

Acts: The Spirit, the Church and the Spread of God's Word

Who Does God Use Most?

Acts 18:24 – 19:20

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, March 1, 2020

I. You'll Need to Be Humble and Teachable Regardless of How Gifted and Capable You Are

Apollos was a very gifted man—eloquent, mighty, well-educated, passionate, and bold! Yet there was still some kind of deficiency in his theology.

Acts 18:25 "...though he knew only the baptism of John."

Acts 18:26 "So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately."

Too often, the *gifts* of eloquence, education, passion, and boldness, become prideful *weapons* that we use to attack anyone who tells us something about us or our doctrine.

Apollos passed the most important test regarding the most essential characteristic of who God uses most – the humble.

Passing the test of humility is a lifelong process.

Giftedness and Bible knowledge are not what gets or keeps God's attention – or grants you God's favor and power to do ministry.

Isaiah 66:2 "...But on this one will I look: On him who is humble and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word."

II. You'll Need to Know How to Lead People Away from Religion and Into a Relationship with Jesus

Paul runs into a group of people who only had bits and pieces of the truth about who Jesus is and what He's done. They still didn't know that Jesus had come, lived, died, and rose again. **[See Acts 19:1-4]**

There are people all around you that only have these *bits and pieces* of information.

Our biggest challenge is not convincing atheists that there's a God. It's convincing people who are clinging to bits and pieces of their own "patchwork" religion that they need to put it down and surrender to a relationship with Jesus as their Savior.

Keep the main thing the main thing. Bring it back to Jesus!

Learn how to ask questions that can help people move away from their "patchwork" religion that they're clinging to for security.

III. You'll Need to Rely on the Power of Scripture and Not Just the Force of Your Own Personality and Arguments

Acts 18:28 “For he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.”

2300 years ago, the philosopher, Aristotle, argued in his book, *Rhetoric*, that there are three things you can use to persuade someone of something: Logos, Ethos, and Pathos.

Logos in the New Testament is used in reference to both God’s Word and God’s Son, Jesus.

Ethos is how you come across as a person. It’s your own “story” that you bring to the moment of persuasion in which you build credibility.

Pathos is the stirring up of an emotional response in someone to get them to do what you want.

The Holy Spirit can, and does, use all of these things! But we need to depend less on our own ethos and pathos, and lean intentionally on the logos of God’s Word.

Hebrews 4:12-13 “¹² For the word (Logos – λόγος) of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”

His Word can do what we could never do and He can see what we could never see about someone...so use God’s Word!

IV. You’ll Need to Know Jesus as Your Own Personal Savior

Acts 19:13 “Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, ‘We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.’”

They’re trying to imitate what they thought was Paul’s formula for success, but they had no personal relationship with Jesus themselves.

Acts 19:15 “And the evil spirit answered and said, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?’”

In other words, “Who do you think you are!? I know who Jesus is. And I know who Paul is. But until you have Jesus as Lord of your life, you have no authority to speak into mine.”

Acts 19:17 “...fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.”

Acts 4:10-12 “¹⁰ let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. ¹¹ This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ ¹² Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”