

Full of excuses

I didn't write this but I have had many similar conversations. I would credit the author but I don't know who wrote it because I received it as a forwarded email. It is a quick read with a profound punch. I thought it deserved wider circulation. Enjoy.

"And what would Jesus have done if He were passing a pagan temple where they were sacrificing children?" I asked,

My friend responded, "Well, I suppose He'd stop."

..."And do what?"

"Probably say something"

"Like what?"

"Probably that they should stop."

"And then what?"

"I don't know."

"What would He have done?"

"Well, He wouldn't have held a sign."

"Why?"

"Because He spoke in love."

"When He called people 'brood of vipers' and 'whitewashed tombs,' was that in love?"

"Yes. But He wouldn't have held a graphic sign."

"Why?"

"Because He spoke in love."

"Why is a graphic sign not loving?"

"Because it turns people off to Christianity."

"Why?"

"Because it's offensive and people won't approach you."

"When He called people 'brood of vipers' and 'whitewashed tombs,' was that offensive?"

"Well, yes. But that was Jesus."

"So, we shouldn't be like Jesus then?"

"No, I'm not saying that."

"What are you saying then?"

"That we should be loving and not offensive. We need to show people we're just like them."

"John 15:19 tells us that we're not to be of the world and because of that, the world will hate us."

"That's true."

"So, then why should we be like the world?"

"Well, we shouldn't."

"How should we preach the Gospel?"

"Not with signs."

"Why?"

"Jesus didn't use signs."

"Jesus didn't use a printed Bible, either. Should we only use what He had available then?"

"Well, He could have made a sign if He wanted to."

"How?"

"With parchment."

"Where would they have gotten the ultrasound picture from?"

"Well, they didn't have any."

"So, tell me again how He would have made the sign in a way the culture would have understood what an ultrasound photo was."

"I'm just saying we shouldn't be offensive."

"When Jesus called Peter 'Satan,' was that offensive to Peter?"

"Yes, I'm sure it was."

"Was it in love?"

"Well, yes."

"Why? It was offensive?"

"Because Jesus was trying to make Peter understand he was wrong."

"So, He spoke truth in love, but offended someone?"

"Yes."

"And...?"

"OK, well, you have a point, but I still don't think it's the best way."

"How would you do it, then?"

"Well, there are organizations that do this kind of thing."

"So, if there is an organization willing to do what we are not, we should support them?"

"That's what they're there for. They're called to that."

"When Jesus said to preach the Gospel to the ends of the Earth, was that only to some people?"

"No."

"Who was it to?"

"Everyone. It's the Great Commission."

"When Jesus said that we should love our neighbor as ourselves, was that also to just some people?"

"No, that was to everyone, too."

"So, if we are to preach the Gospel to everyone everywhere and to love all our neighbors, why should we only have some people do it?"

"I'm waiting for your answer."

"I just think some people are called to certain things."

"Like what?"

"Certain areas."

"Like what?"

"Like missions."

"Like what?"

"Like going to a place where the Gospel needs preached."

"Like where?"

"I don't know, like wherever it's needed."

"And only some people are called to share the Gospel?"

"No, we all are."

"So, would it be correct to say we're all missionaries?"

"Yeah, I think so."

"Where are you a missionary to?"

"I don't know. I guess where I work"

Does the Great Commission specify where we each are called to share the Gospel?"

"No."

"Actually, it does."

"Where?"

"It says everywhere."

"Oh, well, yeah."

"So, why are you only called to your workplace?"

"I mean, I guess I'm not just called there."

"Where then?"

"Well, maybe my golf group and things like that, too. You know, places I go."

"Have you driven down Market Street in Akron?"

"Yeah."

"Did you know that 3 minutes from our church building, they murder babies on Market Street?"

"Well, yeah, but that's where you go, right?"

"Yes, that's where I go on Saturday mornings."

"OK, so what's your point?"

"You've driven past there, right?"

"Yeah, I just said so."

"And you just said that you are supposed to share the Gospel all the places you go, right?"

"Yeah."

"So, why are you not sharing the Gospel there?"

"Well, I mean, you're there, right?"

"Yes, but we started this conversation by you saying I shouldn't be."

"Well...yeah, I guess we did."

"So, tell me again why I shouldn't be there?"

"Well, I mean I see your point. But I don't like the signs."

"But you're OK with my preaching there then?"

"Well, I mean, yeah. That needs done. But it needs to be in love."

"Define love."

"The passage in Corinthians."

"You mean where it says, 'Love is patient, love is kind,' etc?"

"Yes. See? It says 'Love is kind.'"

"It also says, 'Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.'"

"Yeah. I don't see your point."

"What does it look like for love to not delight in evil, but rejoice in truth? Would allowing children to be murdered be 'kind'?"

"I...well, I guess that means we shouldn't do bad things, but follow the truth in the Bible."

"Like modeling Christ and how He acted, right?"

"Right."

"How about telling people about Hell and judgment?"

"No, see, that's where we drive people away."

"So, when Jesus said if an eye causes you to sin, it'd be better to gouge it out rather than go to Hell, that was wrong?"

"Was He wrong?"

"No. He's Jesus."

"And we're supposed to model Him, right?"

"Yes."

"So, again, why is speaking about judgment and Hell wrong?"

"It's not, it just shouldn't be the first thing out of our mouths."

"If a blind person was walking off a cliff, what would be the

first thing out of your mouth? 'I love you and want to help' or 'You're walking off a cliff!' "

"The last one."

"Why?"

"Because it's the most important at that moment."

"So, if someone is going to murder someone else right in front of you, should we shout 'God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life' or should we shout 'Don't murder that person!' "

"The last one again."

"Why?"

"Because they're about to murder the person!"

"So, why is it wrong for me to stand outside an abortion clinic and tell people not to murder their children?"

"So...again, why is it wrong for me to stand outside an abortion clinic and tell people not to murder their children?"

"It's not. I just think there's a better way."

"What is it?"

"We should tell them God loves them."

"I'm going to murder someone in 10 seconds. Quick, share the entire Gospel and then prevent me from murdering. Go!"

"Um...uh, God loves you and He died on the cross. He rose again on the third day and He-"

"Stop! 10 seconds. Just murdered the person. And now you're to blame."

"Me? How am I to blame?!"

"You didn't tell me not to. I just know God loves me. He'll love me even though I murdered someone, right?"

"Well, no. I didn't say that! You can't murder someone and then ask for forgiveness."

"Why? You only told me God loves me."

"He does, but you can't murder someone!"

"You never told me that."

"You didn't give me a chance!"

"Yeah, I did. I gave you as much of a chance as anyone gives me outside an abortion mill."

"Well...I mean, that's not enough time."

"No, it's not. So, in that instance, what is most important? Explaining the entire Gospel? Or trying to convince them to stop before they murder another person?"

"Getting them to stop."

"OK, 10 seconds again. I can't hear a word you're saying because you're so far away. Convince me not to murder my child. Go!"

"What? I can't...what?"

" 7...6...5..."

"Uh, I uh...um, what? I can't talk?"

"2...1...the baby is dead. Congratulations, you did nothing."

"But how am I supposed to get you to understand if I can't even speak to you?! That's not fair!"

"Maybe...I don't know, a large sign might have helped?"

"Uh...(sigh). Yeah."

"So, tell me again why I shouldn't preach the Gospel wherever I go, tell people not to murder their children, use a large sign, and speak words of truth that people might be offended by?"

"OK, I guess I'm seeing your point a little."

2016 Dave Daubenmire – All Rights Reserved