

Sermon Series: Operation Go!—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—2/3/2008

Title: “Witness to my family?”

Text: John 1: 35-42

Intro: Ills.: Meaning of Words: Nova = “no go”

Theme: When we remember that it is Jesus we are reintroducing to a family loved one and not an “organization,” we will see the Spirit’s power miraculously draw them to reconsider a relationship with Him.

Top 10 reasons why we think it’s not smart to mix family and religion

- #10: Your brother-in-law is focused on the piece of broccoli stuck between your teeth and hasn’t heard a word you said.
- #9: Your kids know about your secret stash of 8 tracks tapes and don’t believe anything you say.
- #8: Your husband has his nag-squelch button turned to high and is tuning you out.
- #7: Your mother-in-law was always suspicious of your loony-tune factor and now she is sure.
- #6: Your mom still calls you “Timmy” and hasn’t taken you seriously about ANYTHING for years.
- #5: Your worst nightmare is dreaming you are standing naked trying to tell your cousin about Jesus.
- #4: After your best attempt to witness, you imagine angels holding up score cards: 3.2, 1.8, 2.1, 3.0 out of 10.
- #3: You just came home from the dentist after having a tooth filled and your tongue is like silly putty
- #2: Your son-in-law just graduated from IU with an earned PhD in advanced Atheism.
- #1: Next Thanksgiving you are invited to Uncle Ben’s house when everyone else goes to Aunt Susie’s.

Remember *WHO* you are pointing to in your witness

- **PRINT AND READ John 1: 35-36**
- A certainty about who Jesus is in your own passion and words and actions
 13. John knew that Jesus came to be God’s perfect substitute for him (Lamb of God)
 14. **ILLUS.: RECOUNT JOHN WATCHING AS FATHER(ZACHARIA) OFFER SACRIFICE**
 15. *That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day. 2 Timothy 1: 12*
- Keep telling yourself—“It is not about me!”
 1. **ILLUS.: THE LITTLEST LIGHT**
 2. *“He must increase and I must decrease.” John 3: 30*
 3. Your humble submission to the will and timing and winsomeness of witness will be use effectively by the Spirit
- Understanding your role as a mentor
 1. Even though John had “disciples,” he knew that they were not “his”
 2. One of the greatest dangers to our view of our family is a “possessiveness”
 - a. *“Let people regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.” 1 Cor 4: 1*
 3. It is remembering our calling (*disciple making*) and our role (*mentoring others toward Christ*)
 - a. **Ills.: Catch and Release Fishing**

Don’t be afraid to answer the questions that your family member is asking

- **PRINT AND READ John 1: 37-42**
- Build on the relationship which God has already established
 1. *How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? 1 Cor. 7:16*
 2. **Family don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care**

3. Don't worry about what you are to say – speak in the common language you both know
 - a. James or John did not use the "correct" terminology (Rabbi)— but Jesus treated their question with respect
 - b. *"And if you are asked about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. But you must do this in a gentle and respectful way."* 1 Peter 3: 15-16
 - c. Andrew knew Peter understood what the "*hope of Israel*" was but since he had been disconnected from it and might be skeptical, Andrew put the invitation out, "*Come and see*"
4. Our job is to say "Come and see"— just that simple – introduce them to Jesus, he will introduce them to grace

Meaning of Words

The Chevy Nova was a relatively successful American car for many years. Encouraged by U.S. sales, Chevrolet began to market the American Nova throughout the world. Unfortunately, the Nova did not see well in Mexico and other Latin American countries. Additional ads were ordered, marketing efforts were stepped up, but sales remained stagnant. Sales directors were baffled. The car had sold well in the American market; why wasn't it selling now? When they discovered the answer, it was rather embarrassing: In Spanish, Nova means "***no go.***" The business world is full of such stories. For example, when Perdue Farms, Inc., converted its popular slogan "***It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken,***" into Spanish in hopes of expanding its chicken business, the results were less than desirable. Why? The translation was "***It takes a virile man to make a chicken affectionate.***" Not exactly what Frank Perdue had in mind. The N.T. model for evangelism is the communication of the Christian faith through contextualization, which simply means that the message of the Christian faith is to be presented in a way that makes sense to the person hearing it.

Little Light

Small ministries often make the greatest difference. The most important light in my home is not the large light fixture in our kitchen, but the little nightlight that we keep in the bathroom that keeps me from stubbing my toe when I get up to use the bathroom at night. It's small, but it's more useful to me than the show-off light. (My wife says that my favorite light is the one that comes on when I open the refrigerator!).

John 1: 35-42

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" (vss. 35-36)

When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you seek?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" "Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).(vss. 37-42)