

The Voice

August 2024

Give Them a Chance

By Dan Waters

If you were hiking with your best friend and you could see that they were about to walk over a hidden cliff, would you yell a warning? Or would you let them tumble to their death? What if it was a perfect stranger? Would you yell a warning? Or would you remain silent? If you were the one who couldn't see the cliff, wouldn't you want someone to yell at you and try to save your life???

Whenever you interact with another person, you have an opportunity to bring up spiritual issues. Like the person about to go over the cliff, you may be the only one in a position to warn them. In my own life I only remember a few times when someone tried to witness to me. I suppose that's the way it is with most people. The witness that you give may be the only clear witness that other person will ever hear.

Have we not been commanded to yell a warning to others? It ought to be our privilege to share the good news with others. God has not hidden His commands to witness in some obscure place in the Bible. In fact, He tells us repeatedly: "Go ... and make disciples of all the nations ..." (Mt 28:19) "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel" (Mk 16:15)? "... you are witnesses of these things" (Lk 24:48). "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (Jn 20:21). "... you will be My witnesses ..." (Acts 1:8). "... those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:3 – reference to the "laymen," not

the "preachers"). "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:15). How can Christians ignore these clear commands? If you are a Christian, you have been "sent" by Jesus as a "witness" to the unsaved.

Every generation and culture has certain characteristics that are common to many. People in our culture are actively chasing the American dream and enjoying watching sports. We often ignore the person next door. But very few who claim to be "Christian" regularly witness to others.

In a 2018 Barna survey, Christians were asked to respond to the following: "Every Christian has a responsibility to share their faith." In 1993, 89% of those who had shared their faith agreed. But in 2018 that agreement had dropped to 64%. How can it be that 1/3 of those who had actually shared their faith don't believe it is every Christian's responsibility to do so?

Christians who take the Bible seriously consider it their responsibility to warn others that are about to go over the cliff. But they also consider it their responsibility to warn and encourage other Christians of their responsibility to warn yet others as well. That's what this Voice article is about. It is to encourage Christians to do evangelism. This question will come up when God judges us. Rewards will be gained or lost depending on how we live out

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our faith, including in the area of witnessing. Tears of joy and of regret will be many.

There are two kinds of Christians in the world: those who try to obey all the commands of God and those who don't. It is important to understand that we are saved by God's mercy, apart from works. But once we are saved, we need to obey Him out of love. Jesus said, "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you" (John 15:14). There is no way to sugar coat this verse, nor is there a need to. A related question was asked by Jesus which was even more direct: "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Lk 6:46). Evidently, obedience is a big thing to God. It should be to us, also.

This brings up the next question: "How can I obey God's command to evangelize?" The Bible doesn't give the answer to that question. The only wrong way to evangelize is not to do it at all. Our responsibility is to try to make the Gospel clear. There are many ways to accomplish this end. Ask a mature Christian for ideas.

But how about the results? Many more would share the Gospel if every time they opened their mouth people would fall down and repent and trust Jesus as Savior! (Have you read the book of Jonah?) On the day of Pentecost, Peter's sermon saw 3,000 people trust Christ and then submit to baptism! This doesn't happen very often (it didn't happen very often for Peter!), only when God wills it and moves on the hearts of the hearers. But just because we don't see those kinds of results doesn't mean that we are not responsible to tell what we know. In Ezekiel 3 God tells Ezekiel that if he does not give the message that God gave him to those around him, "his blood will I require at your hand" (Ezek 3:20 cf 33:6). Whatever this ominous verse means, can we agree that God is not be pleased with disobedience?! And lest we think that this is only an Old Testament principle, be

reminded that Paul told the Ephesian Elders that he was "innocent of the blood of all men," because he had faithfully witnessed to those around him (read Acts 20:25-27).

Let's consider one way to fulfill God's command to evangelize. I love to hand out tracts. When I randomly meet people there is usually not a lot of time to talk with them. A tract with a clear Gospel message gives them an opportunity to understand and think about how to be saved. Many people have been saved (or encouraged) by reading tracts. At least those receiving a tract with the Gospel in it have a chance to be saved.

When giving out a tract I try to say something that makes it hard to resist. Perhaps a tract entitled "Peace" might be introduced by: "Do you ever need a little extra peace?" OR "Here is some peace for you." OR if they say they are having a challenging day, "Here is a little peace to help you out!" It's hard for them to say, "No, I don't want any peace in my life!" Or in December give them a Christmas tract while saying, "Merry Christmas!" It's hard for them to turn it down. Or you could give them a St. Patrick's Day tract as you tell them, "Did you know that St. Patrick wasn't Catholic?" They may be curious enough to read it! It's always good to have a default saying to introduce your tract, in case you can't think of anything else to say. How about a line I stole from a soul winner: "Let me give you something good to read." Or, "Let me give you some good news!"

It helps to have a tract with a title that makes people curious. Would you be curious enough to read these tracts we have: 3 Things God Can't Do. I wrote, I Am NOT a Good Person. It's interesting to watch a person read the title. By all means possible we need to evangelize, because God told us to. Julian keeps our tract racks upstairs and downstairs stocked with a variety of good tracts to help us out!

Services & Bible Studies (Times and Places):

Every Sunday:

Sunday School	9:45 am
AM Service	11:00 am
PM Service	6:00 pm

Every Wednesday at 6:00 pm:

Adult Bible Study & Prayer
Middle & High School Youth Group

Men's Bible Study:

Men's breakfast is once a month.
The next breakfast will be in September.

Women's Bible Study:

Will begin again in September.

Summary of the Book of 1 Corinthians (from gotquestions.org)

Author: 1 Corinthians 1:1 identifies the author as the apostle Paul.

Date of Writing: It was written in approximately A.D. 55.

Brief Summary: The Corinthian church was plagued by divisions. The believers in Corinth were dividing into groups loyal to certain spiritual leaders (1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:1-6). Paul exhorted the Corinthian believers to be united because of devotion to Christ (1 Corinthians 3:21-23). Many in the church were essentially approving of an immoral relationship (1 Corinthians 5:1-2). Paul commanded them to expel the wicked man from the church (1 Corinthians 5:13). The Corinthian believers were taking each other to court (1 Corinthians 6:1-2). Paul taught the Corinthians that it would

be better to be taken advantage of than to damage their Christian testimony (1 Corinthians 6:3-8). Paul gave the Corinthian church instructions on marriage and celibacy (chapter 7), food sacrificed to idols (chapters 8 and 10), Christian freedom (chapter 9), the veiling of women (1 Corinthians 11:1-16), the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:17-34), spiritual gifts (chapters 12-14), and the resurrection (chapter 15). Paul organized the book of 1 Corinthians by answering questions the Corinthian believers had asked him and by responding to improper conduct and erroneous beliefs they had accepted.

Summary of Book of 2 Corinthians (from gotquestions.org)

Author: 2 Corinthians 1:1 identifies the author as the apostle Paul, possibly along with Timothy.

Date of Writing: It was written approximately A.D. 55-57.

Brief Summary: After greeting the believers in the church at Corinth and explaining why he had not visited them as originally planned (vv. 1:3-2:2), Paul explains the nature of his ministry. Triumph through Christ and sincerity in the sight of God were the hallmarks of his ministry to the churches (2:14-17). He compares the glorious ministry of the righteousness of Christ to the "ministry of condemnation" which is the Law (v. 3:9) and declares his faith in the validity of his ministry in spite of intense persecution (4:8-18). Chapter 5 outlines the basis of the Christian faith—the new nature (v. 17) and the exchange of our sin for the righteousness of Christ (v. 21).

Chapters 6 and 7 find Paul defending himself and his ministry, assuring the Corinthians yet again of his sincere love for them and exhorting them to repentance and holy

living. In chapters 8 and 9, Paul exhorts the believers at Corinth to follow the examples of the brothers in Macedonia and extend generosity to the saints in need. He teaches them the principles and rewards of gracious giving. Paul ends his letter by reiterating his authority among them (chapter 10) and concern for their faithfulness to him in the face of fierce opposition from false apostles. He calls himself a "fool" for having to reluctantly boast of his qualifications and his suffering for Christ (chapter 11). He ends his epistle by describing the vision of heaven he was allowed to experience and the "thorn in the flesh" he was given by God to ensure his humility (chapter 12). The last chapter contains his exhortation to the Corinthians to examine themselves to see whether what they profess is reality, and ends with a benediction of love and peace.

New Ministry Opportunity

What is the Ministry?

Are you looking for a new ministry that you can be a part of? A ministry that is essential to the church and every Christian's life?

This ministry does not require a strong physical body. It does not require speaking in front of the church. It does not require the ability to build, repair, teach, etc. It does not require strong technology skills.

It does require the desire to speak to God on behalf of the church and other people. It requires a heart full of love and your time.

This new ministry consists of doing what God commands us over and over in the Bible to do.

It requires consciously doing what we already do.

This new ministry is a ministry of prayer.

Would you like to be part of the Iron River Bible Church Prayer Team?

What will this Ministry look like?

The team can work together to decide what it will look like and how it will work.

- When someone in the church has a prayer need, they can contact a member of the prayer team.
- The contacted member will contact the other members of the team.
- They will add the request to our Facebook Messenger Prayer group (with permission from the person who gave request).
- They will all pray diligently for the request.
- They will follow up with the person who had the request and continue to pray.
- They will keep a prayer journal with requests and answers to the prayers.

The team can choose a leader (a member of the church) and a method of communication among the team members.

The team would give updates to the church council periodically.

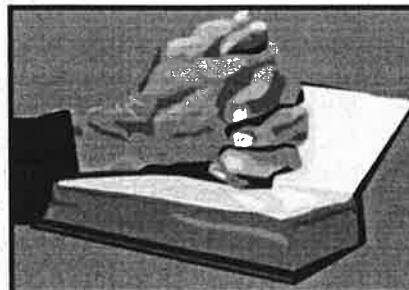
The team can plan church-wide prayer times with guidance from the council.

What does the Bible say about prayer?

- Philippians 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing,
- Jeremiah 29:12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.
- Ephesians 6:18 Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,
- Romans 12:12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.
- Psalm 145:18 The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.
- Hebrews 4:16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- James 1:6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

What can we Pray for?

- Salvation for each person.
- The right man to be our pastor.
- Unity among the church members.
- A love for the Bible.
- 'We would be led by the Holy Spirit.
- Spreading the Good News to Iron River.
- A strong discipleship program.
- Love one for another.
- Truth taught at all times.
- We would become more like Jesus as we experience trials.
- People would use their spiritual gifts.
- We would love our enemies.
- We would always forgive others.
- God would bring people to church to hear His Word taught.
- We would hate sin.
- Safety in travel.
- We would be joyful people.
- God would give us a peace that passes all understanding.
- We would keep our focus on God.
- We would be thankful people.
- The Holy Spirit would make us bold.
- Etc.



Epaphras Prayer Team

Colssians 4:12

Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Missionary Report: Each month we will update a few of our missionaries

Wrights (Missionaries in Gulu, Uganda)

Praise:

Update on Gabriel (one of the young men who Nate works with):

Several weeks ago many of you gave money to help Gabriel complete his house. It is coming along. Gabriel is very thankful. Here are a few photos of the house. Please keep Gabriel in your prayers. He has a burning desire to evangelize the deaf in Uganda.



Gabriel is on left in white shirt. Gabriel's house above.



Wall up. Roof on ground. Needs plaster.

Wisly Bregis (Pastor and School Leader in Haiti)

Pray:

Update on Wisly's project.

We have been praying for Wisly's issue with rain and erosion possibly damaging the church and school buildings. We have also been praying for them to be able to put up a new school building. Currently they are using the church for the main school building. With growth to the school each year, that is not working well. This year they plan to add high school classes.

To prevent the destruction of buildings due to rain, they built a wall and hope to begin the new school building on the other side of the wall. Please pray that God will provide the money needed to complete the building project.



The above photos show the property before the wall on the left. The middle photo shows men working. The right photo shows the wall completed.

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God usually doesn't grade us: "That Gospel presentation was a 6." "That was a really good 10!" "That was a pitiful 2." No, we only find God criticizing those who don't do it at all. We should do our best. We should always try to do better. But God has commanded us to DO it! Even those laymen and laywomen in

the Bible who were run out of town for doing evangelism kept it up: "Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went" (Acts 8:4). You can do it! Because of God's commands you must do it. How do you plan to obey God's command to regularly (this week?) witness to others?

A Life of Serving Jesus

by Lucille Wernholm

I grew up in a small farmhouse on Hwy. 139 in Tipler, WI. I was so blessed to be born in a homewhere God was always honored. As far back as I can remember, my dad was very strict. He always had men working for him and warned them not to use bad language in front of his children. We never knew bad language until we were in school. The bar of soap would come out quickly if a bad word was used.

Our home was full with our family, but God's people were always welcome. Reverend Hamel and Reverend McArthur would come from Marquette and walk through the snow to come and visit. They would bring gifts and go to our school and we could take our choice of a gift. My brother and I took a Bible because we knew it would please our parents.

When I was about 10 years old my mother and I went forward at a special meeting to publicly acknowledge that we wanted to serve Christ. Mrs. Lindahl talked with us. I have served the Lord from that day.

I went to Sunday School and every meeting that they had at the little church Fritz Erickson built which still exists today. I learned a lot from the dear people at that church.

I love the Lord with all my heart and thank Him every day for shedding His blood on the cross and rising on the third day that I might have eternal life. I thank Him for His loving care and meeting all of my needs.

I pray especially for the people of Jerusalem. Our Savior will rein from there one day.

I pray daily for the people of our church and our missionaries.

Family Bible Time Challenge

Whether your family includes children, a couple, or an individual, God's command is still the same. We need to read His word daily and then obey it.

Here is a suggestion/challenge for you during the month of August. Let's all get involved in the:

August Bible Reading Challenge.

A good portion of the New Testament is made of letters that Paul wrote to various churches and people.

This month, your challenge is to read two of those letters: 1 & 2 Corinthians.

After you finish reading the book of 1 Corinthians, you will move to the next book, 2 Corinthians and read this letter.

So, you are challenged to take time with your family each day.

- First pray together.
- Next, read a chapter of the book together.
- Then, discuss what you read together

Share what you learn with others. This could be in person, by phone or text, or even on social media.

See overviews of these letters in this newsletter.

Kids' Corner with Miss Abby

s'mores


RECIPES

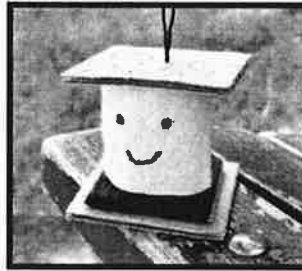
the outside...

- Oreos
- Peanut Butter Cookies
- Fudge Striped Cookies
- Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Double Chocolate Cookies
- Rice Krispie Treats

the middle...

- Reese's PB Cups
- Twix
- Snickers
- Rolo
- York Peppermint Patties
- Milky Way
- Kit Kat
- Caramel Sauce
- Nutella
- Cookie Butter





Saturday, August 10
National S'more Day

1-Cut two cardboard squares, about 2 1/2 inches square.

Cut one 2-by-2-inch cardboard square.

2-Use a pencil to poke holes on the top of one piece of cardboard to resemble graham crackers. Draw a line down the center. (If you want to make it into a hanging ornament, poke a hole up through the center of the "graham cracker" and make a little loop.)

3-Thread needle and knot the end. Stitch eyes and mouth onto felt (or other white fabric). To make the eyes, we made tiny asterisk shapes (*) and we did the backstitch

4-Wrap white fabric around the pom-pom (or cotton balls), and glue it in the back.

5-Wrap brown thread or yarn around the small piece of cardboard to make the chocolate. If you don't have brown thread or yarn, you can cover it with brown felt, or even just paint it brown.

6-Glue the chocolate to the bottom cardboard, then the marshmallow on top, and finally the top graham cracker. (Found on projectkid.com)

Mark 16:15

Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation.