men who ever lived. We will read portions of John 3, 4 and 5, beginning with the first verse of each chapter.

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

Peacemakers! God's Perfect Example

Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?"

Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.

If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

(John 3:1-18 NKJV)

Let's now turn to John 4,

Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John

(though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples),

He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.

But He needed to go through Samaria.

So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

Peacemakers! God's Perfect Example

For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?"

Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,

but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know; we know what we

Peacemakers! God's Perfect Example

worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.”

Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.”

(John 4:1-26 NKJV)

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I ever did.”

(John 4:39 NKJV)

Let's now turn to John 5.

After this there was a feast of the Jews and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches.

In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water.

For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.

Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years.

When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to be made well?”

The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”

Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.”

Peacemakers! God's Perfect Example

And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.

(John 5:1-9 NKJV)

HIS PERCEPTION

I know that this is a long series of passages, but the three together merge into the picture we want to look at. Let's examine Jesus in the light of these three encounters. First we will look at His perception. We learn in Luke 19:10 Jesus' purpose for coming to this world:

for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.
(Luke 19:10 NKJV)

In other words, His attitude is one of a seeker. He went looking for people where they were. His goal was to save. His objective was that all men were in need of salvation, and He had come to seek and save those who knew they had a need. This was not one of His goals, this is why He came. This was His life. Jesus was, in essence, able to look into a crowd like this one and see the one whose heart was ready. He was able to simply walk the streets of life and see the people with needs. Everywhere He went He met their needs. He knew when to ask and when to demand. He knew when to rebuke and when to encourage.

Let's take the John 5 passage. Jesus was walking along in His normal course of travel when He came to Jerusalem to the feast. Jesus immediately went where the people were. You and I would have checked in at the Holiday Inn. Then, Jesus instinctively went where the needy people were. We would have gone to the coffee shop for fellowship. In verse 3, He went to the place where the sick people were lying. Jesus found the neediest one in the multitude. He found the hopeless one. Can you imagine this man? This man had been sick thirty-eight years. He said, "All of this time, I have looked at this pool and wanted to be healed. Every time there was a chance, I would struggle and claw and crawl to that pool, but somebody would get there first. It was every man for himself, and I never made it." Thirty-eight years! Jesus, knowing that this man needed no sermon on his condition, simply asked him the question, "Sir, would you like to get well?" God sends some

Peacemakers! God's Perfect Example

men and women along our path who need only to be asked that question, "Wouldst thou be made whole?"

To the Pharisee and the Samaritan woman, the process was much more involved. They had to be shown their sin. They had to be shown that they were separated from their religiosity. They had to have their real need defined. Not so with the invalid. He was ready and so was Jesus. The man said, "Yes, Lord, but nobody will help me." Oh the hearts that cry out that way. Jesus answered, "I just did. It is an accomplished fact. Now by faith, get up and walk." The man did. What discernment. What perception. Wouldn't you like to see the world through eyes like that? How do you get the eyes of Jesus? How do we get that kind of wisdom?

I think that the Scripture says that we have the mind of Christ. I think that we exercise His discernment and appropriate it in these five ways:

1- By investing your life in the Word of God. Hebrews 4:12 says that the Word that God gives to us is alive. It has the capacity to discern the thoughts and the intents of a man's heart. That is the Word. That is what we have for our use. Psalm 119:98 says that this book is able to make you wiser than the ancients, wiser than your peers and wiser than all of your teachers. How many of you know an untrained man with a seemingly unexplainable amount of discernment? I will tell you something, he is a man of The Book. When you go back through history, you will find that the men and women who have changed the course of history for the good, who have the wisdom to reach out and know the heart of man were men and women of The Book.

2- By spending time alone with the Father. In John 2:24,25 just prior to this experience, it says

But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men,

and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. (John 2:24,25 NKJV)

Acts 4:13 says that people perceived that these were ignorant and unlearned men so they took note that they had

Peacemakers! God's Perfect Example

been with Jesus. That is where their wisdom came from. That is where their insight came from. That is where their discernment came from. They were men who spent time alone with the Father. That is what Jesus did.

3- By asking God to give you discernment. James 1:5-8 gives you the two-step process. It says that if any of you lack wisdom or discernment you are to ask God for it. Ask Him, believe Him, and you've got it. Solomon had a choice. He could have whatever he wanted most from God. He asked for wisdom. Have you ever thought how you would answer that question? What do you want most from God?

4- By exercising the wisdom that He gives for His glory. Read Matthew 25:21 in that light some time. This is the parable of stewardship. It teaches that if you faithfully use what you have been given in such a way that it glorifies God, He will dump more and more and more upon you.

5- By being obedient to known instruction. John 14:21 says,

He that has My commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves Me. He that loves Me will be loved by My Father and I will love him and I will make Myself known to him. (John 14:21 NKJV)

Jesus tells us that He will give us His mind.

Sin fogs the windshield of life. Obedience is God's windshield wiper. If you go back to look at the life of Jesus, these five qualities were etched in His character. So we have that possibility. We can become perceptive. We can have the mind of Christ so that you and I, as we encounter people on a daily basis, can have that sensitivity of spirit to know the need of their heart. We can know when they are open. We can know when they are available. We can know what their needs are and how to properly reach out and minister to those needs. It is a gift from God, but it is available to those who spend time in the Word, spend time at the feet of the Father and are willing to be obedient to what they know to be true.

HIS PROSPECT

Let's look secondly at His prospect list. Years ago, I was a member of a church that had a weekly meeting to go out and call on prospects. There was a big table in the hallway with many cards on it. You would shuffle through the cards and pick out the ones that indicated common interests. You would take these cards and go visit that person. I usually lost the cards before I got to their houses. Let's look at the three prospect cards that the Father handed the Son that day. I don't know that we would consider these as likely candidates if we were choosing.

The first one was Nicodemus. Occupation—Pharisee. Information—religious but lost and leading others who are also lost. Our view of old Nick probably would have been that he was bound to be O.K. He was clean-cut and moral. He didn't drink, smoke or chew and didn't go with those who do. We would probably be sidetracked from the real issue and never really take a chance at offending old Nick.

The second prospect card was for a Samaritan Woman with no name. Occupation—housewife. Information—immoral and unacceptable for church membership. Our view would have probably been not to take that card for fear of being seen talking to her. Besides that, sin was probably so ingrained in her life that she would never be open to the gospel. Next card.

The third prospect card was for Invalid at the pool. Occupation—on welfare. Information—helpless and hopeless for 38 years. Our view would probably be that this guy had nothing to offer God. He has been on welfare for 38 years. He could have done something with his life if he had a little drive. We would probably scratch him as well. Isn't this pretty much how we go about looking at people? Oh that we could see men and women through the eyes of Jesus. Have you ever wondered how Jesus looks at men?

First of all, Jesus saw all people as prospects for the Kingdom. Do you? Take the paperboy, for instance. How many of you have a paperboy who comes to your house? I don't know about you, but our paperboy only comes to our house to collect for the paper on three occasions: when I am taking

a nap, when I am watching the Super Bowl or when I am eating supper. I don't know about you, but I go to the door with my usual, joyful bounce and say, "What do you want!" I then usually yell out, "Honey, the paper boy is here!" I then go back to the Super Bowl or fall back in bed for my nap and hope my wife has enough money in her purse to pay off the paper boy. I'm sure he loves to be called, "paper boy". How would you like to appear at somebody's house and simply be referred to as "paper boy"?

I don't know about you, but I have a feeling that Jesus would see the paperboy as a prospect for the Kingdom of God. I have a feeling that the Master would stop what He was doing, lean down to an eye to eye level with him and with a big smile on His face, put a hand on his shoulder and ask him how he was doing. He would offer him a soft drink or at least a cold glass of water. He would ask him how the paper route was going. He would ask him if he had ever given any thought to spiritual things.

I know that you and I tend to look at people in terms of whether or not they are infringing on our rights or privacy and what they can do for us. We go to the grocery store and see a check person at the register. What do you think of when you see the checker? Do watch them like a hawk? Is she going to crush the tomatoes? Is he going to overcharge you? Why is she moving so slowly? Have you ever wondered how Jesus would feel toward them? I think He would walk through the check out line and think that the checker was a prospect for the Kingdom. With a smile on His face and warmth in His spirit, He wouldn't worry about His groceries. He would think that His groceries were a means to an end to let him or her know that Jesus Christ was alive.

How about the man at the gas station? You don't find too many of them anymore. We just have little machines and digital read-outs. We blame the poor guy who checks us out for the high price of gas. We might not say that, but we do growl at them. They need a smile. They need the gospel.

How about that indignant clerk who waits on you? He has a real need. He has a need for love and peace in return for the

conflict that is going on in his soul. We come across people in our everyday life who need the love of Christ to touch them. The eyes of Jesus see every man, every woman and every child as a candidate for the Kingdom. The heart of Jesus reaches out with nail-scarred hands to ask them in. That is what we are supposed to do.

The second point is that Jesus saw all people in terms of what they could become in Him. No doubt He saw the Pharisee not as we saw him but as a leader without a real cause to lead. Jesus saw him as a drum major leading a band of discord. No doubt He saw the Pharisee as He saw Paul, a man waiting to be born into the Kingdom to be used mightily to lead men and women to a saving knowledge of Christ.

No doubt He looked at the Samaritan woman and thought, "Here is a woman who has spent her life in the world's ways, wasting it and hasn't found the real answers. Maybe she is ready." Maybe Jesus thought, "Here is someone with compassion that is unharnessed, because she is unregenerate."

Jesus probably looked at the invalid by the pool and thought, "Here is a man who is acquainted with suffering. Here is a man who knows the greed and the selfishness of men. He knows the world thinks it is every man for himself. Here is a man who knows the humility of depending on other people when no one is there. But, he doesn't know the Prince of Peace."

Jesus saw all people on equal footing. The Pharisee, no doubt, drove up in his Mercedes with a new Bible under his arm. The immoral woman, on the other hand, was the dredge of society morally. She no doubt was gaudily dressed but probably in well-worn clothes with a well-worn look. The helpless invalid, no doubt, was the dredge of society physically. He was probably a pitiful sight to look at. But, when Jesus looked at these three people, He saw no difference in their souls. That is what James meant when he said that as you open the doors of your church and people come in, don't look for the sharpest dressed or the cleanest cut and bring them down to the front to sit in the front row. Then, if someone comes in who is shabbily dressed, you put them in the back

and hope that no one sees them.

Jesus said, "I have come to seek and to save all who are lost, because the Son of God is no respecter of person." That is why Jesus would have spent His time in the hospitals. That is why Jesus would have spent His time in the prisons. Jesus would have spent His time on skid row. Jesus would have spent His time on the east side or the west side or whatever side of your town where people are unloved and unlovely. You and I subscribe to, "Comfortable Evangelism".

HIS PRESENTATION

1- Jesus asked a lot of questions. He used a lot of illustrations. He usually issued an invitation. First, He asked a lot of questions. Why? He used questions because questions involve the other person to take part experientially in the conversation. One author in a noted book on sharing the gospel suggested that, as a beginner in witnessing, you memorize four basic questions so that you can develop the conversation to the point of impact. These are not for everyone, but maybe they will help some of you.

1) Are you interested in spiritual things? This is a question that you can ask anyone. No matter how they answer it, you can ask the next question. They can say, "Yes," or "No" or "I don't understand," and you can still go on to the next question.

2) Have you ever considered becoming a Christian? Now don't ask someone, "Are you a Christian?" If they were born in the United States and lived within 8 blocks of a church while they were growing up, they might consider themselves a Christian. Before you came to Christ, if someone asked you this question, 90% of you would have said, "Yes." Don't ask them, "Are you a Christian?" But rather ask them, "Have you ever considered becoming a Christian?" If a person is born again, they won't be offended by that question. If he is not, you can easily ask the next question.

3) What would you say a Christian is? Usually they will respond, "A Christian is someone who lives by the Golden Rule." A Christian does do that, but what makes someone a Christian? "A Christian is someone who goes to church."

Yes, a Christian ought to do that, but what is a Christian? "A Christian is someone who loves God with all of his heart." Yes, a Christian ought to do that, but what is a Christian? "A Christian is someone who gives to the poor." Yes, a Christian ought to do that, but what is a Christian? At that point, you can ask the next question.

4) Would you like to know what the Bible says a Christian is? You can open the Word and begin to share with them. No matter how they answered these other three questions, you can share with them what a Christian is from God's perspective.

Whatever we do, we must be like the Master and learn to ask questions. We need then to listen to the answers that people give.

2-Jesus used illustrations. Oh how Jesus used illustrations. His method was nearly always this. He took a physical truth familiar to the person He was dealing with and created from that truth a spiritual parallel that would, if received, turn on the light of truth in this person's life. What do we call this? We call it the Spiritual Switch.

We can see this in His encounter with the Pharisee. Here was the typical, religious hypocrite—us. He was a leader in the church. He was a flatterer of God. He said, "No man can do these things that you do unless God be with them." He was the kind who glad-hands the preacher on the way out of church on Sunday and says, "Boy, you really gave it to them, Preacher!" He thought that God needed him to congratulate Him on the miracles. Jesus had to confront him with the matter of total transformation, something coming out of nothing. It had to be simple, but it had to be profound. Jesus looked at him and said, "You have got to become a baby again." That got his attention. His carnal mind wrestled with this thought for a moment. He then concluded that it was a physical impossibility. He was too big to enter back into his mother's womb and be born again. He couldn't make the Spiritual Switch. Jesus painted another picture for him. Jesus said, "You know what the wind is, don't you? It blows from the left to the right. That is the way the Spirit is. You can feel it, but you can't see it."

Jesus did the same thing with the Samaritan woman. He

perched Himself on the edge of a well. Can you see it now? God was on the edge of a well waiting for one of the world's cast-offs to come by. He did something that no man would normally do. He asked a question of this Samaritan woman, which was an unheard of thing to do. That, in itself, got her attention. He talked to her and communicated with her without condescending to her. People know the difference. He said to her, "I need something to drink." He really didn't. He could have lived without that drink, but He said, "I need some water. Would you give it to me?" She said, "Why do you ask me for water?" He said, "You could ask Me, and I would give you such water that you would never thirst again." Jesus used the water so that He could talk to her about the Living Water.

He did the same thing with the bread come down from heaven. He also used the trees, the sun and the rocks as examples. Paul did the same thing with soldiers, athletes, farmers and businessmen. He took the physical and made it spiritual. What kind of illustrations do you use when you share the gospel? Let me give you some simple ones.

Let's suppose that you are a doctor or you work in a hospital. Maybe you put a big bottle of pills on your desk with a label on the front of it that says PRESCRIPTION FOR MAN'S GREATEST ILLNESS. Let people come in and ask you, "Wow, what kind of prescription is that?" You can open the bottle and pour out four big pills which have a verse on each one. Those four verses can lead that person to the only cure for the only illness in life that is eternally terminal.

If you work in a clinic, you can have an X-ray with a sign over it that says YOU ARE WITNESSING AN X-RAY OF THE HUMAN SOUL. You can light it up and it can be totally black. You have an opening to share the Word of God.

If you are a lawyer, you can have a book on your desk with a cover made that says ALL OF THE LAW EXPLAINED AND CONDENSED. Another lawyer will come into your office, see it and say, "Oh come on. I have a whole office full of books, and I don't have a third of the books I need to explain the law." You can reply, "Yes, but all of the law is condensed and explained in this one book." You can open it up and it is the

living law of God.

If you are an athlete, you can have a football on your desk or a goal post up against the wall. You can put an inscription that says, "WHEN YOU REACH YOUR GOAL, WHAT WILL YOU HAVE?"

You may work at a service-oriented business. People may come in and ask directions on how to get some place. You can put a map up on the wall. Underneath the real map, you can put a map with the inscription HOW CAN I GET TO ETERNITY? You can have a cross where the crossroads go pointing in different directions. You can have an explanation that both roads lead to eternity, but not to the same place.

You may say, "These examples are too simple for me." That may be true, but they may not be too simple for the people you meet.

You may be an artist. You can draw a picture that beautifully represents something that seems so real, like heaven. It can be a beautiful picture that many people come to see. Cut out a hole in the middle of the picture. The people are bound to stop you and say, "I hate to ask you, but why did you cut a whole in it?" You can answer, "It is an unfinished portrait. There is room for another person in it. This is a picture of heaven and you can be there. Would you like to know how?"

You may be a romantic at heart. You can have some books in the waiting room of your office or on your table at home. Among them you can have a book that says THE WORLD'S PERFECT LOVESTORY. When the people open it up, there is the Word of God.

You may be a businessman or an accountant. You can have a ledger on your desk that simply says LEDGER-THE BEST TRANSACTION I EVER MADE. Someone is going to be curious. On one side you have DEBIT and on the other side CREDIT. You can show a person that all of your sins were credited to Jesus Christ. All of His righteousness was credited to you. The balance owed is "0". Ask God for creativity to be able to share the Word of God in these ways.

4- Jesus offered an invitation. No person can effectually witness without knowing the Scriptures. No person can

Peacemakers! God's Perfect Example

effectually witness without leading someone through the Scriptures to a point of decision. I will cover this in the next lesson. I want to ask you to take a look between now and then at Jesus' perfect testimony. I want to ask you to write out your own testimony. In the next lesson, I want to talk about your testimony, my testimony, Paul's testimony and Jesus' testimony. No one will be asked to share it unwillingly, but I would like to ask you to bring it to the next lesson. We will talk about the tests of a testimony.

Meanwhile, let's ask God to give us the eyes of Jesus. Let's ask Him to lead us to see men where they really are. Let's ask for discernment to see people like the proud Pharisee, the immoral woman or the man who for 38 years has been waiting for someone to say, "Would you like to be well?" We can lead men to peace with God.

Maybe you have never made your peace with God. Maybe there has never been a real moment of truth in your life where you have personally said to Jesus, "I want You to be mine." As we close now, you can take this opportunity to do that. You don't have to walk down an aisle or lift a hand or do anything except to say to God, "Help. Yes, I want to be made whole."

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