



Ashley's weekly evangelistic update from Italy

September 27, 2009

No. 26 - True Success

Greetings once again in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I thank the Lord that I have the opportunity once again to share with you about what our great God is doing in and through me by means of evangelism. I pray that these updates continue to stimulate you on in your own walk with Christ.

This past Sunday I was greatly encouraged by our sermon. The text was 1 John 4:1-6 and verse 6 says, *"We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error."* This is a great reminder when going about our days evangelizing in word and deed. We must know the Word of God and boldly declare the truth of the Gospel. The openness or coldness of those with whom we share the Gospel does not determine whether we are successful. I can be encouraged in the work of God and in who Christ is regardless because promises like the one above tell me that God is in control and whoever does not listen to the truth is not of God. Only He can change the heart of that person, not me. Ah, true and tender comfort.

With these thoughts in mind and heart, I went out evangelizing Sunday evening solo once again (my car is not quite ready, Lord willing it will be this week. And it's quite possible that Martina will come with me this coming Sunday). I want to give praise to God for another successful evening. Successful for the following reasons:

1. God moved me to go and evangelize even when my flesh would have preferred not to
2. Approaching people cold turkey in order to share the Gospel hasn't necessarily become easier but God is always faithful to give me the strength. He did once again on Sunday.
3. God enabled me once again to see more of the wonder of Christ in the truth that I'm sharing with others and marvel at the fact that He opened my eyes to know Him personally!
4. A few more souls heard of God's impending judgment and Christ's sacrifice
5. God continues to teach, mold and chisel me more into Christ-likeness through evangelism

I would like to share about two, drastically different conversations which I had that evening, praying that they may be of encouragement to you. One was with a couple in their late 30s. I had a delightful conversation with them for the first 10 minutes, talking about nothing in particular, and then I was stirred – it wouldn't profit any of us if Christ was not mentioned throughout the whole conversation and then we continued not-so-merrily on our separate ways. Not-so-merrily because what true love is there towards a fellow-man when we simply have a 10 minute, soon-to-be-forgotten conversation, without sharing words of life with them which

could be used of God to draw them to Himself? Their faces fell when I “changed subjects”. They measured their good standing with God on everything but Christ. Oh, but our “righteousnesses are like filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6) in God's sight! I thank God for His mercy in pushing me toward them and allowing them to hear that His standard is not ours.

Federicka and Ilaria were two gals in their mid-20s who claimed a career and romantic love to be some of the most important elements of life. I challenged them to think about those who don't have a career and those who don't have this type of love? What is the only thing which lasts? What sweet freedom there is in knowing the truth that only a personal relationship with Christ is lasting, satisfying, freeing, and saving from the wrath of God. Federicka was doubtful, “but I know lots of people that even lose that. They lose their faith in God when they go through difficult trials or tragedies.” So, God once again provided an opportunity to knock down some strongholds by sharing truth about the true nature of faith which is founded in Christ, not a vanishing sentiment. Praise God that if you are truly His, you are kept by Him, your faith is God-given, nothing could change that! We talked a bit longer and then I left them with an invitation to the family course along with our True Life tract. Thank you for **pray-**

ing with me for Federicka and Ilaria.

Afterward, I was able to do a quick distribution of family course invitations, mostly to young families, which nearly everyone took. Continue to pray with us that the Lord might use this course as a means by which many might hear the Gospel and be saved.

This past Sunday wasn't spectacular numbers-wise but what ultimately defines true success? I'm learning that it certainly isn't how many people you talk to or how many are in your church or how many people you give tracts to or how well liked you are. Real success is following God's will because of faith in Him. Are we growing in submission to His Word? In obedience to Him? Are we looking more like Christ each day? Is Christ our treasure, our delight, our joy? If the answer to these questions is “yes”, then we can humbly thank the Lord for success that truly gives Him glory. This is how we must live. Pray that we (you, me, other believers) would be spent joyfully living in His will.

Being spent,

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