

# 10 Keys to Sharing Your Faith

by Shane Idleman

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*To effectively share your faith, you must know your audience, be prepared to defend your faith, and have a heart for God.*

**Duration:** 1:06:28

**Scripture:** Acts 17:1-18

**Topics:** "Evangelism", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God in evangelism, highlighting the spiritual battle involved in sharing one's faith. It explores Acts 17, providing principles for effective evangelism. The speaker encourages humility, teachability, and being filled with the Holy Spirit to have both authority and power in witnessing. The sermon stresses the need for repentance, acknowledging the sovereignty of God, and leaving the results to God while being faithful in sharing the Gospel.

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## Transcript

Ten keys to sharing your faith. And before I do, I want to remind you that evangelism is warfare, okay? Anytime you go to evangelize or anytime you're going to share your faith, you are hitting a spiritual realm. You are, it's a spiritual battle.

So when you go into sharing your faith, I'm assuming most of you want to share your faith, right? Okay, good. So the 11 a.m. is more awake than the 9, that's good. But sharing your faith and wanting, we have this desire but sometimes we don't know how, what to say, when to say it, what's a good time, what's a bad time, what to expect.

So I want to look at Acts 17 this morning, Acts 17 verse 1 and kind of give you some principles to sharing your faith. And I like what Vince Lombardi said, he's a famous coach of the Green Bay Packers. He said that any man's finest hour, his greatest sense of achievement is when he lies exhausted on the field of battle victorious.

So it is a battle, but you come out of it victorious, you come out of it built up. We are called to share our faith. And I will submit to you that I think a reason many people are dealing with or struggling with a lack of a sense of purpose, there's a lack of joy.

Have you ever felt that way? Lord, what have you called me to do? I'm just going through life, it's meaningless, I'm lacking a passion for what you've called me to do or what have you called me to do? I don't have joy that Shane talks about, I don't have this peace. Many times it's because we are getting full of the word of God but you have to let it out. Now if we're talking about health for a minute, what happens when you eat too much? It's stored, right? That's where we gain weight is because that energy is being stored because we didn't use it.

Same thing spiritually, if you're being filled with the word of God, you have to let it out. Paul said, woe to me if I don't preach the gospel. I'm receiving, I've got to give it out.

So maybe some of you are struggling with what's my calling, what's my purpose, and you will struggle with it until you step out and you begin to serve, you begin to share your faith, you begin to witness to others, you begin to be filled with God's spirit and a sense of purpose and peace returns. So don't just tune me out and think about what's for lunch. When you hear how to share my faith, I know how to share my faith, trust me, you'll glean something if you're open and teachable.

That's one of the points by the way. So chapter 17, Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica where there was a synagogue of the Jews. Then Paul, as his custom was, went into them and for three Sabbaths, Sabbathess with an S on the end, so that's three Saturdays, he reasoned with them from the scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, saying this Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ.

And some of them were persuaded and a great multitude of devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women joined Paul and Silas. So the first point is know your audience and the rebuttals. Know your audience.

Paul went in talking to the Jews and he knew his audience, he knew the rebuttals, he knew how they thought, he knew what they were thinking. And you might be thinking, well Shane, that's going to take a little work. Yes it is.

It's called apologetics. It's called studying the word of God and giving people a reason for the hope that is within you. I mean it makes it very difficult if you've been a Christian ten years and somebody says, why do you believe? Well, I don't know, they teach it at church and the Bible says something.

That doesn't carry a lot of weight there. You want to know your audience. For example, if I'm going to talk to an atheist, let's say, I'm going to talk differently and present things differently than I would with, say, a Mormon or those who are Jehovah's Witness or those in a different religion.

I'm going to talk to them a little bit differently. Because if you tell an atheist, well, here's what the Bible says, well, they're not real concerned about that. You've got to show them the inerrancy of scripture.

You've got to show them God in creation. The Mormon, for example, actually puts the book of Mormon above the Bible. Wait a minute, wrong order here, let's get back to this.

And you argue from a position of spiritual authority with the word of God and you shoot at them differently. Well, the Bible says this, right? Joseph Smith says this. So you can't have both Jesus and Joseph Smith right.

They both can't be right. One of them is wrong. Who are you choosing? And people sometimes get upset because they say, Shane, you shouldn't put down other religions.

I'm not putting them down. I'm trying to show you the difference and I want to show them the difference because the truth is in the difference. And if you're being led astray or led in a wrong direction because you're following wrong information, I have an obligation to say, hey, you might want to check out what the Bible says because I can tell you by the authority of scripture, you cannot deviate and have some other book that contradicts it.

Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, whatever it is, you can't deviate from that or other religions. Well, the Bible's good, but it's not this. You can't have both.

That's why when Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, the life, nobody comes to the Father except through me. That's pretty narrow, right? That doesn't leave you a lot of other options out there. It's either He is the way or He's not.

It's either this is the truth or it's not. And I'm assuming that most of you are here because of that. That we believe that.

So when you share your faith, know your audience. And believe it or not, the reason I started to study a lot is because I didn't know my audience 18 years ago or so, 19 years ago. I came back to the Lord around 1999, 2000.

He began to give me a hunger for His word, a hunger for these things, and I would be stumped often. It's like, oh, I never thought of that. Oh, that's true.

I don't know. And just like not knowing what I really believe. Well, the Bible says it.

Well, you don't know if the Bible's wrong here, here, really? It's wrong? Now I've learned to ask, where's it wrong? Show me. Just one place. Well, unless you get somebody that says something ridiculous, but most of the time, the key is to know your audience and the rebuttals.

What I mean by that is if any of you are salesmen in this room or have a sales experience, nobody in this whole room, oh, you just don't want to admit it, right? With sales, they teach you that no, Terry, I know you do, right? You work for me. 24 Hour Fitness, many years ago. Remember we talked about no just means yes, you just haven't convinced me yet.

No just means you haven't convinced me yet. So when you keep hearing no, you have rebuttals. Well, I need to go home and talk to my husband, right? Well, wouldn't he want you to get in shape and start now? Well, that's true.

I don't have the money now. You can post-date a check, right? Rebuttals. And you have rebuttals.

You know what they're saying, so you have rebuttals. Same thing when witnessing. I know what an atheist is going to say often.

I know what these different religions are going to say. Now as a word of encouragement, you might not know all the rebuttals. It doesn't matter.

If you have the Spirit of God in you, the power of God, some scripture, you can still share your faith. I don't want to discourage, but for those of you who want to build your faith in this area, know your audience. And what Paul did, he said, this is Jesus.

Let me quote Isaiah 53. It was the Lord's will to crush him, crush Christ, and cause him to suffer, and to raise him to life so that many people could be forgiven. Now this is a tough scripture for many people.

It wasn't for the Jews. They understand that the Father bruised the Son, and it's hard for us to really fully understand the ramifications of that. But when you understand John 3, 16, that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes will have eternal life.

They will not perish. So please the Father to bruise the Son and to provide redemption for us. So the Jews understood this is going to be a suffering Savior.

He's going to be beaten. No bone will be broken. They'll cast lots for His clothing.

All of this was laid out in the prophets, the prophets they used to read at every service. So Paul's saying, listen, this is the Christ that we've been reading about. This is Jesus who rose from the dead.

So he knew his audience. But the Jews, verse 5, who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason and sought to bring them out to the people. So Paul and Silas were obviously with Jason and the Jews that were not persuaded.

That tells me that some are persuaded, some aren't, right? So the second point is this, opposition is the rule, not the exception. We sometimes think that, okay, there's going to be opposition and that's the exception that might happen. You better go into this knowing that opposition is the rule.

If you're stirring the spiritual realm, if you're upsetting the demonic influences, if you're doing what God wants you to do, there will be opposition. Here's a proof point right here. How hard is it for you to get to church? You and your spouse.

Let's go to the movies and watch Walking Dead. There's no problems, right? Let's have that terrible popcorn. Let's drink 32 ounces of sugar.

Let's go watch this garbage. There's no problems. The flesh is in unity.

But when you start to stand up for what God wants and try to just announce to your kids and your family, we are going to start having family devotionals at dinner. All hell will break loose. All hell will break loose.

Right? Mood swings will come in. The little ones. There's this demonic something happens when you want to do things for God.

And often that's part of the fight. The fight comes, then the victory. So opposition is the rule.

Expect it. When these false kings and systems of thought were challenged, the response these people had were hate and anger. There's opposition.

So now let's fast forward to verse 10. Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. So they went from Thessalonica to Berea.

When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica in that they received the Word of God with all readiness and they searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. So in Thessalonica, the Jews were persuaded, some got upset.

These, fair-minded, means more balanced. They were more balanced. They said, OK, Paul.

Is it in here? Well, not the last quarter, right? Is it in the Old Testament? Is it in the Scriptures that we have? Is what you're saying, Paul, in here? Jesus suffered. That's right. It's right here in Isaiah.

They were fair-minded. Have you ever heard the term Bereans? Bereans mean that they study the Word of God. And I often say, have a Berean heart but not a Berean spirit.

What happens is the Berean heart is to study the Word of God. The Berean spirit is getting puffed up in pride and arrogance. And they have this sense of superiority and this pride and arrogance because they are puffed up by the Word of God.

So the Bereans were studying the Scriptures. They're saying, is it really so? And I want to remind you to leave here knowing that this is the authority. This is the authority.

This is the best way to expose cults because this is our authority. So when a cult says their authority comes on top of this, you say, no. They say, no, well, have you read our track from our society? But you've got to read this book.

No, this is the authority. That's the point. Study the Bible and let the Bible study you.

See, because when you argue, when you debate or when you have apologetics and when you're discussing your faith, you're really coming with this. This is the authority. This is where you're ministering from.

This is what you're sharing. The truth is in you, so you're sharing the truth. But if you don't have the truth, if the truth is not in you, you're not going to be able to share it.

And that's why I believe that most people can't share this effectively because they're not quite sure what is in here. I mean, I know Shane said this at Church Sunday. I know Jesus, right, He died for me.

I know He raised from the dead. That's why we celebrate Easter. At Christmas, He was born.

And I got those things down, but you'll be tongue-tied if you get with anybody who knows anything about the Bible because you've got to know this. You can't rely on Shane on Sunday morning. That's actually the primer.

Have you ever remember those old diesel engines? You get some ether, just like this gasoline, you spray into the engine to fire it up. That's all I'm doing. Let me give you some ether this morning.

Let me get some motivation. And then you don't just die on the vine until next Sunday. You've got to be in the Word.

And then as God's teaching you every day, you can share or not. But I just learned this. I just learned this.

We're going to have wives in heaven, Mormon church. Well, I just read Jesus said there's no marriage in heaven. We'll be like the angels.

So who's right? God was once like us, and we will be like God? Really? Well, it doesn't say that. Here's a chapter and verse. It does not say that.

And you begin to understand your faith. So start with small steps. Don't be so overwhelmed like I'll never be able to read the Bible.

Yeah, just start. 20 minutes a day, you can get through the whole Bible in a year. Then what? Then you start again.

Then you start again. And you start to get the heart of God. You'll be able to articulate the truth.

So that's the third point. Study the Bible, and let the Bible study you. What I mean by that is I'm studying this.

I'm getting sharpened. My character is getting tweaked a little bit, if I can use that. It's getting smashed a little bit.

The ego's getting smashed. And God's working on my heart. Because you have to remember something very important, that God prepares the messenger before you go out and spread the message.

God prepares your heart. He shapes your heart. Once you start to get a love for the people in the hospital homes, then you go.

Once you start to get a love for those in your neighborhood and they're dying around you, then you go. Because if you don't have love, you go in wanting to argue and prove your point and win the argument. Been there, done that many times, right? I'll get home, my wife will go, how'd it go? And I go, I don't know, but I sure let him have it with the Scripture.

Right? What was that? See, is that what Jesus did? He would listen and he would, actually, the people he rebuked were the religious leaders more than anybody. So know the Bible. And it's almost like in one ear, out the next.

We talk about that a lot. But we talk about it because it's not being done. How many of you would just, why don't you just give up Facebook for a month and read the Bible instead? Oh, that's painful.

It's painful to the flesh, but not to the spirit. Right? See, if we're led by the spirit, we'll make changes to where this becomes a priority. This becomes the focus of our lives.

Then we're able to minister from that. Search and see. He said, search and see if I'm thinking God's thoughts.

So if you want to know, you know what, are these God's thoughts? Does He want me to do this? Is this really you, God, or myself? Because I've often said the worst enemy is not the devil, it's within. I'm more afraid about what's within than the man wearing red with a pitchfork can tell. Which he's not, right, you know that.

The devil's an angel of light, can appear an angel of light, demonic influence. Don't think of this cute little thing, it's demonic and destructive. He's sent to kill, steal, and to destroy.

But that's how I know, is by looking at this. Are these thoughts God's thoughts? I mean, I've changed course before. Try reading Proverbs before making financial decisions.

Greedy, or something about greediness and gain and all those who are trying to get gain and become greedy and what it's going to lead to, and you look at something else about Proverbs and how this is going to lead to that, and you realize that, you know what, my thoughts sometimes are not God's thoughts. And I joked about that last week, but I was true, well, the joke, how do I ever word that, foot and mouth, right? I was joking about it, but it really wasn't a joke, it was true when what we watch determines how we live. Every time we watch Fixer Upper, we want to travel to Texas and spend \$150,000 on our house.

If we could just get a loan, I think if we'd stop tithing to the church, we could do it, start, the kids we sponsor, let's cut those off, I think we can barely make it. And then you see the Carl's Jr. commercial with the Western Bacon Double Cheeseburger, I gotta stop by there. And then I see the Lexus commercial, it's like, oh, it's only \$1,000 a month, I'm sure, between that, right? I mean, but see, but these thoughts aren't God thoughts.

How are you going to balance those unless you have the balancing act? You know, is that a right thought? I mean, so many people should, you know, or marriage, should I marry this person? Well, what does the Bible say? Do not be unequally yoked. Not, well, I know, but it's crystal clear, it gives us guidance throughout the journey. So we look to the Word of God to see if my thoughts are God's thoughts.

See if I'm acting according to the character of God. I mean, we could end most marriage issues if we would just have husbands and wives read Ephesians every day and apply it. You would just, marriage counseling would go out the door.

Right, husbands, love your wives, wives, respect your, and if you just follow these things to the heart of God, search and see if I'm parenting correctly, if I'm making decisions that align with God's Word. So be Bereans to know what to say, but also Bereans to know how to gauge your heart. And then fast forward to verse 16.

Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. Has your spirit ever been provoked within you? I can't even go to Las Vegas anymore. I decided that 17 years ago.

Right, oh my goodness. The pervert, you go to Los Angeles, just provoked within me. Now Lancaster, considering that 10 foot tall Buddha statue, or 10 foot, they have those in their homes.

10 story, did I say it at the first service? I may have to go correct that. Okay, 10 story, a 10 story high Buddha statue. Why is nobody provoked? You got all these other statues.

You've got mosque and you've got Hindu temples. It's no big deal. No big deal.

Right, we're too involved in the things of the world, so it's no big deal. But somebody takes your Dodger tickets. My spirit's provoked within me.

Somebody dents your car. Somebody takes your spot. So you get provoked on those things, but not the things of God.

When the things of God are demoralized, it should provoke you. When we can look in our nation now, we don't have to be a gender. Kids can pick, they wanna be an it, or an ism, or a butterfly.

I mean, it's just, there's a provoking, the 10 commandments, let's remove those, and let's put all this perversion out there and glorify that. That should provoke you. Something should provoke you.

Watch a partial birth abortion, and if you don't get provoked, something is wrong in your heart. See, these things provoke you. What happens? It provokes me, now I'm going to take action.

Actually, many sermons coming from being provoked, and being ticked off by what the enemy is doing. He's ticked me off so much, I might get a little bold. I might get a little loud.

I'm provoked to call things as they are. So Paul here was sensitive to the provoking of the Holy Spirit. That's the next point.

Don't ignore the leading, the provoking of the Holy Spirit. Verse 17, therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. Now I don't want to just gloss over this.

The promptings of the Holy Spirit, right? The promptings of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes we think God will speak to us. God, if you would just shoot it across the sky.

Have you ever prayed that? Me and my wife on a few things. God, just drop a letter in the mailbox from no one, right? With the special writing that says, oh, we just want this mega message. Many times it's not bad because we know the condition of our own heart.

And we know, God, I just want to be crystal clear. I want to be sure that you're in this. God, I want to, but I've noticed it's a still small voice of the Holy Spirit.

It's a still small voice of God. That's how God leads us. Often it's that prompting, that provoking in the Greek language here that they're writing it is to stimulate or to excite, to provoke.

There's something there. God, I've got to act on this. God, I've got to act on this.

And those are the things. Those are the things you've got to watch for. I remember all day yesterday, I hope I can share this, it's okay.

But I was provoked to go to the hospital home. And Sheryl, I visit you. I see you here today.

I invited her. But all day yesterday, I'm at the beach. I'm like, what's wrong with me? Where's this coming from? I wanted to leave on time and get home and go to the hospital homes.

You can ignore that, right? Don't think Shane's up here always listening to the Holy Spirit. Oh, no, no, no. I can put on the ah button real quick.

Like nope, I'm done. I'm not going to listen. So my encouragement is to listen for those.

And I don't know why. I don't know why God doesn't use a megaphone. But sometimes I think He's not going to compete for our attention.

It's like, hey, I'm over here. Louder, would you go? It's still a small voice. You want to hear me? Silence your life.

Quiet your life and listen to me. Seek me and you will find me. Steal your heart.

Steal your soul. Wait on me. In silence, there I am to minister and to lead you.

So the Holy Spirit's a prompting. It's something you can't discount. I remember as I was leaving the hospital home yesterday, I walked by this man and then I went back in and just felt a need to pray for him and other things I can't share right now, but God confirmed it.

And just listening to that. And I don't listen all the time or I ignore. But that's the whole reason I threw this point in there is you're not gonna have often, sometimes, I mean, God will clearly give a vision or a dream or it was so clear.

Have you ever heard that or said that? That was God as if somebody was speaking to me. And that's okay. He's had to give me a few of those before.

But often the leadings are just that, a quickening, a provoking. I've got to do something and it lines up with God's will. You know, you're not the person that says, I just have this leading to leave my spouse.

No, you're probably, there's a wrong spirit. It's a wrong thing gauging you, so you have to be careful. Goes back to the other point.

Does it line up with Scripture? Verse 18, then certain Epicureans and Stoic philosophers encountered him. There's a lot of hard words in this one. And some said, what does this babbler want to say? Others said he seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.

And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, may we know what this new doctrine is, which you speak? For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. They're, obviously, right? They've never heard anything like this. A guy's raised from the dead.

He's your Lord and Savior. You better bow to him. There's a judgment coming.

Whoa, wait a minute. What are these new things? Therefore, we want to know what these things mean. For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear something new.

Nothing has changed in 2,000 years. Right? We're looking at all these new things, new concepts, new ideas, new diet plans. Do you know there's 1,200 a year diet books written? Oh, gosh, that's a convicting part of this.

Better stay there for a minute, right? But there's something new all the time. Tell me, somebody just was reading *The Secret* at a restaurant I was at. Don't go read it.

But he said, have you read this? Oh, my goodness. No, it's just repackaged New Age philosophy. Just repackaged.

It runs its course. Here comes another one. Here comes another.

A couple years later, here comes another one. Here, it's new. It's new.

Truth is never new. If it's new, it's not truth. And if it's truth, it's not new.

That's a good way to remember it. What God set in motion when he created, it still is in motion. So they're talking about what's new, what's new.

Nothing has changed. That's what they're doing now. In our culture, what's this new thing? And that's what kept Oprah going.

She'd have something new every month, right? Or new this, a new doctor. Dr. Oz says this. Dr. This says this.

And all these new things are coming out. So this is what they were up against. Now, it's interesting.

The Epicureans, Epicureans, they were atheists. And they believed in the chief end of man is pleasure. All of you are here because of pleasure.

Seek pleasure, you'll be fulfilled. That's the end of us. We are born somehow, we don't know how, from this DNA and you survive and you make it and just get as much pleasure as you can and you go back to the earth, back to the dust and, oh, I don't know what that was about.

So that's what they believed. And now the Stoics believed that we are one with the universe. Have you ever heard that? That we're one with the universe, that we are with the spotted owl and the sycamore tree and bananas.

It's all one, it's just one. There's some type of deity out there. It's all one.

So they were spiritual where this group were atheists. So that's what Paul was up against. And a commentator by the name of Howson said, the two enemies that Christianity has always had to contend with are the ruling principles of the Epicureans and the Stoics, which is pleasure and pride.

The two enemies of Christianity have always been pleasure and pride. Same thing back then, same thing now. And then, verse 22, Paul is actually going to address the Areopagus without using the Bible.

Oh, keep going. But see, with the Jews, he uses Scriptures that they're familiar with. With this group of people, Greek, philosopher, Stoic, he's just going to talk to them based on other things.

So let's see what he says without using the Bible. How's he gonna convict without using the Bible? Well, here's how. The truth is, what he's talking about, the truth is in the Bible.

He's just not gonna quote the Old Testament because the people are not familiar with it. Verse 22, then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious. For as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with the inscription to the unknown God.

So they have all these altars to all these gods, and they're like, just in case we missed one, this one's to the unknown God. Okay, whoever you are out there, we probably missed you, this is to the unknown God. But let's stop here a minute and talk about point number, key number five.

Acknowledge and encourage them. Acknowledge and encourage them. Now, I'm preaching to myself here because this was hard for me at first.

I don't want to acknowledge and encourage them, I just want to go right for the juggler. Right for the throat, right? You're an atheist, well, bah, bah, bah, bah, bah, bah. You're a Mormon, bah, bah, bah, bah, bah, bah.

I'm like, well, hold on. But I'm learning, and I'm sure some of you have too, that it's good to encourage them and listen. Like, I see that you're religious.

Like, I would tell people that. I would say, I see you're religious. I see you're wanting to find God.

I see that you have a heart for seeking God. I see that you want what God, I see you searching, you're a searcher, I respect that. And you build them up, right? You encourage them and show them, I see where you're going.

Because who in here doesn't want to ever be heard? Or you just want somebody to step all over you like a doormat? We don't want that. Back to the old adage, right? Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Encourage them.

Also number six, use what they already know or believe. So Paul encouraged them and he showed them what they already knew. This unknown God, what you're worshipping, I'm gonna show you who this is.

So he encouraged them and he used what they already knew. And I like to use a sandwich approach, okay? Sandwich approach is this, right? The bread on top is the encouragement. You're encouraging them, you're building them up, and then bam, you come in with the meat.

Oh, wow. Jesus is the only way, the only truth. Wow, this is, then you sandwich them again.

You give them hope. You encourage. You don't just do one or the other.

It's this approach that is biblical. Therefore, then Paul said, therefore the one whom you are worshipping without knowing, I'm going to proclaim him to you. Verse 24, God who made the world and everything in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.

So see, he's telling them the truth. Listen, you have all these temples, but God does not dwell in temples. Here's the difference between all the other religions on the planet, all the other belief systems in the planet.

With Christianity, you come speaking the truth. All other systems are nothing. So when he says, I will tell you about the living God, he's coming with a position of authority and truth and power.

All other religions, nobody, that's why they often say, well, here's what I think. Or here's what these philosophers said. Or here's speculation.

It's all speculation and conjecture and theory. But the truth of the word of God is truth, and you can just lay it out like Paul is. I mean, think about it.

He didn't say, well, here's what I'm thinking. I don't know, what do you guys think? He said, the God who made everything, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.

There's no debating there.

Nor is he worshiped with men's hands as though he needs anything, since he gives to all life, breath, and all things. And he has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on the face of the earth and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings. This would be a whole sermon in itself, because he talks about the sovereignty of God.

He said God created you. God sustained you. The sovereignty of God, who he is, how he will be worshiped.

Everything in this one paragraph to these people who were somewhat receptive. And then the seventh point, what we see Paul doing is he used supplemental information to make his point. So you as well, you can use supplemental information to make your point.

What I mean by supplemental is we have this, but then you can bring in like with an atheist, a lot of facts, scientific facts. Granted, a lot of them aren't ready to listen, right? They've already made up their mind. But you bring in other information.

Like at the debate you can watch, like I did in February, that I brought in other quotes from atheists. Or Charles Darwin, who said, I must freely admit that the way the eye is made, the chances of that are absurd. Here's what he said.

Here's another atheist who said he was the GMO, he was head of the Genome Project that studied how DNA was made and transferred. He said, there's got to be a creator. And you use their own information on them.

You bring in supplemental things to show them the truth. Or compare their writings to the Bible. Like for example, these groups I named earlier that actually they believe in the Bible, not to the same degree we do, but it was a good book.

You compare their writings with the Bible. And you show them where they are in error. So you bring in other information.

Here's a good reminder, verse 25. Nor is he worshiped with men's hands as though he needed anything since he gives life to all men, or all life, breath, and all things. This is God who stands in the edges of the universe.

He created everything. You leave them with that awesome perspective of who God is. You don't make God this small, you make him this big.

They can't comprehend how big and awesome this God is. And I'll just give you one of my goals here. I hope it doesn't sound too mean, but this is one of my goals, is to make sure they don't get a good night's sleep.

I want them to go home and wrestle with the facts I just gave them. And it's amazing. I don't know how many people you've talked to.

I've talked to a lot. And you run into them later. You gave me a lot to think about.

Or you really made me upset. Or you really, I can't, I'm just so mad. I'm like, I'm getting a good night's sleep, why aren't you? Because you're coming with the truth.

And for some reason, people think that is arrogant, but it's not arrogance, it's confidence. And don't confuse the two. You can be very humble and very confident.

You can, you can be humble and confident. It's not arrogance. It's not arrogance to say, God, is this who he says he is? That's confidence in knowing what the truth is.

So you can use supplemental information to make your point. Get them to think, not have a good night's rest. Think about, I can't believe he said these things.

I mean, it's amazing when you tell people the truth. I shared this, I don't think it was since we've been here, but I ran into, I was jogging in Palm Springs many years ago. My wife said, okay, I'm gonna eat at this place for lunch.

And I was jogging, and I never showed up. Or breakfast, I think. And I never showed up.

I ran in, as I was running, I saw this guy like, he goes, is this guy checking me out? This is Palm Springs. I said, hey, how's it going, what do you? He goes, oh, I've never seen you in this area before. Come to find out.

Of course, he's, you know, struggles with homosexuality. So for 45 minutes, I just listened and laid out. Listened and laid out.

Listened and, but have you thought about this, of forgiveness and repentance and redemption, and God loves you, and this is, and just, oh, he goes, I could not believe, he goes, I've never had anybody say this to me. Because you gave me a lot to think about. See, not angry, just listening.

Just listening, but here's where the Bible says it comes from, Romans one, so we're suppressing truth, and God gives us over, but I was born this way. I said, but I was born to lie. I was born to cheat.

I was born to mislead. I was born to commit adultery. I was born to do all these things.

Doesn't make it right. And that's why God sent Christ, not to condemn you, but to set you free. That's the whole point of repentance.

And just shocked that nobody's ever explained this to me. Right? Because many times, we're burning the rainbow flag and cussing at people and not showing them the love of Christ. See, I believe, I truly believe you can love somebody and have grace and mercy, but you can be as bold as Paul and not back down from that boldness, not compromise the truth.

So that leads me to point eight. Offer the solution to their problem. Many people who are engaged with you have a problem.

And if you think they don't, they do. If they are an unbeliever, lost, without God, or caught in a false religious system, they have problems. We have our own problems.

Right? They have a problem, they have a need. One thing I love about people in other religions or searching, is they are searching. They are hungry, they want spiritual truth.

So you help them with that problem. Verse 27. So Paul said this, so that they should seek the Lord.

See, put the responsibility back on them. You should seek the Lord in the hope that he might grope for them and find him. In the hope that they might grope for him and find him.

It's this imagery here, you might say groping. It's this imagery of a man caught in darkness, right? That's what they are. They're lost in darkness and depravity.

And they're groping in the darkness. They can't see anything, but they're seeking in the hopes that they would find him. So Paul uses that imagery, they can understand.

They're groping, find him, you will seek him. And you can tell people that. You can tell people that and encourage them.

Seek God while he may be found from you. He's not hiding in heaven. He's not a mile below the ocean, down there with the mermaids.

Right, this is a God. Bible says he's an ever-present help in time of need. So you can call on him, you seek him, you will find him.

He will never turn down a sincere heart that says, God, I don't know you, but I want to. I don't know you, but I need to. God, would you show me who you are? He's not gonna be in heaven going, no, no, you missed that one.

Sorry. He's actually looking. The Bible says the eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are loyal to him.

Those who seek, if you seek me, you will find me. If you call on me, I will answer. See, I don't know, but I just get so excited sometimes because these are not, like we'd be in trouble if it said, if you call on me, I might answer.

I might if I'm on this side of the globe. If you seek me, I might consider allowing you to find me. But this is a God who says, if you seek, and he cannot lie.

Put God to the test. I often say, your word is at stake. Your word says, if I seek you, I will find you.

And when I do that, sometimes the worship comes alive early here in the morning, and God begins to pour into my heart, and I find him afresh again. Holy Spirit, fall in this place, and we're transformed and revitalized and renewed because he answers what he says. If you seek me, you will find me, but if you reject me, I will reject you.

See, it's back in your court. It's back in your court, so put it back in their court. If you seek him, you will find him.

Call on him, he will answer. Verse 30, truly, Paul says truly. Man, he just tells him, truly, these times of ignorance, God has overlooked.

He's basically saying, you've been ignorant. You've been foolish, you did not know there was a true and living God. He's overlooked it, but now, but now commands all men everywhere to, uh-oh, you guys ready for this word? It's not said in many churches.

If you're wanting to build a large church, you don't want to talk about this very often. You hope people read it on their own. Oh, you guys ready? It's gonna offend some people.

But now commands all men everywhere to repent. Repentance is a beautiful word. It's the first word of the gospel.

Jesus said, go and preach repentance. There's actually a book written entitled Repentance, the First Word of the Gospel by Richard Owen Roberts. There's I guess another Roberts out there, but it's not the one that's contemporary.

This guy, he's older. I don't know if he's passed away yet, but it's a wonderful book. And the reason this is so important is repentance is you see sin how God sees it.

You see that you are lost without him, that Paul just convicted me. I do need you, God. I humble myself, I repent of my sin, and I believe.

And that's how the person is changed. That's the only hope. That's the only hope for our nation, for our country, for our churches, for our families.

And just a quick message to pastors. If you are not preaching repentance, you are not preaching. You might be talking.

You might be talking. And this is just a beef of mine. Let me just vent for a minute.

I'm not gonna mention names and things, but I see guys on TV who don't preach repentance, who don't preach sin and none of the things. And I talk to other Christians about it who like these people, and they say, well, they're just kind of, they're just kick-starting people into the kingdom. They're just kind of, you know, they're the softer version of you, Shane.

They're just, you know, just kind of, come on. But you never find that in the gospel. Paul doesn't say soften everything for a year or two, and then the next stage, don't mention hell for about four years, and then the next stage, he doesn't have that.

So I think we are excusing some of these people because we want to be nice, right? We don't want to judge, you know. But they're not talking about these foundational aspects of Christianity. They are not preaching.

They are motivational speakers. They are not preachers. They are not pastors if you're not talking about the totality of Scripture.

If you can only talk about love and grace and mercy, you are not preaching. You are pontificating. You are tickling their ears.

So you have to preach all of the Bible, but not in a spirit of arrogance, but of love. Because if you truly understand the significance of repentance, you can't avoid it. I mean, for me to avoid the word repentance, talking to that guy in Palm Springs, you might as well just schedule a root canal for me.

Everything went back to that. Okay, so what must I do to repent? What must, repent. Repent.

Paul says he commands all men everywhere to repent. Now, did he soften it up after that? No. Because he has appointed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man, Jesus, whom he has ordained, and he has given assurance of this by raising him from the dead.

That's why the resurrection is so important. Jesus is not a good teacher. He was a great teacher, but he was not just a good teacher.

He was the Son of God, God himself, and he said, I will be raised from the dead. The resurrection validates who he was and who he said he was. So you don't have to be scared of the resurrection.

Actually, there's wonderful, look at Lee Strobel's material. Read a couple of his books. You can talk about the resurrection with very, very good chances of making a person think.

Because number one, it's not a fairy tale. Even Jewish historians, secular historians, noted that Jesus was born, that he died a horrific death on a cross, but then the body went missing. Both of the guards should have been killed for allowing the body to be missing, and where's the body? They would have found the body, there's no religion.

But then we have 500 and some witnesses attesting to the fact that he was risen from the dead. So if you study it, you'll have so much faith welling up inside of you that you can hold your ground when you talk with people, not arrogantly. Here's a good rule of thumb, as they get louder, you get quieter.

I haven't mastered this yet, right? Hey, that's a good one, we should try that one at home. You wanna catch that one? When the spouse gets louder, right, you get quieter. That would stop a lot of arguments in the home.

Spouse get louder, you get quieter, same thing. 11 o'clock service, I'm gonna pray for you guys. There is a day of judgment coming.

Paul proclaims these words on the Areopagus, again. Do you know what that was? It was the seat, let's just say the seat of judgment. They don't have to keep saying that word.

He was proclaiming judgment on the seat of judgment. They would come from the Greeks and Stoics, and all these people would come to this place, that was the seat of judgment, where authority sat, where judges would pronounce judgment. So he was standing at this place, talking about the true and living God who is coming to judge all of the world.

The significance is amazing. And often, he was proclaiming Jesus, King Jesus. King Jesus, would you come again and make a difference in our lives? It's what he's telling them in verse 32.

And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. If they're not mocking, they're not convicted, okay? So whenever people mock you, just say, oh, convicted. Convicted.

Convicted. Oh, you're one of those guys? Convicted. Yeah, convicted.

Mocking, right? People ever mock you for what you believe? It's called conviction. So when they heard the resurrection of the dead, they mocked Paul, but others said, we will hear you again on this matter. So Paul departed from them, he kept his cool.

However, some men joined him and believed. Among them was an Aragonite, and a woman named Daenerys, or Daenerys, and others with him. Forgive my dyslexia this morning.

I should have just scratched these out earlier. But this leads me to point number nine. Leave the results up to God.

So some were not persuaded, so Paul departed. And often, I think we get so let down if there's no results, right? But what farmer plants a corn of crop, a crop of corn, and then reaps the benefit the next day? Nobody does. So many times, when you're planting seeds, you don't know where that is harvesting later.

You have no idea, and I'm glad we don't sometimes, because we get too prideful. See what I did for the kingdom of God? All these things, bop, bop, bop, bop, bop, bop. All these, look at the, and God keeps us humble, but also realizing we do the planting from time to time, God does the watering.

The harvest is up to Him. All of that is up to Him. So when somebody comes to the Lord, you know, they're like, oh, Shane, thank God you, well, I guarantee this started 10 years ago.

People have been praying for you, and praying for you, and praying for you, and praying for you, and talking, and I just caught you at a low spot, where you were finally ready. And so don't give me the credit, or somebody else, God is working in all of that. We're just a messenger.

Now, this is actually has a flip side, it's very encouraging, because somebody isn't listening, it's not my problem. Somebody isn't growing like I thought, it's not my problem. I just heard a good analogy this week.

God is the potter, right, and He puts us on the clay, but what we like, He puts the clay on the potter's wheel, but we like to put other people on the potter's wheel, and we like to be the potter, right, and transforming them, and God says, no, leave all that up to me. You just do what I've called you to do. Chapter 18 now, we're skipping chapter 18, verse six, but when they opposed Him, and blasphemed Him, Paul shook his garments and said, your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean from now on, I will go to the Gentiles.

So little things transpired, he left this area, he went and talked to the Jews, and the Jews were rejecting him, so he said, your blood be upon you, and on your heads, and on your children, on your family, everything. I'm clean of this, I'm going to the Gentiles. So let me, I'm getting to the last point here, let me throw this out there, ask God what He wants you to do.

I think many times we're too worried, like, Lord, am I supposed to do this, or I'm waiting for this, or I want to get into school first, I want to do, where does God, what does God want you to do right now? Where, Lord, what are you, at the restaurant, where you're going, at the grocery store, with friends, it's, we think of these things far away, these lofty things, but God is asking us to do things here, right now. Verse eight, chapter 18, 24, now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, mighty in the scriptures, think about this, this man's mighty in the scriptures, he came to Ephesus, this man had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. Now this could take a while, if we wanted to, but I won't do that to you.

The baptism of John, John the Baptist, was baptizing people in the Jordan River. They were coming to him as a baptism of repentance. They were unclean, they wanted to get their life right with God, they were being baptized.

But this Apollos knew nothing about Jesus, really, or the ways of Jesus, and being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of sin, and the work of the Holy Spirit, and all these things, we don't know exactly, but he was just focused on the baptism of John. So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. Now this is interesting, I don't think too many people would be prepared for this.

If you're ministering, and you're doing things, hopefully you're teachable and you're humble. That's the next point, teachability and humility are your greatest weapons, aside from truth. Teachability and humility are your greatest weapons.

See, this man was teachable. This really doesn't tie into the apologetics aspect, but I wanna glean something from Apollos' life. Normally he would say, oh yeah, well I know this, I went to this seminary, or I know this about the Bible, and you don't, and they're not open.

Many people, many people, I know this is hard to believe, but they don't listen, they're too busy making their point. Many people are not teachable, they're too busy talking. See, here's an interesting thing about being teachable and humble.

When I talk about it, we all go like this, oh yeah, that's right, but we don't apply it. How many people could be corrected, what about if it said, and shame was explained the way to God more accurately? Oh really, well who says, right? And we start to argue because there's no teachability and humility there. I'm gonna throw this out there, all of us in this room need to be more teachable.

Nobody has perfect theology. If you tell me exactly what your theology is, I'll find 10 other solid Christians that disagree with you on non-essential issues, on non-essential issues, not the essentials of the gospel. And it's teachable and humble people that are gracious and understanding.

You can hold your convictions, but be teachable and humble. Arrogant people argue, humble people listen. The last point here is teachable, be teachable and humble as you're sharing your faith.

Now I'm gonna give an example, this is dangerous to do, because this is actually not like me. I'm a little hesitant to share this because I don't want people to get the wrong impression, but in February, we were passing out postcards at the college, and I ran into an atheist there who's a pretty prominent atheist there. And I talked to him for about 25 minutes, 20, 25 minutes, his office, just sitting listening to him.

And it was hard because I wanna just boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, right? Oh, here's a chart that shows we are connected to the apes. See, oh. You know, he said he was gonna write a Bible about, or a book about how Paul was wrong in the Bible.

I'm like. And all these things, I'm just sitting there, just sitting there trying to listen, practice what I preach, right, same thing. And it was hard, it was difficult.

So I'm not giving you this example to elevate me because I struggle in this area of being humble and teachable with those other belief systems. But he emailed me, we touched base, and he said, when I met you, I was impressed by an honest, simple nature, apparent willingness to learn things, and your lack of arrogance. I'm like, woohoo, that was a close call.

Because it was in here, right? It was in here. He said, you acted a lot like I suspect the historical Jesus of Nazareth acted. I would enjoy meeting again with you when time permits.

Now, normally, that doesn't happen, right? But I was so conscious of myself sitting there and being quiet and listening and quiet and not wanting to, you know, vent things. Because what we do is we react, not respond. Right, he would say something.

See, we have the similar DNA of a monkey. I'd say, well, that just means that the Creator, right? I eat bananas and breathe air, too. You would use similar DNA, right, wouldn't you? Why would you need completely different DNA from Jupiter and one from Mars? If it's the Creator, they're gonna use the same type of DNA interwoven and use different creations, with man being, us being created in God's image.

Right, so, and when he said, I'm gonna read about all Paul's incorrect teachings, I wanna say which one, name one. And then go off, right, and start arguing in that. But there's a relationship that's been built and we're praying, I'm praying that he's gonna be at church next week.

He said he would come to church next week. So be praying about that and God's open. But see, if I wanna start to argue with him like I wanted to, I mean, I almost had to do this.

That makes sense. And not joke, I'm just being serious, right? Because the flesh also wants to show off, right? And just, this is ridiculous. Because I do, and I'll just say it, I mean, I love people who don't believe that there is a God, that all this just happened, just as much as I would anybody else, but I just can't fathom how that concept is even possible.

I just, I can't see how all this just happened. You know, the jellyfish and then the sharks and then us, I mean, all just kind of come together somehow. Keeps it in order, the moon, the sun, everything is just, you know, it doesn't get over 110 or we would not do good, and it doesn't get below, you know, 30s here, 20s, I mean, the degree, if you, I don't even wanna get into it, but the mathematical, everything is so minute, like if the sun was just a little farther, we would just be an iceberg.

I mean, it's just that, and the gravitational pull, if it just, if it was like a percentage of a percentage of a percentage greater, we'd all be smashed like pancakes. Or a little bit less, we'd just float away. So who keeps all that in a perfect harmonious order? Nothing? I just can't fathom that, so I have a passion for that, but when you get to really get to the root of it, these people are mad at God.

It doesn't exist. That's where the root of this is. So God is not impressed with your intellect or your knowledge, he is interested in a broken and contrite heart.

So I'm gonna leave you with this last thought. The main key to evangelizing, to witnessing, to sharing your faith, okay, here's the main key. This is probably the most important of the whole sermon.

Right here, this is the main key, is being filled with the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit, okay? Now, here's the funny thing that happens. We say, oh yes, I know that, I am.

The problem in most churches, here's why I believe we're not seeing healing to the degree we could. We're not seeing the demonic realm beaten. It's okay to pray, you know, people have demons, right? There are people with, there's a demonic stronghold in their life.

The reason we're not seeing people released, the people we're not seeing come to Christ at greater numbers, the reason we're not seeing a lot of things, the reason we're not witnessing is because we have authority, but we don't have power. See, authority is given. Every believer, when you say, I am, I believe, I repent of my sin, I believe in Jesus, you have the authority.

But power is conditional. Power, the closer you draw to God, the more power you have. When you disconnect from the things of the world, I'm gonna get into that in a minute, the more power you have.

So people have authority, but they have no power. I'm gonna tell a Los Angeles County sheriff, I know quite a few. Some of them usher for our church.

One's on the worship team right now today, just heads up. If you take, if you take, see if you can spot him, right? It's not Jim on the drums. If you, Jim, you'd make a good sheriff.

I think of the old Wild West, the rabbit trail. So you take your badge to Florida. Hey, look, I'm a Los Angeles County deputy sheriff.

They'd say, you have authority there, but you have no power here. You have no jurisdiction, you have the authority back where you're at, but you have no power here. See, here's the big thing many people miss.

We're living a lukewarm, carnal Christianity often. We have authority, but we have no power. I mean, if you don't read the book of Acts and go, where's this? Where's this power? So we have authority, but not the power.

We have the power, here's when. When you separate yourself from the world, from the filth of the world, that's why holiness is not a weird word. It's a very important word, because power and holiness go together.

If you wanna be holy and powerful and set apart for God, you cut your ties with the world. You don't look like the world. There's a difference there.

You're following hard after God. I have the power because I've been fasting and pleading and praying. You have the power because you've been fasting, pleading, and praying.

We have the power because we've been meditating, memorizing, and proclaiming the word of God. Jesus said, you will receive power and become my witnesses. See, it's this aspect of power that we forget.

That's why many people are bored in their faith. That's why they're not, let's not take a survey, but when was the last time you led somebody to the Lord? Have you seen a miracle? Have you seen somebody being healed or set free? Have you prayed against the demonic element in their house or in their life? And have you seen that demon be removed from their life? Where's this power? Well, that was back then. I don't believe that.

I believe that Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forevermore. And he himself said, those who believe, those who believe, you will cast out spirits. You will, oh, here's one.

I don't know, are you ready for it? You will raise them from the dead. People say, do you believe in that? I say, if my little four-year-old dies and dies, you don't think I'm be praying that? Of course I believe that. Of course that the same power, the same power that rose Christ from the dead is in you if you engage it.

But if not, you just have authority and no power. Here's what happens, if I said right now, listen guys, in the Bible study room, there is somebody deeply possessed and demonic, and you do not want to go in there unless you're ready. Most people would go, what's for lunch? I'm not going in there.

Right? But as a believer, when you have the power, the authority, you've been prayed up, you've been fasting, you've been in the word of God, you want, I'll say, I'll go in there. I'll handle that. Because you have the power.

I remember, first we started visiting hospital homes. Paula, you remember this, I won't say details and things, but I think she asked me if I could go visit this person. And I went in there, and the nurses, the door was closed, and even the nurses said, you don't want to go in there.

She is highly suicidal, depressed, and just, you do not, you know, we've had the door closed for a reason, she wants it closed all day. So do I go, oh, gosh, that's true, you know, and gosh, now, or do you have the authority and the power? Say, oh, that's wonderful, and Satan's got her bound, but we're going to walk in there with the authority and with the power. And opened that door, eventually she started coming to church, got baptized at some other church, and God changed her whole heart.

Now, I was not prepared for what I saw, because it was a felt suicide attempt, with the, I think it was a 357, blew out the front of her skull, and she was blind forever, for then, and she, it was just, I started crying, and my tears, I remember my tears hitting the floor. She didn't know I was, and God's just breaking me. He's breaking her, he's breaking me, right? That's why this whole process of going, that's why I encourage the hospital homes, because you will be a broken person, you will have the heart that Christ has.

That's why it's so difficult, that's why most of you are not going. When a church decides, does it have enough helpers, something's wrong. That's ministry 101, if you don't know what you need to do, that's what you need to do.

You need to get plugged into that. But I went in there, and I'm not trying, again, not trying to elevate, because I fall in these areas many times, but I understood I had the authority, and I had been praying and fasting before I go to these homes, and I was walking in the power of the Spirit. So that demonic realm has no authority and power.

See, you don't go into it, and the devil says, the devil says, some people says, I don't know you, but I know Paul and Jesus, and they'll attack you, but when you come in with spiritual authority, they don't tell you what to do. You realize that, right? They don't tell you, oh, there's this, you get, oh, oh, camps, you have the authority and the power, you command the demonic realm, you tell that demon to leave, you tell that sickness to leave. I'm not getting hyper, weird, charismatic, I'm just preaching the Bible.

I mean, I came to this realization, because people, I get emails all the time, this message goes out to thousands of people all the time, and sometimes it's a blessing and a curse. But they just put you in that old, that weird, hyper-Pentecostal, charismatic camp where you're holding rattler snakes and can get bit by them, and oh, look it, I didn't die. No, I'm just saying, Jesus said, those who believe in me will cast out demons, they will raise people from the dead, and if you're ready, they might speak in other tongues.

Whoa, well, either, see, either you gotta chop that out or you gotta embrace it. And because I believe he's the same yesterday and today, forevermore, I believe in the miraculous power of God. And people say, well, I don't believe that anymore.

I just say, well, too bad, I feel sorry for you. I could not go to church that believes that the gifting, the power of the Spirit, all these things are gone because we don't need it anymore. I would actually submit to you that we need it just as much now more than ever before.

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