

FAST Lesson 4E: A Real Man Builds Relationships – Outreach (Sharing Our Faith)

John Kain, 2010

- I. As Christians we have made a decision to receive an amazing gift of eternal security from God, communicated to us by the Word (scriptures contained in the bible) and by the work of the Holy Spirit inside us, through other people, and in the world God created. Many people confuse this divine activity with man-made religions. But our faith is our expression of a relationship with God, not an institution. Our fellowship with God and with other believers represents the kind of relationships that anyone should be attracted to, but we sometimes just don't invite others to join in.
- II. We were given the essence of truth in a particular way, but God communicates truth through many cultural formats. Real men are open to discussing rival concepts of God - however, we don't accept the notion that "it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you have faith in something and live a good life." The object of any faith is important because, when tested, it is ultimately true or false, real or fake.
- III. There are important consequences to alternative faiths, including impacts on our society (knowing we are loved by God vs. the confinement of superstitions and endless behavioral codes of conduct). We believe that faith also impacts our personal destinies.
- IV. What we believe and others believe is important, and should be discussed. Our attitude should be humble – we didn't invent our faith, and we don't know how God will get through to others. We share what we know – that we have encountered Jesus, his message is awesome, and we want other people to check it out themselves.
- V. We may lack motivation to share our faith because we have lost touch with the needs around us. We sometimes forget how dead we were spiritually before our personal encounter with the life-changing love of Jesus and the power of the Word of God.

VI. Our partial awareness of the viewpoints of people around us should not lead to an attitude that we know what they are thinking. We don't know what God is doing in their lives. We should sincerely respect them, but we should also be open about sharing what we are doing (our interests and our fellowship activities), invite their participation, ask their permission to pray for them if needed, and don't be upset if they say "no." Its not about us – it's about God.

"He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end." (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

"He commanded us to preach to the people and to **testify that he is the one** whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." (Acts 10:42-43)

"To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. **For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled,** and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Luke 18:9-14)

"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment." (1 Timothy 6:17)

"You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked." (Revelation 3:17)

"But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul." (Deuteronomy 4:29)

"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32)

"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)