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Series: Week 10
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The Essential Practice of Witness

The Essential Practice of WITNESS -
"Confidently testifying of who Jesus is and what He has done, in ways that invite others to follow Him."

-Our witness' testimony is "***compelled"*** by the authority and ever-presence of King Jesus to go and share His Good News with the world… (Matthew 28:19-20)
-… And through the ongoing, powerful work of the Holy Spirit, this Good News can be "***compelling***" to those willing to receive it. (Acts 1:8)

"What am I compelled to say?"

1.) <u>The Story of the Gospel</u>, which God inspired, preserved, and has carried along to us today to read and understand the Good News of Jesus. (2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21, 1 Co. 15:3-8)

** Please see the back page for "The Gospel: The Good News that Gets Better and Better!"*

Consider:
-Do you believe that God created you and loves you?
-Do you believe that you are a sinner, in need of a Savior?
-Do you believe that Jesus died in your place to pay for your sins, so that you could be forgiven? Do you believe that He rose to life again, breaking the power of sin and death for all who place their faith in Him?
-Would you like to talk to Him now in prayer, confessing your sin, proclaiming your faith in Him to be your Savior, and humbly asking to receive His free gift of forgiveness?

…if so… You are ***Forgiven!*** You receive your ***Adoption!*** You are empowered and sent on ***Mission!***
And you can live with the now and forever hope of ***Heaven!***

2.) <u>The Story of Jesus' ongoing, transforming work</u>, seen in the lives of His people around me, and in the personal change He is doing within me! (Romans 12:1-2, 2 Cor. 3:16-18, 2 Cor. 5:16-17)

-When Jesus is at the center of a life, there is a transforming work that should ripple out for the world to see. We should continue to grow to have more of His characteristics evident. It is an ongoing work that will never be fully accomplished until we see Him face to face, but it should be this ***"More and More"*** that is witnessed by all.

Consider:
-What examples of Jesus' transforming work ***have you seen and heard of in the testimonies of others?***
-What examples of Jesus' transforming work have ***you personally experienced?***
-How would you describe your daily, personal relationship with Jesus? Would you describe Him not only as your "Lord and Savior," but also as your friend, counselor, protector, provider, teacher, etc.? How often are you aware of His living and active presence?

"Who am I compelled to say it to?"

1.) *…<u>The family within your home, and the Family of Faith</u>* (Deut. 6:4-9, Eph. 5:21-6:4, Psalm 145, 1 Cor. 11:25-26)

Consider:
-What would it look like, in this season of life, to schedule time to share about the truth and love of God with those closest to you? (Deut. 6:7)
-What could you wear or display that can remind you to reach out and share Jesus' love? (Deut. 6:8-9)

2.) *…Those "near" to, and "far" from Jesus.* (Mark 12:28-34, 1 Peter 3:13-17, Col. 4:5-6)

Consider:
-Who do you know that you might say is "near" to surrendering their life to Jesus? Are there those who know many facts, and claim a genuine curiosity, but have not yet understood Jesus' personal invitation? What does intentionally sharing with this person look like for you?
-Are there those in your life who you may say are "far" from Jesus, actively rejecting His truth and love, and perhaps even hostile towards Jesus' followers? If so, what might be your next right step (patience and prayer, acts of service, bold proclamation)?

The Gospel: Good News that Gets Better and Better!

Five Essential Elements to Embrace:

Creation – (Genesis 1:26-27, Psalm 139:13-16, John 3:16, Romans 1:20)
-God, the Creator of all things, chose to uniquely create every person, and declared that they are valued and loved by Him. ***But, it gets better…***

Forgiven – (Genesis 3:15, 1 Cor. 15:20-22, Psalm 103:11-13, Romans 3-23-24, Titus 3:3-7)
-***…First, however, here's the bad news…*** All of us have done things that were wrong in our lives (lied, cheated, hurt others...). In the Bible, these wrong decisions are called "sin." Our sins separate us from our Just, Holy, and Perfect God. ***But here's the Good News,*** in His love and mercy, God made a way for us to be forgiven. God, the Father, sent His Son Jesus, to become a human like us. He lived without doing anything wrong. He willingly paid the penalty for our sins, through His death on the cross, so that we could be forgiven. There is nothing we can do to buy or earn this forgiveness; it is a free gift of grace alone, extended to all who would receive it by faith alone, believing in Jesus alone. ***But, it gets better…***

Adoption – (1 John 3:1, Ephesians 1:5, Romans 8:15-17)
-Jesus was raised to life again! He broke the power of sin and death for all who have believed and opened up the way to have a new life with Him! He invites us to become a part of His forever family, becoming a "new person" with a "new heart" and a new family name! We call ourselves Christians, because we are in the family of Jesus Christ. We can call God our "Father," and other adopted "sons and daughters" are now our "brothers and sisters!" ***But, it gets better…***

Mission – (Matthew 22:37-40, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Philippians 3:12-14)
-As members of the family of Jesus, we also live with the Holy Spirit within us. He helps us to change more and more every day to be like Jesus, and gives us power, wisdom, and courage to live with mission, meaning, and purpose, sharing God's love with other people, inviting them to follow Jesus as well. ***But, it gets better…***

Heaven – (Luke 23:43, 2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21:1-7)
-Everyone who has been forgiven by Jesus, and adopted into His family, will be able to see Him again one day. After this life is over, we will live with Him in His forever kingdom, which will be pain-free, joy-filled perfection. ***… And will get better and better, forever and ever!***

