

SHARE
“Sharing Boldly”

Introduction: Conclusion of most important series—SHARE

- A “share craze” society—yet believers fail miserably
- 74% of America’s unchurched ARE willing to hear a Gospel presentation
- 38% are looking for something to satisfy
- 82% are at least somewhat likely to attend church if invited

Review: SHARE

- Broadly
- Clearly
- Strategically
- Obediently

Today: Boldly

Early church as example:

Acts 4—Peter/John at Gate Beautiful—arrested, threatened, released, and warned

PRAYER:

Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:29-31 NKJV

- Boldness-“parrasea”

Acts 5

- Miracles—arrest of the apostles
- Re-arrested, threatened
- We must obey God rather than man
- Plot to kill—Gamaliel intercedes

And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. 42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. Acts 5:40-42 NKJV

Acts 28—Paul in prison

Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him. Acts 28:30-31 NKJV

— Confidence—“parrasea”

IMPORTANT: The early church was characterized by boldness in sharing their faith.

— Boldness (parrasea) openly, frankly, without concealment, free from fear, with urgency

We are called to share boldly: Four reasons

I. We must share boldly because we have been commissioned to do so.

A. It is our commission as stewards of God’s Word and the Gospel

Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 NKJV

B. It is our commission because of our privilege

But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more. Luke 12:48 NKJV

C. It is our commission because of a ripened harvest that requires workers

Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Matthew 9:37 NKJV

D. It is our commission because Jesus commanded us

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. Matthew 28:18-20 NKJV

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died. 2 Corinthians 5:14 NKJV

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5:20 NKJV

II. We must share boldly because we have been empowered to do so.

A. Promise of power

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8 NKJV

B. Pentecostal power explained

But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. Acts 2:16-17 NKJV

Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. Acts 2:33 NKJV

C. Pentecost power spread

And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. Acts 10:45 NKJV

D. Paul's understanding of power

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. Titus 3:5-6 NKJV

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Romans 5:5 NKJV

E. Poured out power (ek-cheo) gush, poured out

F. Poured out power is love not a particular manifestation

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 1 Corinthians 13:1 NKJV

a. This love empowers us to fulfill the heart of the law

Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Matthew 22:37-40 NKJV

b. This love empowers us to reach out to lost humanity

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 NKJV

c. This love empowers us by re-orienting our lives from an inward focus to an outward focus

(ILL) Peter in John 21—charged to feed sheep 3,000 saved at Pentecost

III. We must share boldly because it is our responsibility to do so.

Be merciful to those who doubt; 23 save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. Jude 22, 23 NIV

A. It is our responsibility to speak the truth boldly

One Translation: “Some of them you must persuade out of their error while they are still wavering.”

1. Not just doubt but tottering toward heresy
2. Two responsibilities
 - a. Know truth ourselves
 - b. Share it is due time

B. It is our responsibility to snatch people from danger

“Save others by snatching them out of the fire.”

1. This takes discernment and wisdom but there are times for action
2. There is a time for holy boldness

C. It is our responsibility to patiently but wisely share with the lost

“To others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.”

Clothing stained by corrupted flesh

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1. Have to engage their lives
2. But cannot “compromise” our own

Sharing our faith boldly is...

- Our commission
- The reason for our empowerment
- Our responsibility

IV. We must share boldly because our message has eternal consequences.

That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? Romans 10:9-14 NKJV

- A. At the end of the day it's about eternity!
- B. Couple of stories

I shared with David M., a formerly unchurched businessman from New York, the information you have just read on U4s. David read the essence of this chapter and responded with a lengthy email. With his permission, I share with you a portion of his correspondence.

Hey, Thom, I just finished reading the material on the U4's. Boy, could I identify with those people. I was probably a U4 just about five years ago. I never was antagonistic toward the church and Christians, but I was resistant to anyone trying to convert me.

I look back on those years, and the best I can describe it was that it was a time of fog. I didn't think or see much clearly in those days. Most of the time religious matters were not at the top of my agenda, but they were kind of hanging in my conscience. I guess the Holy Spirit was trying to get my attention.

The most amazing thing about that period is that I can't recall one person over several years who ever said anything to me about Jesus or even the church. I had Christian neighbors who never opened their mouths. I had Christian coworkers just two offices down from mine. Never a word from them.

Looking back now, I think I would have welcomed a word from a Christian. I didn't know it at the time, but I was hurting deep inside. And I probably would have put on some act of bravado to let people know I didn't need God as a crutch. But I still would have loved to have heard something from a Christian.

I guess I moved to more neutral position, what you call a U3, after watching a Billy Graham crusade on television. I bet if someone invited me to church then I would have gone. You know the rest of my story. I finally visited a dynamic

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church in town and became even more receptive to the gospel. Finally someone from the church asked me to lunch. Mike, who is now my best friend, shared with me how to accept Christ. A few months later I did pray to receive Christ.

But do hear what I am saying. I had to go to a church before someone talked to me one-on-one! For the first 42 years of my life, no one witnessed to me or invited me to church. I pray that I will never make that mistake of keeping my mouth shut. No, it's more than a mistake, it's a sin.

Thom, I pray that your next book will be used of God to open some mouths that are sinfully shut. If I had to depend on most Christians in America for hearing the good news, I guess I would still be hell-bound. Please let your readers know that most of the unchurched people out there would welcome a word from a Christian. Please tell them before it's too late for some.

Thanks, David. But I will not need to tell them. You already did.

Deanna K. is from Hawaii. A little less than a year ago she accepted Christ through the witness of a soldier stationed there for several months. Deanna is very excited about her newfound faith. She immediately became involved in a local church where she is growing in Christ every day.

A month prior to my conversation with Deanna, she signed up for a Bible study advertised in her neighborhood. When she arrived, she was very surprised to see so many of her neighbors that she knew fairly well.

"I looked around the room right before we began," she told us. "I said, Jennifer are you a Christian?" and Jennifer said, 'Yes.' I then asked Debbie Jo if she was a Christian, and she said she was too. In fact, I asked five of my neighbors that same question and they all told me they were Christians.

"I guess I was kind of obnoxious that day. I told each of them that I had been a Christian less than a year. I told them that I had lived in the neighborhood for eight years and none of them had even told me they were Christians. I got too emotional and told them that they might as well have told me to go to Hell, because that's what their silence said."

Conclusion: How shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard?

Our silence has eternal consequences!