

COMMUNICATING THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD

BY THOMAS WHITE



“In the beginning.” These three words start many stories that frame our culture. But the most important use of these words comes in Genesis as part of the grand narrative of the Bible. God created humanity as the pinnacle of creation, and mankind rebelled against the Creator. This conflict could not be resolved by humanity, so God foreshadowed through Old Testament events and prophecy the coming Savior who would reconcile creation to the Creator. Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, died on a cross conquering sin and death. He ascended to the Father and is coming again to make all things new. This grand narrative of the Bible changes the way we

live life and view the world. This is the greatest story ever told and one that must be clearly communicated to the ends of the earth.

CREATED TO COMMUNICATE

Have you ever thought about what sets humanity apart as the pinnacle of all creation? God created mankind both male and female in His image on the sixth day. But we are different from other created beings. Being made in the image of God includes the capacity for a relationship with

Him. This relationship requires communication. Humanity communicates in a way that no other aspect of creation does. We have an alphabet. We have written words. We have books. We speak, and we teach the next generation to communicate. At some level, to be human is to communicate.

Humanity has the unique opportunity to use communication to glorify God. Of course, we may twist this good gift using it to sin against God, but for our purposes, think about how communication allows us to glorify King Jesus. We compose songs. We write letters of encouragement. We write books. We write sermons. We preach those sermons. We teach classes. We tell stories. When we communicate effectively and clearly, when we preach passionately, when we create a catchy phrase that becomes an earworm, we use the gifts God has given us to glorify Him.

Communication allows us to articulate truth and what we believe about God from Scripture. The precisely written confession statement brings clarity about what we must believe to be saved. The ancient hymns of the faith last generations to encourage weary saints and praise God. The bold proclamation delivered in the power of the Spirit changes lives through convicting sinners and uplifting believers. Words have purpose and power. All these methods of communication use words. All of these worthwhile tasks require a basic understanding of how to communicate.

COMMUNICATE WITH PURPOSE

Communication skills provide essential tools for a life well lived for the glory of God.

Think about that statement. The ability to communicate is essential. We teach sign language to babies to communicate. We teach more complex sign language to communicate with those who cannot hear or speak. We teach words both written and spoken to communicate the thoughts in our heads and the desires of our hearts. We pray to God with words formed in our minds that communicate meaning. We sing to God with words conveying emotion and truth. Communication is a basic building block of a life well lived for the glory of God.

Consider how the ability to communicate impacts evangelism and missions. We have the privilege of telling the greatest story ever told to others. We communicate the Gospel through words. When we go to another country, we seek to communicate the Gospel in its heart language when possible. We seek to translate the Word of God into the native language

to communicate more effectively. Precise, well-crafted words carry a message of eternal importance, so we should learn all we can about effective communication.

We tell stories to teach principles and entertain our fellow man. An excellent story may mesmerize the audience while teaching good values or challenging our culture's accepted sins. The Bible tells stories. Nathan told a story to David when confronting him. Jesus used parables to teach heavenly principles through earthly stories. Learning to tell a story properly through written or spoken words allows us to love God and others well. Humanity innately has a love for stories. Most anyone who has children has heard the phrase "tell me a story" at bedtime. Just look at Disney to see how effective telling stories can be.

THERE IS A GOD, AND HE HAS SPOKEN

Here is my point: There is a God, and He has spoken. We as humans should learn all we can about effective communication to glorify the God who is worthy. We should refine our communication skills and sharpen our gifts to reach the world with the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We know that eternally significant changes don't happen because of the eloquence of our words but by the power of

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the Spirit using those words. The writers of Scripture used compelling phrases, illustrations, and vivid examples to communicate Holy Spirit-inspired truth to us. We should write well, speak well, and communicate well for God's glory and our joy.

We can't stand for the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ if we can't communicate. That's why our Department of Communication has an essential function at Cedarville University and a task that is never complete as we seek to hone our communication skills. Let us be lifelong learners of the art of communicating well until that day when we hope to hear God communicate "well done, my good and faithful servant." Let this be the grand narrative of our lives as we tell others of the grand narrative of Scripture.

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