

Sermon for April 19, 2015

“And you are to be my witnesses to these things.” Uh-oh, we’re going to talk about that dreaded “e” word today—evangelism! I know; the mere mention of this word causes us to sweat profusely, our throats to become dry and scratchy and we start to look around for any means of escape that’s available to us! So today we’re going to try to make witnessing a little less scary for all of us.

I think part of the reason witnessing is so scary is that we may be doing it wrong. Many of us think that what we say has to bring someone to faith in Jesus Christ, but that’s not our job. That job belongs to the Holy Spirit. We also may not be witnessing because we remember a time when someone witnessed to us and told us that if we didn’t believe like they do; we were going straight to hell. We didn’t like the way this encounter made us feel and we don’t want to make others feel the same way; besides, judging isn’t our job—it’s God’s.

Some of us are afraid that talking about our faith isn’t cool and we don’t want to be the outsider, the strange one. Let’s face it; most of us don’t witness about our faith because we think we don’t know how and what to say. But you know what—you do know how to witness.

Breaking it down to its simplest form; witnessing is just telling someone else about something we really like and are excited about. Let me give you an example. One of my favorite television shows is the Big Bang Theory. Whenever something comes up that reminds me of an episode—I talk about it. We witness all the time and we don’t even realize we’re doing it. We’ll talk to family, friends,

co-workers, even strangers about our favorite movies, television shows, places to eat, sports teams, where to vacation and the list goes on.

So the first part of our exercise today is really easy. I want you to turn to someone next to you and talk to them about your favorite restaurant, sports team, movie, work, anything and after a few moments I'll stop you. Alright begin.

Was it hard to find the words to describe what you were talking about? Is there only one way to do this? Did you do it perfectly? As you can see there isn't just one way to witness. And you know what, we don't have to be perfect when we're doing it—we only have to be honest.

Now I want you to witness to the same people and before you get nervous, just remember that witnessing is talking about where we see God active in the world—whether it was in your personal life, through the church, our schools or someone else's life. To get you all started I'll mention a few things where I've seen God active here at Calvary.

I've seen you take people to doctor's appointments, go shopping for them, make meals for others, bring members who can't drive anymore to worship, volunteer at VINE, clean up the environment, pray for families in need—you get the idea. But now it's your turn to tell where you've seen God at work; you can do this!

God doesn't want this to be hard for any of us to do. Jesus started the disciples in Jerusalem; a place where they were comfortable and had friends and then out into the rest of the world. We can do the same—start with family and

friends and then move out into the community. We can all do this—just keep practicing!