

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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Persuasion

"Men are so made that they can resist sound argument, and yet yield to a glance." – Honore de Balzac

"One of the best ways to persuade others is by listening to them." – Dean Rusk

"If you would convince others, seem open to conviction yourself." – Earl of Chesterfield, letter to his son, 22 Feb. 1748.

"Character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion." – Aristotle

"Persuasion is often more effectual than force." – Aesop

One of the hardest things to do is convince people of the need for Jesus Christ. It seems that everywhere you turn, the push is for a person to be self-sufficient. The mere suggestion of the need for someone greater than ourselves is seen by some as ridiculous.

When you are able, stop at a book store and look at the "self-help" section. There is book after book teaching you that you need no one. You are to have confidence in your own abilities. You need absolutely no one. And that inner strength is supposed to help you persevere through life.

Yet when you pick up the Bible, you find that man is encouraged to look to God for strength and comfort. "O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jer. 10:23). "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

In Scripture, we learn of incidents where people attempted to teach others of the need for God. "And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, 'Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you'" (Acts 24:24-25).

Using the parable of the soils as a barometer, we realize that one out of four will hear our efforts of persuasion, provided of course that we are using Scripture (cf. Rom. 1:16). Some would likely say that is not very good odds. What it is for us is a dose of realism. But it reminds us that there are folks who can be persuaded to follow the Lord.

While many will reject the truth, we must realize that there are folks who will listen! Even the prophet Elijah had to be told that seven thousand had not yet bowed their knees to Baal (1 Kings 19:18).