I HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS

HEALING HEARTS

Few phrases ever uttered bring more attention and sense of well being as much as the phrase, “I have some good news.” Picture a family sitting around the table one evening. Dad is trying to explain to the family that things are going to change for them pretty drastically over the next few weeks and maybe months. He was told today at his work that they were closing the business and his job would be ending at the end of the month. Since they had been losing money for the last couple of years there is no ability to pay any kind of severance package. Everyone will be forced to cut back a lot for him or her to survive on what he will get from unemployment while he searches for a new job. Imagine in this scenario one of the young people in the family saying, “Dad, I’ve got some good news.” “Well son we could sure use a little good news tonight. Tell us what it is.” The news might be, “I got an A on a science test” or “I made the team in basketball.” It isn’t so much what the news is that matters but that just the words; “I have some good news” affect the whole mood of the family.

Think for a moment just how hard it is to carry a family bad news. Over the years I’ve been called on to carry awful news to families that I loved. It has ranged from trying to explain to a wife that her husband committed suicide in their home a couple of hours ago, to telling a new mother that her baby was born dead. As hard as it is to give people bad news, it is so exciting and joyful to carry family good news. When you have good news you can hardly wait to get to the people to give them the news.

Imagine a scene played out in the life of the eleven apostles of Jesus. There were twelve but Judas made a horrible choice to betray the Lord and then instead of returning to ask a gracious Lord to forgive him he chose to hang himself. These eleven have been through the most gut wrenching times in their lives up to this point as they saw the Lord and Savior, the Messiah whom they had left everything to follow, crucified on a hill called the skull outside Jerusalem. As they locked themselves in a room fearful of every movement outside the door, their emotions took another extreme move when the message came from a group of women who were disciples of Jesus that they had been to the tomb that morning and Jesus wasn’t there. An angel told them that he had been raised and would go before them into Galilee. For the last 40 days they have been with the resurrected Lord, on and off. They have heard his words of comfort and felt the gift of the Holy Spirit in their life. They have eaten with him and seen him walk through locked doors without unlocking them. Now they are standing on the Mount of Olives and Jesus gave them the greatest of all commissions. “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved. He who does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:15-16)

What do you think of when you hear the word, “Gospel?” We probably think of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Paul declared in I
Corinthians 15:1-4 that this was the essence of the gospel. Mark in opening his story of Jesus on earth called the whole story of Jesus the gospel, so we might think of the story of Jesus. I’m not certain the eleven men who were on that mountain that day with Jesus would have thought nearly that deeply. To them the word gospel is simply “Good news.” Every time they went into a new town, village or area with the gospel they were saying to everyone who would listen, “I’ve got some good news for you.”

Their day needed some good news. It was a time of struggle, brutality, immorality and abusive behavior. Rome ruled the world, often with an iron fist. Much of their lifetime of carrying the message of good news to the world, Nero was on the throne and he was a man without reason or common sense. His brutal actions became notorious throughout the kingdom. But these men and the thousands who joined them in their mission offered good news wherever they went.

We too live in a day when the world as a whole needs the message of “Good News.” God loves every person and paid the price for every sinner to be bought back from the world of sin to be his follower. He paid the price for our sins with the deathblows on His unique son, Jesus, when he died on that Roman cross. The world needs the gospel far more than they need wells where there isn’t enough water, coats where the cold rips through the layers to freeze the body, or food in areas where people are dying with hunger. They need the good news of Jesus more than a cure for Ebola. It is certainly true that we need to care about those physical needs as well, but never be satisfied with simply helping with such a need, while leaving them lost and without God. Far too few are hearing the call and commission of Jesus to go and share His good news. Far too few Christians after being saved are going back home to tell those they love what great things God has done for them and he is waiting for them to come as well. “I’ve got some good news.” Wonderful. Don’t forget to tell it!

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