

## Share Your Faith

### Listed Scriptures

Lk 15:7; Rom 8:38-39; Jn 3:16

### Lesson Aim

- 1) To learn from examples in the Bible of how to share the faith, light and truth of God
- 2) To understand what it means to be the love of God and how we can be transformed into having that kind of love

### Memory Verse

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify Your father in heaven." (Mt 5:16)

### Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Psalms 56-60

## B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



If we take a close look at many of the famous evangelists in the Bible, we will notice that most of them did not seem to be "cut out" for the job, at least from an outward appearance. Several of the disciples (Mt 4:18-22) were fisherman and certainly did not possess the necessary qualifications that one might associate with being a public speaker. Although Saul was bold in his persecution of the Christians, no one would have ever thought he would end up spreading a message of love and peace among his one-time enemies. Even Jesus Christ was doubted by many. Born as a carpenter's son, it was difficult for people to imagine Him being a preacher and a miracle worker. Yet all these examples serve to tell us that it is God who chooses us to do His work. And when we are lacking in certain areas, He will transform us in a way that will allow us to share our faith with others.



If the resource is available, begin the lesson by singing the hymn "Share Your Faith". In case sheet music is not accessible, this is an excerpt from the hymn:

**Share your faith, share the peace and joy you know.**

**Share the light in a world of darkness.**

**Share the truth that can set all people free.**

**Be the love of God, let Him live in you and me.**

These words are very meaningful and relevant to today's lesson.

The lesson will focus on these aspects and hopefully encourage the students to serve God by sharing their faith.



### Part 1

## Share Your Faith

Jesus Christ clearly told us in Acts 1:8 that we are His witnesses, that we have the responsibility to share our faith by preaching the gospel to others. This is also one of the missions of the true church, as studied in previous lessons. However, do we share our faith because Jesus Christ commissioned us to or is it because we really feel the grace of God upon us and realize the importance of spreading this grace with people we know? As in the lyrics to the hymn sung in the Warm Up section, we should share the peace and joy we know, to share the truth that can set all people free. That is indeed precious. When we own something of great value, we tend to want to tell others about it. Do we feel just as compelled about spreading God's word? Let's take a look at several people who did and how God used them to share their faith in different ways.



## A. Share Your Faith: Paul

Paul was picked by God to serve Him by spreading the Gospel to the gentiles. But it didn't start out that way. In fact, we all know Paul was a great persecutor of the

Christians before his conversion. Even immediately after he became a new person, a lot of believers had trouble really believing that God could use him. But God chooses each person for specific reasons. Let's take a look at some of Paul's qualities that at first glance seem to prevent him from serving God, but were used by God in the end to spread the good news.

### a. He was a fanatic

Before his conversion, Saul was very determined to arrest Christians and persecute them in any way possible. He gave his approval when Stephen was stoned to death (Acts 8:1). He even asked the high priest for permission to imprison believers as he saw fit (Acts 9:1). Although Saul seemingly did his work with a lot of zeal, it was zeal that was misplaced. However, the Lord Jesus was able to transform this fanaticism into undeterred faith in the end. After his conversion, Paul preached endlessly, making many missionary trips to spread the word of God.

### b. He was stubborn

Saul was pretty pig-headed when it came to what he thought was the right thing to do (Acts 9:1). Usually, when we are stubborn, it is hard for us to submit to the will of God. However, after Saul's conversion, he allowed the Lord Jesus to turn his hard-nosed personality into something very valuable. Paul became one of the most resilient missionaries. Despite death threats, shipwrecks and imprisonment, he never gave up.

### c. He was well-educated

Saul was raised as a Pharisee and educated under a highly respected teacher. All these made him a very knowledgeable person. Of course, his understanding of God and salvation was incorrect and it seemed impossible for Saul to be able to humbly accept that Jesus Christ is the Savior. However, on the road to Damascus, he was literally transformed by the Lord Jesus (Acts 9). Today, we know that many people who are well-educated have a difficult time accepting God into their lives because it is based on faith, and not necessarily on what they logically know or can prove. But as in Saul's example, we know that God can use the most extreme personalities and unexpected people to share His message of love and salvation. Paul was even able to use the knowledge he had gained earlier to preach the good news. Once Paul knew and experienced God's transformation, he felt compelled at all costs to share his new-found faith. Even qualities that seemed to be in the way of God's work was changed into usable gifts.



## **B. Share the Light: Jesus Christ**

We all know why Jesus Christ was sent to serve. Unlike Paul who was later converted, the Lord Jesus came into this world with one mission in mind. All His life on earth, He was training Himself to do the work that God sent Him to do. But there were many people who were unhappy with the way He conducted Himself. Jesus Christ once said that it is not the healthy who needs a doctor, but rather, the sick who needs healing. This meant that it was His mission to help those who were rejected or looked down upon by society, people who really needed Him. Let's take a look at some of the people He shared the light with:

- a. tax collectors (Lk 19:1-10)
- b. prostitutes (Lk 7:36-50)
- c. lepers (Lk 5:12-16; 17:11-19)
- d. the physically handicapped (Mt 20:29-34; Mk 7:31-37; Lk 5:17-26)
- e. the demon-possessed (Mk 9:14-20; Lk 4:31-37; Lk 8:26-33)

All these people have one thing in common. They were hated by the rest of society but more importantly, they needed to hear the message of salvation. Sharing the light means shining in places of darkness. We know that this world is full of darkness. But it is especially bleak for those who seem to have no hope. Jesus Christ understood that in order to fulfill God's work, He had to shine the light. Many of us today tend to make quick judgment calls as to who can or can not be saved. We often think that it is useless to preach to a friend who is already a Buddhist or someone who is sexually promiscuous. But Jesus Christ has shown us that God's salvation cuts across all classes and prejudices. Our job today is to just plant the seeds. God will allow for the growth.



## **C. Share the Truth: Philip**

Although there are not many passages in the Bible that specifically refer to Philip (the evangelist chosen as one of the first seven deacons, Acts 6:5), the few that are mentioned teach us a lot about what is important when sharing the truth.

### **a. He was sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.**

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him" (Acts 8:35). We often believe that we need a certain personality in order to be able to preach the gospel. But we learn from Philip that the determining factor is whether we are sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit. We can ask God to simply help us keep our ears and eyes open for any one, people we know or those we may have chance to encounter, who may need to hear the message of salvation.

### **b. He evangelized one-on-one.**

"So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' And he said, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him" (Acts 8:30-31). It is not always easy to preach to another person. There seem to be many barriers: language differences, the lack of courage, not knowing the Scriptures well enough, preaching to strangers, preaching to people of other faiths, too busy with work and family. But the fact is that one-on-one evangelism is the most effective way to bring someone to know the Lord Jesus. Because Philip was speaking face-to-face with the eunuch, he was able to answer his questions concerning the passage in Isaiah directly. And it was those words that moved the eunuch to ask to be baptized. Spending time with someone personally allows us the opportunity to share testimonies and make Jesus Christ real, and not just a message preached on the pulpit.

### **c. He was not prejudiced about whom he preached to.**

"So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship" (Acts 8:27). When Philip saw that the Holy Spirit had moved him to preach to an Ethiopian of high status, he did not hesitate. Today, we often convince ourselves that certain people can't be preached to for various reasons. And we don't bother to once we have made that determination. When the Spirit moves us, we can only share the truth of Jesus Christ to the best of our ability. The rest is up to God. We really do not know who is hungering for God's salvation and should not make any pre-determinations about the people around us. In fact, before meeting the eunuch, Philip had first taken the gospel to Samaria, where his work was very successful (Acts 8:5-13). This teaches us that it is God who orchestrates when any one person can be converted, no matter who this person may be.



### *Part 2*

### *Be the Love of God*

How can we share our faith by being the love of God? The lyrics to the hymn sung earlier say that we need to let God live inside of us. What does that mean, to really manifest God's love? Let's take a look at what God's love is like so that we can truly be that love.

## **A. God's Love Is Forgiving**

"I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance" (Lk 15:7). This kind of love is the reason why Jesus Christ came to earth, to seek those who need His forgiveness. Although we often talk about loving others, that tends to only include people we know and like. But what about our enemies? Maybe a friend who has wronged us, or a boss who gives us a hard time? It seems difficult to forgive and embrace someone we can't stand to be around, but that is the power of God's love. He forgave us when we were sinners and we feel blessed and relieved that we have a part in His heavenly kingdom. Perhaps that person is also waiting for us to do the same. To be able to forgive someone is a great demonstration of God's love living and working inside of us. Holding grudges, on the other hand, will only hinder us as we try to grow in faith.

## **B. God's Love Is Beyond Measure and Will Never Run Out**

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom 8:38-39)

Paul wrote these words to encourage the believers to remember to turn to God's love always, no matter what the circumstance or how difficult life may become. Paul is really saying that we can not be separated from the love of Jesus Christ, ever. Does anyone ever feel that way about us, that he can completely rely on us for anything and everything? Some of us feel that way about our parents because they give us unconditional love. Even when we turn 50, we know their love remains. Can others come to us in that manner? Do we even offer that kind of love to people around us? In this individualistic society, we are taught to look out for ourselves. It's hard for us to do someone a favor unless we know we will be getting something back in return. The love of Christ teaches us otherwise and we must let the voice of God stand out among all others so that we can demonstrate love that is beyond measure.

## **C. God's Love Is Sacrificial**

"For God so loved that world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (Jn 3:16)

This famous verse teaches us that God is not self-centered and His love reaches out

to others. He did not just tell us that He loves us but He paid a high price to show us, giving up the life of His Son. When we want to be the love of God, we need to also be aware of how much we are giving out. It's hard to love someone with just feelings and words. We have to be willing to give up our time, money or effort in order for others to respond to our love. Take a moment and reflect on the kind of love we radiate. Do we love when it is convenient or do we really sacrifice ourselves? We need to step out of our comfort level and do something that requires us to extend beyond ourselves. Only then can we be worthy of being God's love.

### C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



- 1** Share two traits that Paul possessed that seemed to prevent him from serving God but were later used to spread the gospel.
- 2** Explain how Jesus Christ shared the light while in this world.
- 3** Why was Philip a good evangelist? List two qualities and support your answers.
- 4** Describe what the love of God is like.

### L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



#### ***Transformed***

God has interesting ways to use people to do His work, as we have found out from this lesson. Sometimes, it's hard for us to imagine that we can do work for God too. Maybe we think we are too immature or have too many "bad" qualities for God to even bother using us. Even if that were the case, God can transform us into a usable vessel, just as He changed Saul into one of the most successful missionaries. For example, He can turn our addictions into a thirst for God's truth. Or transform our lust for things in the world into a passionate love for lost people. Whatever the case, only God can make it happen. But we also need to know this and believe it. If we keep telling ourselves that there is no way God could ever change or use us in a way that is important, we aren't letting God in to do His work. As Saul was transformed, he became obedient and

did not resist the Lord Jesus. Similarly, we must also be “transformed by the renewing of [y]our minds” (Rom 12:2). Think about the following questions:

1. Is there a “bad” quality that you possess that you think might be hindering you or preventing you from fully participating in God’s work? For example, you might possess a lot of anger or you are too involved with school to put God first. How can you let God transform this quality into something useful?
2. Do you have a sense right now that God wants to change you more deeply than you’ve allowed Him to? Share your thoughts. If you feel that God does want to use you but you aren’t sure how to accept His will or to submit to it, what’s the next step you should take?
3. Do you feel like there is something you need to sacrifice in order to be able to work for God?
4. What do you think evangelism involves and how can you ensure that you keep getting closer to that level?

### **Testimony**

Do the people around you see that you are a follower of the Lord Jesus? There have been many testimonies where the parents or family members of new believers object to their coming to church. But because of the believers’ transformation and unwavering faith, demonstrated through their love, the objections slowly subside. Read the following testimony.

I got baptized when I was 16 years old. It seemed so long ago but the memory still remains. My parents are worshipers of ancestors, to a small degree. However, when I was introduced to the True Jesus Church, the work of God was working so mightily within me that I wanted to get baptized and be a Christian. The day I got baptized is one I will never forget. The weather was so cold and the water was freezing, but because of the love of God, that didn’t stop me. I wanted to be fully cleansed from my past sins and be called a child of God. My parents were so busy working that they didn’t attend my baptism. They didn’t oppose my decision to become baptized and I thought they approved of my choice to be a Christian.

After I got baptized, persecution came. My parents stopped me from going to church and wanted me to refrain from church worship. But the more they opposed, the more I wanted to attend church services. Therefore, secretly, I went with other church sisters. Thankfully, God gave me the precious Holy Spirit one week after my baptism and I didn’t feel so alone and without power. On a few occasions, I was late coming home after the church service, and my parents shut the door and forbade me to enter the house. Not only was I left outside in the cold for about one

hour or so, (I got baptized in October), my parents would start saying very nasty words about going to church. Many times, I was hit and abused with whatever objects my parents could pick up around the house because of my religious convictions.

One time, I got so many wounds all over my body, I was crying inside my room. My parents had already left the room and gone to sleep. But I was still weeping, not knowing why I was treated in this manner. I opened up the Bible and strangely enough, I turned to 2 Peter and started to read a passage. It said, “Dear children, do not feel astonished about the trial that you are going through as if something strange is happening to you. But rejoice, knowing that your suffering is a glorification to God.” Right then and there, I felt like my heavenly Father was speaking and comforting my wounded soul. I told myself that I needed to be strong in order to preach the good news to my parents.

The persecution went on for about 3 years. Every week, I was either hit or scolded at. My parents even threatened to disown me. Some days, I would go to school looking like a cat who had been in an all night brawl. Sometimes I would be dressed in long sleeves and long pants and my schoolmates would wonder why I was wearing my winter clothes even when the weather was so hot. I will never forget those days. But even with the on-going persecution, thank God that He gave me the Holy Spirit to strengthen me. I knew I had to do something so that my parents could see the love of God. I prayed and asked God to give me His love—the unconditional love that I needed to show to my parents.

Week after week, I received more revelation from God through prayers. The message was always delivered loud and clear—more of God, less of me. How could I show more of God and less of me? I concluded that God wanted me to show my obedience and love to my parents by caring for them, listening to their problems and needs, helping them out in the shop (they had their own business) and studying more fervently at school. This was the best way to demonstrate to them why I felt so strongly about going to church: the love of Christ, manifested in me.

It was not easy, but I felt that with the help of God, the tasks didn’t seem so burdensome and hard to carry out. God said explicitly that we need to show love and our good deeds in front of everyone. We should be the light of this world. After all, no one puts his lamp under the table. We need to shine like stars in the universe. Even though there were some weeks I couldn’t go to church, I knew it was only temporary. Even though I missed a lot of good sermons, I knew God was going to move my parents’ hearts and allow me to go to church again in the future.

Sure enough, God's grace is abundant. Three years went by very quickly. My parents no longer persecuted my faith. They saw something within me that I couldn't even explain in words—the love of God. I wanted God to transform me when I began my new faith even though the persecution was taking place. And He did! He transformed me to someone who has a lot more patience, a lot more love and a lot more obedience. And the strange thing is that my parents saw me in a new light—a Christian, a child of God. I truly praise God for helping me and enabling me to show God's love to my parents. May all glory be unto His name!

Note: The writer's parents received the amazing grace of God through water baptism nine years after. They are in the fold and are enjoying God's grace and blessings every day!

1. Even though this sister was severely persecuted, how was she able to maintain her faith?
2. What kind of a transformation did you see in this sister's life?

## R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



*We know how much God loves us when we remember how He sent His Son to die for us on the cross. God has commanded all of us to love, not only God, but also the people around us. The single greatest way to really share this love is to bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Let us demonstrate our love through a transformed life, showing others kindness, patience, gentleness and self-control in all that we do. May God give us the wisdom and strength to carry out His will.*

## Lesson 13

### Review

#### Lesson Aim

That the students may have a review of how God, His salvation and the church play a role in their lives

## R E V I E W

1. **Provide two points to support how God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent (see Lesson 4 for possible answers).**
2. **Describe how Jesus Christ is the Savior of this world. Use two illustrations to support your answer (see Lesson 5 for possible answers).**
3. **Write about 3 prophecies in the Old Testament that concern God's promise of salvation.**
  - a. When the serpent tempted Adam and Eve to sin, God told the serpent, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed" (Gen 3:14-15). This was to prophesy that the descendant of woman, or the virgin, would bear the Lord Jesus to destroy the power of Satan (Mt 1:20-21; Heb 2:14-15).
  - b. When Abraham obeyed God and sacrificed His beloved son Isaac, God told him, "...blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed..." (Gen 22:16-18). Later, Jesus Christ was born as the son of David, a descendant of Abraham.
  - c. Before Jacob passed away, he told his sons what would happen in the future. He said, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver