

The Fruit of Our Labor

The book of Acts ends in a puzzling way. After Luke spends several chapters detailing with how God providentially got the Apostle Paul to Rome, the book ends with Paul preaching the gospel in jail. He is under house arrest waiting for his case to be heard by the Caesar (Acts 28:30-31).

What happens to Paul? Did he get out of jail? Did Caesar grant him his release? Was he ever able to preach the gospel again as a free man? Luke doesn't answer these questions in the conclusion of Acts. He leaves the story unfinished because it continues even today. As we preach and spread the gospel, we add more chapters to the story of Acts.

This reality will help us conclude the evangelism portion of our "Hand to Plow" series. After shining, being gracious, and giving God the glory in our daily lives, there are some fruits we can expect to enjoy in our relationship with the lost.

The Fruit of Confession

- Planting the initial seeds of evangelism sends a strong message to the world. He announces who we are at our core (1 Peter 4:1-5; Matthew 10:32-33). Our lives confess that the gospel is powerful and has changed our lives.
- The world knows we are disciples when they see us going to worship, standing against sin, treating others with kindness, and displaying integrity.

The Fruit of Curiosity

- Inciting curiosity helped create an opportunity for Jesus to teach the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-30). Jesus made her curious about "living water." She wanted to know what, where, and how to gain access to it. She was perplexed that the Lord knew such intimate details about her life.
- Our godly lives can also make people curious. They can make people curious about faith and how they can share in it.

The Fruit of a Chance

- Curiosity can help us gain an opportunity to share the gospel with the lost.
- Paul urges us to pray for evangelistic opportunities and make the most of them (Colossians 4:3-5)
- Jesus made the most of the opportunity He was given with the Samaritan woman (John 4:25-26).
- Paul made the most of the opportunity he was given with the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:30-32).
- Our Christian influence is so powerful that it can incline the world to be more receptive to the truths we share with them from the gospel.

The Fruit of Conversion

- After spending time with Jesus, the Samaritan woman was converted (John 4:28-30).
- The jailer and his family were converted (Acts 16:33).
- While Paul preached in Rome, many obeyed, and others didn't (Acts 28:24-29). These are the results of evangelism even today!
- We cannot control whether people obey the gospel, but we can share and present it to them in love. We can take part in helping them come to know the Lord.

The Fruit of Contribution

- We contributed to the story of Acts when we were baptized in Christ (Mark 16:15-16).
- We also contribute to the story whenever we take part in evangelism!
- The story of Acts will continue until the Lord returns!

Conclusion:

Do you need to obey the gospel and contribute to the unfinished story?

- Shawn Jeffries