

Sermon Series: “Sharing Good News—A Way of Life”—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—2/22/09

Title: “Being a True Friend”

Text: John 1:35-51

Intro.: *Illus.: The Used Car Salesman*

Theme: Jesus says, “There is no greater love than that you are willing to give up their life for your friend.” So how much do you love your friend/family member? Enough to do whatever it takes to introduce them to Jesus?

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

Enough to get out of the way and let them see Jesus (John 1:35-39)

- It is not about you and me
- 1. John, the Baptist, could let another go to Jesus because he *KNEW* Jesus and who he was (*the Lamb of God vs 36*)
- 2. *He must increase, but I must decrease. John 3:30*
- It is not about what I will lose but what will the other gain by meeting Jesus
- 1. Often, we are worried about the affection of our family member, the fun times with our friend, the promotion at work, the “risk,” and it keeps us from sharing Jesus with someone who desperately needs Jesus
- 2. **Illus.: Joseph Meister Lived**
- 3. *I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. 1 Corinthians 9:22*

Enough to want your family member to meet Jesus, the answer (John 1:40-42)

- Our greatest vulnerability is with family who know our best and worst
- 1. *“A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household.” Mark 6:4*
- 2. Andrew risked ridicule from Peter who had already seen him go off chasing after John the Baptist
- 3. Andrew went *first* (*vs 41*) to brother because of his love for the *rambunctious one* whom Jesus alone could reach
- 4. What do you “risk” by sharing Jesus with your family?
- 5. *For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me up. Psalm 27:10*
- Let Jesus’ own word do the convincing
- 1. It may take you “bringing them to Jesus” — invitation preceded by prayer followed by effort

Enough to risk letting your acquaintances know that you know Jesus (John 1:43-44)

- Is it hiding Jesus from our friends or hiding our friends from Jesus?
- 1. Our prejudice makes us believe that some are just not redeemable or some just can’t or won’t believe
- 2. Philip was from the rough and tumble “*sailor town*” of Bethsaida, where Andrew and Peter hailed
- 3. What would our associations think if they met your Jesus? Who is our Jesus—porcelain doll or real friend?
- Willing “*to take one for the team*” (**John 1:45-51**)
- 1. Philip is so convince and moved by Jesus that he is “*ready to take up his cross and follow Jesus*”
 - a. He meets up with his cynical, religious friend Nathaniel – who is determined to take no wooden nickels
 - b. Philip uses the tools of the Law and Prophets with which Nathaniel was acquainted to point to Jesus
 - c. *“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” Romans 10:15*
- 2. Not driving but leading others to Jesus
 - a. Nathaniel argumentatively presents his religious reasons for not believing in Jesus (Galilee is not Bethlehem)
 - b. Some of our friends might know just enough spiritual information to get themselves in trouble
 - c. Never try to argue someone into the Kingdom of Heaven; rather use the “*come and see*” method (*vs. 46*)
- 3. Love for your lost and searching friend is born out of the love with which Jesus searched us out
 - a. *“We love because He first loved us.” 1 John 4:19*
 - b. **Illus.: Some things are too good not to share**

Surrendering to the Invitation

Liz Curtis Higgs was one of the best-known disc jockeys in America, and she lived quite a...wild lifestyle without God. In fact, Howard Stern was the A.M. show, and Liz Curtis Higgs was the P.M. show. And one day Howard Stern said to Liz, "You know, you need to clean up your act." Now, that really says something if Howard Stern is saying it. And because Liz Curtis Higgs had been burned by so many men, and her heart had been broken...she became a militant feminist... But she had a Christian girlfriend who kept inviting her to church. So one day after a long, long time, she said, "Okay, I will go to church one time and one time only." So she went to church one time with her friend. And that week, the pastor just happened to be teaching on the Bible verse that says, "Wives submit yourselves to your husbands." Not exactly a good verse to start with a militant feminist. And she got a little uptight, a little ticked, a little angry. But she continued to listen, and she actually heard the second part of the verse.... You see, the second part of the verse says, "And husbands—you sacrifice yourself; you give yourself for your wives just as Jesus Christ sacrificed himself for the church and died for her." Who is asked to give their life up? The husband. When Liz heard that part, she leaned over to her friend and said with a little cynicism, "I'd gladly give myself to any man if I knew he would die for me." And her friend leaned over and said, "Liz, there is man who loved you enough to die for you. His name is Jesus Christ. That's how much he loves you." And it was not long after that that Liz dropped her guard, surrendered her life to God in love, and became a believer. Today she is a well-known Christian author and speaker. **Rick Warren, "You Were Planned for God's Pleasure," Purpose Driven Life Campaign Resources**

JOSEPH MEISTER LIVED

Louis Pasteur, the pioneer of immunology, lived at a time when thousands of people died each year of rabies. Pasteur had worked for years on a vaccine. Just as he was about to begin experimenting on himself, a 9-year-old, Joseph Meister, was bitten by a rabid dog. The boy's mother begged Pasteur to experiment on her son. Pasteur injected Joseph for ten days--and the boy lived. Decades later, of all the things Pasteur could have had etched on his headstone, he asked for three words: JOSEPH MEISTER LIVED. Our greatest legacy will be those who live eternally because of our efforts. **Source: Leadership Journal**

Some things are too good not to share

One Mercedes Benz TV commercial shows their car colliding with a cement wall during a safety test. Someone then asks the company spokesman why they do not enforce their patent on the Mercedes Benz's energy-absorbing car body, a design evidently copied by other companies because of its success. He replies matter-of-factly, "Because some things in life are too important not to share." How true. In that category has to come the good news of the Gospel, the good news that ours is a seeking and saving God in Christ. This is good news that the church may not and cannot keep to herself.

John 1:35-51

³⁵Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" ³⁷The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?" ³⁹He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

⁴⁰One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ). ⁴²He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

⁴³The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me." ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.

⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" ⁴⁸Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." ⁴⁹Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." ⁵⁰Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these." ⁵¹And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."