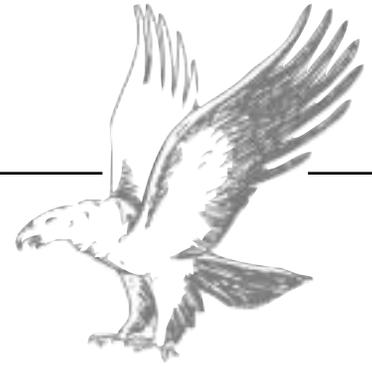


Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”
Isaiah 40:31*



January 9, 2011

Tell What Great Things God Has Done

God has done great things for us, and we should enjoy them. But God does not intend for us to keep them to ourselves. If they are great for us, they should be shared with others.

“Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, ‘Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you.’ And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him” (Lk. 8:38-39).

To appreciate this story, we have to go back and look at the miracle that set up this exchange. This Gadarene demoniac was no garden variety case of demon possession. He called himself “Legion,” because many demons possessed him (v. 30). The effect of this multiple demon possession was horrific. He wore no clothes and lived in tombs (v. 27). When others tried to bring his madness under control using chains, he would break free and run into the wilderness (v. 29). This man’s life was a hopeless mess.

But all that changed when Jesus came into his life. Jesus cast the demons into a nearby herd of swine, who were destroyed by their new masters. The pigs were lost, but the man was transformed, “clothed and in his right mind.” The change was so dra-

matic, it frightened those who knew him (v. 35). The Lord had given this man a new life.

It’s no surprise, therefore, to read of this man begging to follow Jesus. The Lord had given him his life back; how much more could he learn from Jesus if he followed him! But Jesus had other plans for His new disciple. Hanging around Jesus might have been personally satisfying, but he could be far more useful to the Lord’s cause by returning to his people and sharing the story of what God had done for him. It was an effective strategy, for “the whole city” heard about this man’s amazing story.

There are three lessons in this episode for God’s people today.

First, our salvation is not just a personal gift from God, but also an instrument through which God’s grace is shared with others. That’s why God does not whisk us away to glory as soon as we come up out of the waters of baptism. Our own victory over sin may be accomplished, but God wants that experience to be shared with others, as a means of introducing them to the hope of a better life. The most

effective evangelism is that which spread person-to-person, by those who have already experienced God’s grace.

Second, there is a strong correlation between our level of appreciation for what God has done for us and our willingness to share that story with others. If we’re too embarrassed or indifferent to tell others about the changes that God has wrought in our own life, then what does that say about our level of gratitude for His gift? If, on the other hand, we see the salvation of the Lord as the greatest thing that ever happened in our life, then we can’t help but share it with others.

Finally, the message that God would have us share with others is not a complicated one. We do not have to be Bible scholars to talk to others about the Lord. Like this man, all Jesus asks of us is to “tell what great things God has done for you.” The simple story of how God has changed your own life can be a powerful incentive to others who are looking for improvement in their own lives.

Of course, all of this assumes the Lord has done “great things” for you. Has He?

- David King