

Voice in the Wilderness (podcast)

Episode Three (3) outline

- Intro
 - Welcome & reason for the podcast
 - The days are short.
 - Need for repentance within the Ada church.
 - Unflinching exploration of how the Ada church does ministry.
 - Adopting intentional, one-on-one discipleship
 - Start seasons of disciple and disciple-maker faith building.
 - Rinse and repeat as the disciple becomes a disciple-maker.
 - This is the model Christ gave us.
- Today's subject – Prepare the Way of the Lord
 - What is the required skill of all disciples?
 - In the army, there are basic training combat skills that everyone has to learn, no matter what their primary job may be.
 - For those who have received salvation, their basic training is to be the matchmaker for the unsaved to start a relationship with Jesus.
 - The bride must be introduced to the groom, or the marriage won't happen.
 - Isa 40: 3-5, **"A voice of one calling: In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."**
 - How well are the Ada churches doing with this task?
 - Are there "Prepare the Way" bootcamps for believers going on?
 - An available tool: "Share Jesus Without Fear" app.
 - 36 responses with scriptures to help answer common objections about the miraculous power of God to change and save lives through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
 - Ability to access the Bible by touch, making it easy to navigate witnessing conversations.
 - Designed to reduce the pressure, arguments, and fear of failure associated with sharing one's faith.
 - Using the Biblical model of John the Baptist, how is "the way" prepared in the individual's life?
 - Isa 40: 6-8, **"A voice says, 'Cry out.' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' 'All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.'"**

- Repentance is the inescapable beginning of faith
 - Compelled that your very being is in need of rescue.
 - Understand that your ancestral heritage will not save you.
 - The “wrinkle”: Do we still have an ancestral spiritual heritage in this community?
 - If not, this community needs to be treated as a new mission field. You can’t speak “Hebrew” to “Greeks”.
 - Faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior requires a personal commitment of real-life change.
 - Turning away from sin.
 - A new life of devotion.
 - Have access to a committed body of believers who offer the intentional training to grow in faith and skills to serve the Lord.
- How is “the way” prepared in the community?
 - Isa 40: 9, **You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, “Here is your God!”**
 - You have to intentionally be visible, a presence in the public square.
 - Where are the “high mountains” in this area?
 - Reveal to Ada that Christ is the Son of God and their necessary Salvation.
 - Introduce them, as John the Baptist did, to their God (Jesus).
 - John 1:29–34, 29 **“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.**

Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One. “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”

- One danger in this postmodern culture, where “truth” has been redefined to mean what we used to call “opinion”, is that ABSOLUTE TRUTH is not even thought to be attainable.
 - Speaking to a group of Anglican priests and lay leaders in 1945, CS Lewis argued:

- “One of the great difficulties is to keep before the audience’s mind the question of Truth. They always think you are recommending Christianity not because it is true but because it is good. And in the discussion, they will at every moment try to escape from answering ‘True or False’ (which are absolutes) into stuff about good society, or morals, or the incomes of Bishops, or the Spanish Inquisition, or France, or Poland—or anything whatever. You have to keep forcing them back, and again back, to the real point. Only thus will you be able to undermine their belief that a certain amount of ‘religion’ is desirable but one mustn’t carry it too far. One must keep on pointing out that Christianity is a statement which, if false, is of no importance, and if true, is of infinite importance. The one thing it cannot be is only moderately important.”
- Lewis is right. The moderate presentation in the desirability of Christianity as being a good way to go is not enough. We have to force others back, and back again, to the question of reasonableness and ultimately TRUTH. Christianity is good, and good for the world because it is TRUE. If it were not true, it wouldn’t be good for anyone since being rightly related to reality—truth—and being good are tightly connected.
- You are not alone!
 - **Isa 40: 10-11, “See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.”**
 - It is not in your power that any of this is accomplished, and therefore, the results are not your concern, either.
 - With that being said, God does have a reward for you just being there.
 - You will be in the presence of God, with a front row seat to see His hand at work.
- Ending
 - Become intentional about Preparing the Way for Jesus in this community!
 - Start training the congregations to be that matchmaker for Jesus!
 - Prayer for the Ada Church to be intentional with Repentance, Salvation, & Sanctification.
 - Thanks for listening...and responding to this call of action.
 - Say **“Matthew 9:38”**