

## Why Is It So Hard to Share Our Faith in Jesus Today ... The Message?

Here's one of those challenges that is often leveled at the church...*"I could love Jesus, I just hate the church."* People reject the message because they say it doesn't change the people who believe it. They say that the church is full of hypocrites; the church is just about people who think they're better than everyone else.

In reality, I believe they have a problem with Jesus too; at least right up to the time when they put their faith in Him. It might be Jesus Himself who bugs us.

If you look in the Bible, people were getting angry with Him all the time. That's especially true of people who felt that they weren't sinful, that they didn't need to repent of any sin. They were often angry at Jesus because He pulled no punches with them. Without forgiveness there would be only eternal judgment with God. That makes people today angry as well. But that's not the church talking, that's not us Christians talking, that's Jesus talking. The people that were open to Him, the ones with whom He was gentle, they were sinners too, but they knew it. They were ashamed of it, they were seeking forgiveness for it. He was the One who was perfectly loving to the unlovable, to the ones in need who knew their need.



There's more, however, to what makes Him so challenging to some people, and this might be the one thing that irritates people most of all; and that is Jesus Himself when He claims that He is the only way to salvation, that He and He alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He says He is the Savior of the world, not merely a good example or a loving teacher. In a world of self-help, self-made, self-focused pseudo saviors; that kind of talk would probably get you hung on a cross today too.

So, what can we do to help us share our faith in Him?

There's really no secret to sharing our faith in Him ... we must get to know Jesus and His Word even better today. Because, the only way that people overcome their skepticism of those kinds of claims is when they, by the power of the Holy Spirit, get to know the uniqueness of the Jesus of the Bible. Therefore, I'm just going to say it this way: *"Friend, if you are skeptical of the claims of Jesus, I just ask you will you get to know Him first? Let Him have His say in your life because there is really nobody like Him!"*

Think about what the Bible says, Jesus is God in the Flesh who didn't use His power and status for Himself, He used it so that you and I, rebellious people by nature, could be reconciled to God eternally! I know that His uniqueness can offend at first; but as witnesses, our job is just to keep "boasting about Him." That can eventually cut through the skepticism and the unbelief. Because of our sin, our hearts are as hard as stones. It's the power of Christ, His Word, His Spirit that turns us from self-centered sinners to forgiven, sharers of His grace to others. Only He can do that!

That's what we're inviting people to see when they come to church. They should see a lot of people just like them, with all kinds of struggles and problems, but with one difference. We see all of our life in the grace of God that comes in and through Jesus Christ Alone. So even worship is about coming into His presence, receiving His gift, His Word, and then venturing out into the world to be His people so that others might see Him too! So then, as witnesses sharing our faith in Christ, the challenge, really, is to learn how to boast even better about Jesus. Don't be surprised if people even get mad at Him at first. The message of Jesus, shakes all of our lives to our shakable foundation so that He can build our new lives in Him, on Him forever.

That's the View from Here.

*Pastor Winter*