

**The Walk: Share**  
**Matthew 28:19-20**  
**Sunday, October 5, 2025**

Have you ever noticed how the people on Facebook tend to have lots of opinions? Leaving aside politics and advertisements (which I wish was possible), you can't get on to Facebook without seeing all kinds of suggestions about the best books, the movies you just *have* to go see. The best places to eat, the best recipes.

And, of course, that phenomenon isn't limited just to social media. Most weeks I'll talk to someone wanting me to try a restaurant they love, or talking about a sports team they follow fanatically, or a TV series that I just have to watch.

The fact is, people are passionate about a lot of things, and people tend to share the things they are passionate about with other people.

But here's something I find interesting. While people are free with their opinions regarding sports teams, movies, and books, it's pretty rare for someone to spontaneously share with me about their faith. And I'm a pastor!

I wonder why that is? Why is it that we, who have been entrusted with THE Good News of New Life in Jesus Christ—which is, after all, the most important thing in the entire universe—are so hesitant to share it.

And, I think there are several reasons. For one thing, we don't want trouble. We all know the two things you don't bring up at family gatherings, right: politics and religion, right? We figure it's probably safest just to keep our mouths shut.

Another reason is that we might not be totally, 100% sure exactly what we believe. Or, more likely, we may not think we've studied enough to have all the answers to all the questions.

And finally, part of the reason could be that we just aren't that passionate about our faith. This tends to be the case with people who view salvation strictly in terms of a ticket into heaven when we die. If that's all it is, then it doesn't have much if any impact on life here and now, and there's really not all that much to get excited about. You've got your ticket, you're good.

But, as we see in today's scripture, Jesus didn't give us the option of not sharing our faith. The *last thing* he said to his followers right before he ascended to be with the Father was to share their faith with everyone. Most of you know of this commandment as the Great Commission.

Which raises the question of why he would say that? Why is it so important that we share our faith that Jesus made that commandment his last word on earth?

First, we need to remember why Jesus came to earth in the first place. He came to bring the Gospel, the Good News of New Life, of born again, eternal life, that begins when we say yes to Him.

Which is great, but here's the deal. Jesus, even though he was the second person of the Holy Trinity, was still a single human being. Rather than miraculously delivering the Gospel to the entire human race all at the same time, he appeared as a single person, in a particular time—about 2,000 years ago—and a particular place—the rural Roman backwater of Galilee. His reach was limited. He could only tell so many people who he was and why he had come.

And, in any case, he knew that just telling people by itself wouldn't work. They would need to see new and eternal life in action to really get it. So, he focused his earthly efforts on a core group of 12 disciples, allowing them to share his life, and revealing to them just who he was and why he had come. And then, as we read today, he relied on them to do the same once he was gone.

CS Lewis analogized this process of spreading the new, born-again kind of life to how viruses spread: through person-to-person contact. It started with Jesus. He passed it on to his 12 closest followers. They passed it on after that. It's been passed on and on since then. And now we've got it.

And we've got it because someone passed it on to us. You're here because someone shared the Gospel with you. In many cases it was a parent. Maybe a Sunday School teacher, or a co-worker. But someone passed on to you the secret of new life in Christ. Now, it's your mission to pass it on to others. Jesus' mission to spread new life is our mission as well. That's why it's called the great CO-mission.

So, how do we do it? Well, at some point, we've got to *want* to do it. We've got to internalize the amazingness of God's grace towards us. We've got to understand just how much God loves us. And we've got to start experiencing more of the new, bountiful, and eternal life that Jesus came to give us. In other words, we've got to find the passion in our faith, and the way we do that is through some of the spiritual practices we've been talking about the last several weeks: things like passionate worship, deep study of God's word, serving God's children, and giving back to God.

Which will then lead into actually living a new and different kind of life. Living differently is what the first Christians did. They loved the unlovable, cared for those on the margins, forgave their enemies, and lived with an unnatural, God-inspired joy and peace. And people noticed. Even though Christianity wasn't an officially recognized religion, it grew rapidly because of the beautiful alternative Christianity offered to the dominant culture.

Saint Francis, who came along many centuries later, is said to have put it this way: "Preach the gospel at all times. When necessary use words." It's what I ask y'all to do in the benediction every week: live your life so that the people around you want what you've got.

But, at some point, we're going to have to explain what it actually is we've got.

So, how do you do *that*. I mean, let's assume someone came up to you right after worship today and asked you to explain the Gospel. Or maybe someone sees you paying for someone else's groceries and asks you why you did it. They're interested. They want to know more. What would you say?

Well, I can tell you what not to say. Don't be bullhorn guy. Most people don't respond well to the "gospel" of an angry and hostile God who's just waiting for an excuse to send us to hell. That gospel isn't THE Gospel.

So, what IS the Gospel. One of the most famous and influential theologians of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Karl Barth, wrote a massive, thirteen volume series of works on systematic theology called Church Dogmatics. But when asked to sum up the Gospel of Jesus Christ in one sentence, he referred back to a children's song most of us know. We sang it last week: "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so."

I agree with Karl. Although I usually expand it a little. You hear me do it most every Sunday. God is love. We were created out of that love to live in that love. We, however, rejected that relationship and alienated ourselves from God. But God loves us so much he sent his son to enable us to re-connect with the kind of lives we were created to live—what Jesus calls eternal life; a life that begins the moment we say yes to Jesus and continues into eternity.

But even that is a little abstract. One of the things I learned in preaching class is that we remember stories. We relate to stories. It's why we love movies and novels and want to tell other people about them. So, when it comes right down to it, all you've got to do is tell your story.

So, I want to take just a couple of minutes right now for you to think about your story. What difference has Christ made in your life? What difference has being part of this community of faith made in your life? How would you describe that difference to someone in just a couple of minutes?