

Conversations with Byron

Matthew 5:13-16

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

Last week I mentioned I had the opportunity to engage two science majors, Dan and Morgan, at Starbucks for Jesus for almost an hour. That experience, along with my experience with Byron, and others, has led me to believe that there are some things we need to make certain of when we share our faith to be effective. The worst thing you can do is to lose your witness for Jesus. Jesus once said that we are the salt of the world and that if we lose our saltiness, we can't get it back. There are a lot of Christians that have lost their saltiness with others. My desire is that we will all be salty witnesses for Jesus. But in light of Jesus' statement, I wanted to list with you some ways we can lose our saltiness, or witness for Jesus.

1. We lose our saltiness when we don't share our faith according to Biblical etiquette.

1 Peter 3:15-16 15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, 16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

a. We don't display Gentleness

1. Impatient with people (Tone, frustration)
2. We become defensive
3. We are not approachable

b. We don't show Respect

1. We don't value another's opinion
2. We don't listen to understand (often we are thinking of our next response)
3. We attack a persons position or character

c. We don't leave with a Good Conscience

1. We don't honor God before others
2. We don't honor others(saying things we regret out of frustration)
3. We eliminate the chance for a future conversation (Future talks move toward the personal level)

2. We lose our saltiness when our lifestyle does not represent Christian ethics

Ephesians 5:1-3: Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children 2 and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. 3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

- a. Sexual Immorality
- b. Impurity (thought life, slander, hatred)
- c. Greed (a.k.a. Selfishness) [We are to love our culture in a sacrificial way like Christ loved us]

3. We lose our saltiness when we are not sensitive to our cultures concerns

Romans 9: 20-22: To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews.....so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law.....so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

a. Not meeting people where they are at

1. The Jew: Represents the religious: Invalidating the OT, Minimizing the Law of Moses, or worship style
2. The Gentile: Making them feel like they need to change and become like you
3. The weak: Not respecting another's matter of conscience (alcohol, dress, politics)

b. Coming across like the gospel will solve all their concerns

c. Not showing interest and sensitivity regarding their concerns (We have to think like a missionary)

4. We lose our saltiness when we primarily rely on apologetics to defend our faith.

1 Corinthians 2:3-5: I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. 4 My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, 5 so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

a. Most people aren't competent addressing issues like textual criticism, evolution, world religions

b. Theoretical apologetics doesn't address how Jesus changed our lives

c. Ultimately, it's the gospel message, through the Spirit's Power, that wins others

5. We lose our saltiness when we consistently are not sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading

Acts 16:6-10: Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. 8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

a. The inner promptings (Yes, share....no don't share)

b. Reasons people lose their sensitivity to the Spirit

1. Its been grieved because of sin
2. Our devotional life is not a priority
3. We don't understand the role of the Holy Spirit' in evangelism

Conclusion: Matthew 5:13-16: "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.