

General Topics :: 17 year old dead... what's it gonna take??

17 year old dead... what's it gonna take?? - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/5/11 9:49

My friend, Mike is dead. He passed away Sunday most likely while I was sleeping or taking God for granted.

I don't know if he was saved since I last saw him. Last I knew, he wasn't.

What is it gonna take for us to get **SERIOUS** telling people about Christ?

Here was a kid I talked sports, girls, and jested with, and occasionally I would mention God but I never outright told him or personally offered it to him 'cuz I was scared.

So scared in fact that my friend may be in hell eternally 'cuz I was such a spirit filled pansy. (SARCASM INTENDED.)

This word may be for me. Or Mike's death could be the wake up call for my friends here in Eugene that call themselves Christians yet follow there own agenda with lame activities and hanging out but never doing the **things that matter**

Maybe you read this and shed a single teardrop, and it moves you until next week when it will fade to the bottom of the forum list and be buried under "Everybody Loves Raymond" or chicken dinners at church, forgotten, a bygone becoming a bygone, my friend's soul the cost.

I had a responsibility and I failed

How many of us have done that? Saw a *perfect* opportunity and passed it buy, not having the luxury of a guarantee of ever seeing that person again.

This truth is Christ, Paul, Peter, James, the rest of the Apostles, Martin Luther, John Wesley, Finney, Ravenhill, and countless others have poured out their lives because they gave themselves as slaves to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They didn't have excuses, they had a passion that went deeper than a prayer for souls. THEY ACTED!!!!

My question to this site is what's it gonna take for us today to come out of our complacency and tell people, and let God handle the rest?!?!

Re: 17 year old dead... what's it gonna take?? - posted by RobertW (), on: 2004/5/11 10:43

Brother Chad,

My prayers are for you and the family at this time.

The last sermon to our Church in 2003 I preached and told the people "We are staring down the barrel of 2004!" Some thought one thing and others that another. However, In a period of 40 days in January we canceled 3 Sunday services because of the weather- two of them were back to back. That sparked an urgency in me to begin to preach repentance at the next level. The strongest preaching and teaching I can ever recall went forth in the last 4 months. We baptized about 35 or so people. But just as you mention- soon these things begin to find their way to the bottom of the priority list. As soon as people find relief...

It was about 2 weeks ago now that the Praise and Worship leader at New Life Pentecostal Church of God was brutally murdered along with his sister and two children. This is the 22 year old man that led praise and worship before the message Andrew Strom preached at their church on REPENTANCE. That message is on this site! Has it caused an urgency to repent even more? How will people ultimately respond? WHAT will it take before people get the message?

Brother I fear for the Church and this nation. I saw a person healed of a tennis ball sized tumor in their lungs from smoking when they were basically given a death sentence. Did they repent and turn to God? They came to church ONCE since they were healed and continue to smoke. I always believed that if they hit close enough to the bottom they would repent; but this generation is re-writing the manuals!! I have despaired over the highhandedness. I have been VEXED- grieved to the point of holy indignation. I have watched people knowing they were dying not turn from there ways many times over. I have attended several of their funerals.

I'm tired of arguing doctrine and splitting hairs. I'm tired of the sports gods as they be so called and the other vanities that people burn incense to. When will the urgency become great enough to awaken the consciences? Disaster is looming brother! I have already attended the funerals of like 6 people this year. God have mercy! And He has-- but its fastly running out.

God Bless,

-Robert

Re: 17 year old dead... what's it gonna take?? - posted by matthew (), on: 2004/5/11 10:49

Thanks Chad...for a not so gentle reminder.

Reading your post brought no less than a dozen specific names to mind that could very well be gone before I speak to them next.

It also brought to mind two scriptures that have been convicting me for quite some time:

"Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience." 2 Cor 5:11

And even more Jesus saying in Matthew the 10th chapter:

32"Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. 33But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

34"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35For I have come to turn

" 'a man against his father,

a daughter against her mother,

a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law--

36a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'

37"Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; 38and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

Re: 17 year old dead... what's it gonna take?? - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/5/11 13:10

Brother Chad.

My heart breaks along with you. I am guilty!

This has rightly caused a flood of tears...

What the hell is wrong with me? Oh God it would be better that I knew nothing of You at all and be sent far from Your presence than to keep all that I have learned and grown to know about You and tell NO ONE!

Oh maybe a few, those close to me. "If" it just happens to come up in conversation... But that gives me no comfort, nor should it. What is this hellish fear of man? I don't even fear 'man'...I think I know what it is, it's that I fear injuring more my poor little psyche, 'what others may think of me'.

It is pathetic.

I have a handful of ready made excuses, "I don't know what to say", "I don't really understand it well enough myself", "I need to get all my doctrinal ducks in a row".

Excuses. nonsense.

I lost my cousin last year, pretty young, 36. I had 'witnessed' to him about a month before. But it was a sloppy, scattered, rambling bit. He did ask what it took to become a Christian and I told him he could become a Christian right now if he wanted...but it got disjointed and I didn't 'seal' the deal right then and there.

Though I believed he was saved and can't really give any real evidence to prove it. There is a few things that seem to point to it. But, I could have erased all doubt right then and there.

As you alluded to, I also had said that I would no longer be afraid after he died. That I would...

And now that 6 months have passed where am I?

Robert said:

Quote:
-----I'm tired of arguing doctrine and splitting hairs. I'm tired of the sports gods as they be so called and the other vanities that people bu

rn incense to. When will the urgency become great enough to awaken the consciences? Disaster is looming brother! I have already attended the funeral of like 6 people this year. God have mercy! And He has-- but its fastly running out.

Yes, I agree. Tired of splitting hairs as well, so much of it is like 'sport' in itself, a mental gymnastic's, "Christian chess"... But who am I to even say that? It's exactly what I do and leave the other more important and bottom line issue undone.

Quote:
-----My question to this site is what's it gonna take for us today to come out of our complacency and tell people, and let God handle the rest?!?!

I don't know brother, but it is the right question. It even came up here as well:
(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id1915&forum35) Why I didn't tell, what should I be doing?

I started writing out something just this morning called, "A Plea For The Unconverted". It may be more for myself than for what I am trying to articulate to the unbelieving world. What I hope to do is to 'cut the crap' sorry, I don't know how else to put it. I want to own up to our own failings as the Church, as in Christ's body. The glossy Gospel and false representations we have given. The blatantly obvious as well as the 'easy believism' model. All of it, we need to come clean and acknowledge where we have failed, it's not just an 'us and them' thing either. We who like to dive into deeper waters should be the ones that can articulate our faith better. It's a small start, but not near enough. Hopeful that I can get it all together and have it dissected and corrected, modified by you all here. Then to get it out there into the world and eat a copy of the scroll myself till it becomes a part of my bone and marrow.

Brother Chad, this thread will not fall by the wayside. We need to deal with this.

I need to repent before the Lord and pray that He burns this hellish nonsensical fear out of my soul. Otherwise I am just wasting my time.

Re: - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/5/11 15:35

It is soooo sad... The test of how much I mean this and how sorry I actually am is going to be a month from now, after I've graduated and got a job and my girlfriend and I are together, (she's a good-hearted Christian, but just as lousy a witness as I...)

and will I have witnessed or will I have let this fire fade, like before?

I do my "things"--- Friday night youth activities, Speed The Light, worship God on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and any other time ending in "day" but my obedience is limited to virginity (but still, thoughts occasionally fill my head...) or being faithful in offering and church and not cussing and singing worship songs.

"19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." "

NOT WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING!!!

GOD HAVE MERCY ON ME AND BRING ME OUT OF MY SELFISH WAYS AND LET ME BE YOUR WITNESS, MAKING DISCIPLES!!!

May I, or we never again become so blind that the main function of the church is lost underneath RELIGIOUS RITUALS.

I understand now why God took Mikey. For so long I asked for a passion and dedication to tell others about Christ. I never told anyone, and I now have a passion. God is just in this decision and I pray that after this I can learn my lesson.

"God is God and we are dust-
we are wrong and He is just."

Just a thought that occurred to me.

TELL SOMEONE!!!!

Re: - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/5/11 16:02

I STRONGLY SUGGEST TO GO ALL THE WAY TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS THREAD!!!!

Just so you know, I'm so ashamed, too. Everything that I told Christ in a fit of passion is being brought back to me. Making vows, "Oh LORD, I'm devoted to You..." Yeah... Right.

Am I???!!?!?!?

Really, I am devoted to my youth group, to my Christian friends, to singing Delirious, or 12 Stones, because those things require little difficulty.

but everything I have said to Him now resounds like garbage in my head. Lame promises.

God knew my heart, how I'd fail Him over and over again, although I said I'd do anything, I thought then that I was hot stuff with my loud prayers... but for what? To what end??

To let countless faces pass me by, holding the talents to myself.

My excuses and regrets won't hold up in front of Christ unless I change.

God, I'm sorry to you, to Mikey and to his family, and to my church for being a deceiver pretending to care when obviously I DON'T 'CUZ EXCUSES FLOW MORE FREE THAN MY OWN TESTIMONY, A TESTIMONY OF CHRIST'S POWER. .. THE WORDS OF LIFE STAY LOCKED IN MY HEAD...

BUT NO MORE...

NO MORE...

Re: - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/5/11 16:06

God obviously is telling us something here... with these 2 posts... ("Why Didn't I Tell...")

Let's get serious... before it's too late...

We don't know if there is still a chance to witness... there may not be tomorrow.

In Christ

Re: witnessing - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2004/5/11 17:03

Chad,

I am deeply sorry for your friend- and for you. There must be some balance here somewhere. If your friend is in hell (and we don't know that for sure), you cannot blame yourself for this.

Though you may have had opportunities to directly say something- and you did not- I would hope that the way you lived your life was shouting "Christ" to Him. :)

In these two threads, a couple of things come to mind. One is that we must remember why we witness- for the glory of God- for His sake and not ours or our friends and family. "He deserves the reward of His suffering". Yes, it is sad to know that some people will end up in judgement but it is worse still that the Lord is the one we should be considering.

Second- our lives should be lived so that we are a witnessing tool in even the way we live. Our lifestyle should shout "Christ- and Him crucified". People should look at us and KNOW that we are His. This is many times enough for them to be convicted. If they still choose to go their own way- they are responsible- not you.

I have to believe that your friend knew of your Christianity. I have to believe that he has heard the gospel in more ways than one in his lifetime. It's everywhere. All people- especially in this country are given plenty of opportunities (even without us preaching at them) to seek Him out and come to Him. I don't think many people actually die and did not have some type of opportunity to surrender to Christ at some point. God is just.

I am not saying that we should not witness directly, but we also are to live AS A WITNESS so that we draw people to Him. Any one can witness but deny Him by their actions and daily living. There is no good in that.

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"George is an elderly gentleman, who lives in the southern United States. He is retired and lives alone. A few years ago, he lived in a house which was sandwiched between the homes of two religious-minded people. One day, George confessed to me how he hated to see the neighbor on his right, because the man was always preaching religion to him.

"Listen, my friend," George's neighbor would say, "you can't be saved until you accept Jesus Christ as your personal

Savior. Let me help you give your heart to the Lord."

"All he has on his mind," said George, "is trying to convert me and I resent it."

Now, George didn't feel that way about the neighbor on his left - a nondenominational Christian student of the Bible. Why? Well, that Bible student realized that his job wasn't one of conversion - it was to witness.

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me...." said our Lord (Acts 1:8, KJV). A witness, according to Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition, is someone who can give testimony, or someone who is called upon to give evidence. That is the kind of witness we should be - to testify and give evidence about Jesus Christ.

#### Witness by Demonstration

We do our best to show, in our lifestyle and in our actions, the things we have learned in God's Holy Bible. We do our best to live by the commandments given by God and demonstrated by His Son, Jesus. And, when given a proper opportunity, we tell others about the Good News and all the wonderful truths concerning God's divine plan for humankind.

But what we don't do is try to cram this information down someone's throat. We don't hammer away at their beliefs to get them to accept Bible truth, and we don't twist their arm to get them to convert to our way of thinking. No matter how sincere and well-intentioned our zeal may be, it would do little good to antagonize someone in an attempt to persuade a change of heart.

This man, George, is now a real Christian - a student of God's word. He became one, not through the irritation of forced conversion, but because of a real desire for a closer relationship with God and His son. **This desire was aroused by seeing, in someone else, the kind of person he wanted to be.**

All people are free moral agents and each must make up his own mind concerning these matters. George did so. But not all people will choose as George did; many will choose not to learn Bible truth. It is not for us to make these decisions for others - it is for them, alone."

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I am not writing any of this to minimize the issue. I just don't want you (Chad) to feel all the responsibility. Your friend was also responsible for his own life and the decisions he made. I hope the Lord will comfort you in some of these thoughts. My prayers are with you.

In Him, Chanin

Re: I'm guilty too Chad - posted by Gideons (), on: 2004/5/11 20:43

Chad,

Chanin gives some very wise counsel. That's not to say that shouldn't minimize what has transpired (as she said).

I think we often equate our witness with our speech. There has to be more than mere words. Surely this is much of the problem in the sterilized modern church. My prayer and the cry of my heart is that Jesus be exalted in every area of my life and that people who know say "He's got something in his life. I wonder if I can have it?" If God can transform Him, surely there's hope for me. Much of the "church" has lost its witness, because it refuses to practice what it preaches and an unbeliever can smell hypocrisy from a long distance.

At the same time, however, God surely wants us to have a heart for the lost. I have an elderly neighbor who is quite eccentric and his home recently got condemned. There's a sign on his door that says "Condemned." Sometimes when I see people, I see something quite similar on them. I'm condemned, without the blood of Christ, I'm condemned. When I see this, how can I not do anything but weep for them and ask God to reveal himself to them? But for his grace alone, I would be in that same position.

I hope and pray that God will give us a broken heart over those who don't know our Lord and Saviour, as well as allowing His light to shine forth in our hearts so brightly that people would know there's something different about a true believer.

You're in our prayers Brother Chad.

Ed

Re: - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/5/12 10:29

thank you.. I'm short on time but I'll post later.

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/5/12 13:03

Once again it appears I have managed to jump off the cliff of conclusions with my foot in my mouth and my heart on my sleeve.

Chad, my apologies first. I do truly share in your grief for your friend as well as for your concern about sharing your faith. This is a difficult time for you and I will pray the Lord will send The Comforter, The Holy Spirit to give you wisdom, strength and understanding as well as the peace that passes all understanding.

Originally this brought back to mind the 'promise's' I had made to God awhile back after losing my cousin. It rightly sent me to consider once again just what is it I am supposed to be doing according to the will of the Lord, not by my own failed musings or by what others may think it is. I reached up and grabbed the shelf of guilt and condemnation and pulled it down upon my head. I am thankful for the wise counsel of those who did strike a balance here. I also believe our witness has to be *lived* and also believe it is hypocritical to go about 'witnessing' as a duty like it is some kind of sales presentation. It is not. It makes me cringe to go back to some of the 'training' I had in this regards, drawing up the plan of salvation on a napkin, you are over here, God is over here, here's the bridge... It's just so ...shallow.

Much more could be said. I just want to encourage you Chad not to take this upon yourself in the wrong way. It is not your obligation to do the saving, that is the job of the Holy Spirit. Nor do I want to skirt the issue of just what our responsibilities are individually as well as the church. Hopefully we can gain some perspective as we go further into this.

Will be praying for you.

Re: - posted by Rahman, on: 2004/5/12 19:17

God in heaven Chad what a sobering topic ...

I've been saved a long time and I feel the same way about sharing Christ ... My Pastor always tells us that if we all preached Christ to our own families that's a good enough start ... I suppose ... And I do ... But I have a nagging sensation also (the Holy Ghost) that I'm not all that I should be in the witnessing department ... I'm great with a thus saith the Lord to my fellow Christians, but down play when it comes to the world ... What's it gonna take for us to become serious you asked ... I'm firmly convinced it's gonna take one massive, swelling, downpour of Holy Ghost Revival ... We all need His help, for it's truly obvious in the modern church that His final harvest won't be reaped by our might and power, but by His ... Bro. Ravenhill often quipped that "the early church was electrifying, while the modern church electronic" ... And I'd venture to say that many of us have pulled plugs ... I'm always reminded that there were only 120 clueless Christians waiting in the upper room until God the Holy Ghost, the Lord Creator Spirit, rushed in ... then suddenly there were 3,000 ...

Churchianity has gotten us so far away from the essence of true Christianity today ... Most of us have been taught to treat the Holy Ghost like He comes with a thermostat ... But don't dismay my fellow seekers and knockers, Jesus hears our prayers, stores our tears, knows our fears, and above all else knows our hearts ... The Holy Spirit is about to out Pentecost the original Pentecost with us ... He's about to install His own thermostat on Christ Church!, and when He does He's gonna turn up our heat to maximum ... I believe this with all my heart, soul and being ... God is about to give us His power of Holy boldness in the witnessing of His salvation plan, while in unison softening the hearts of those we're to witness to ... That's what history shows He does in Revival ... I long to be a part of an empowered community of Christianity, instead of our present weak, segregated Churchianity ... Brother Ravenhill's "new demonstration of Christianity" is just on the horizon ... Amen