

Who We Are – We are Gospel Vessels

Statistics always say that the top 2 fears for most people is **the fear of dying** and **the fear of public speaking!** Which do you fear most?

As Christians we are called to do both – “die to self” and “speak the gospel”.

I know this isn't the perfect analogy, but the call “to die” and the call to “share/speak the gospel” can be just as fear-filled & difficult for us to face!

God never promised that the Christian life would be easy, but doing these two things will definitely bring about Christ-like transformation in our lives.

We've talked about the importance of inward & upward transformation, but this message is about the need for outward transformation in our lives as well.

The love of Jesus moves us in the direction of experiencing, as Jesus did, an outward death. That means for us, **our old nature needs to be put to death!**

What's our old nature(flesh)? The desires we all share to make life all about ourselves! **It's the belief that we were created to pursue our own happiness!**

This is not the purpose for which we were created! God created us to be in relationship with Him, & through that relationship come to bear His image!

This glorious purpose for our lives has always been overshadowed by our own sinful nature and desires, and that is what needs to be put to death so that we can experience the true purpose of God in our lives!

God gave us in the past prophets to tell us these things, he gave us the Law to teach us these things, He gave us judges to show us these things, He even spoke this truth to us with His own voice, **but we did not get it or receive it!**

Something more was needed to make this outward transformation stick!
John 1:14 – “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and now we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

God Himself had to come to earth, walk in our shoes, live out this calling in the flesh for us in order to provide for us not only the example to follow but also the ability to do it through the death and resurrection of His Son!

“Living He loved us, dying He saved us, buried He carried our sins far away.

Rising He justified freely forever, one day He's coming oh glorious day!”

This is the source of our outward transformation **as well as the message we are to share with a world that desperately needs to hear & receive it.**

If we have been the recipients of this transforming work in our lives, our response should be to make this life-transforming reality known to others.

For **“faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ.”** But **“how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard.”** – Romans 10:17,14

We the Church are the sent ones/ambassadors/representatives/witnesses for this transforming work of Christ in this world. **We are called to make this gospel known, trusting that God will be at work bringing life out of death!**

If we were created to bear God's image in this world, and Jesus is that perfect image, then we are to model our faith sharing after Jesus as well!

To do that we must also embody John 1:14 in our lives - **“The Word became flesh & dwelt among us!”** We are to be the living embodiment of Christ & the gospel as we live in this world and dwell with those within it!

How can we do that today when it comes to us sharing our faith?

- **We need to remove the stigma of the pulpit** – Sharing our faith is not just the job of pastors/evangelists! We all share in this calling as Christians!
- **We need to get rid of the script** – It's not just about pre-scripted words, it's about an authentic faith lived out before others in word and deed.
- **We need to get off the stage** – There's no hierarchy when it comes to those who deserve the gift of faith, or the extension of the gospel!
- **We need to dwell w/people as we share the gospel,** not just speak at them!
- **We need to get outside this building** & meet people where they are with the life-giving & life transforming message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are all called to be gospel vessels – not the type that holds in this good news of Jesus' transforming work, but the kind of vessel that disperses it.

Which one will we be? How can we follow the example of Jesus & take on flesh & dwell relationally with people and share our faith in word & action?

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