

# Called to Mission

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Date: 06 May 2018

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[ 0 : 00 ] As we've been looking through the last few weeks, we've been looking at our vision for Christchurch and what we were given many years ago. And this week we're focusing on God's calling to us in our community for those people that we're called to reach and achieving what we are called to be and what we're called to do. I don't know what you'll like at sharing good news or how you share good news. For our offer courses, we use some clips at the beginning and here's what some people have said, how they convey good news.

Good news? I don't know. Recently. Yesterday maybe. Today when I got told I'd get 20 quid for an hour. My best friend's having a baby girl.

No, I don't have any. You go first. No, you've got good news. Baby slept through the night. I think it was one of my GCSE was on. I found out I was getting a better job, I guess.

It was my brother getting into university. I'm quite loud, so I'll just shout it to everyone. Twitter, Facebook, stuff like that really. With my friends, it's usually food.

Oh my God, guess what? You know? Like I just tweet most of my stuff. Jumping off and down. I tell them face to face. I don't do like Facebook or all that sort of stuff, so.

[ 1 : 24 ] Is it good news if you can't tell anyone? I suppose all good news is worth sharing. To make everybody else happy. So people can celebrate with you, right? Yeah.

All good news is worth sharing. It was a day you don't forget. It was the 9th of December. It was 1986. It was 7.42 in the morning.

The Countdown by Europe was number one in the charts. Miami Vice, if you remember it, was headlining on the television. I actually did own one of those white jackets with the padded shoulders.

We'd just finished decorating our house in Taunton. I had just sold my glorious Mark II Ford Capri to buy a Ford Fiesta Mark I.

The good news was that at 7.42 on that morning, I became a dad. And in those days before mobile phones, before social texting, before any media, like every other dad in that maternity wing, I was armed with a bag full of 10 pence pieces.

[ 2 : 44 ] Because I knew with that bag of 10 pence pieces, I was going to share the most important and exciting news with all the people that Mandy had put on this list.

All in the right order to make sure that we knew. The good news was that life had changed forever. That Mark Wesley Jennings had come into the world.

And I couldn't wait to share that news. It was natural. It was exciting. And so it should be. Because when we've got good news to share, that's the way it should be.

And I didn't care who I told. After on my way home, I told the bloke from the paper shop in Galmington. I told the postie on the way past.

I told my neighbours as I took the dog out, I told everybody the great news. I am a dad. I didn't care who knew.

[ 3 : 49 ] When we read this passage this morning, I've got to ask, how do you hear this news? How do you hear it?

How do we hear it? Honestly, because for years I'll tell you that I heard this as something a little bit mediocre.

As though it wasn't the most exciting thing to do. Because for me, I knew all about Jesus. I knew my Bible. I was in the choir.

I can even remember the hymn numbers on the page. Three times a day, you don't forget that sort of thing. But being sent out like sheep amongst wolves isn't perhaps the most cheery thought that we've got to go and share our good news.

I went to Secondary Modern, and I'll tell you, I'd seen a few lambs savaged. But the disciples are learning. And they are still learning.

[ 4 : 51 ] They are being disciplined as to what to do. So I am asking myself, this scripture, is it a game changer for us?

You see, the disciples are having a theory lesson before the hands-on stuff actually happens. Jesus throws in a line, and it's a great line for them, and it's a great line for us, and it comes right at the end of that scripture. For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

God speaking through us. And that's got to be good news. Because you see, for many, they didn't get it. They still didn't get it until the Pentecost moment.

They were having a theory lesson here of what was to come, because they were going to experience the good news of Jesus died, rising again, and then that powerful Pentecost moment when everything that Jesus had been saying to them, which we hear in the scripture today, they actually went out and did.

[ 6 : 11 ] This was a preparation moment for sharing the good news. And it was good news, and Jesus knows that they weren't going to be fully effective until they'd actually experience this Pentecost moment when the world would be changed and transformed.

Good news for the world, good news for a generation. And Russ said last week in the preaching as we were looking through this, you know, it's not about us. It's always about him.

It's about him, and it's for him that we share the good news. You see, in the power of the Holy Spirit, life is changed.

We have the words. We have a fresh confidence. And the word that's been coming through this morning in our music and in our scriptures is authority. And he handed them authority to go and share the good news.

And it has to be good news because it's what the world is looking for. It's bubbling out of them. Can I suggest, we have been given these little booklets and we're going to take them.

[ 7 : 25 ] It's the 11 days of prayer that starts on the 10th. And we're going to pray with people across this world that those five names that we put on the inside, that they will come to hear that good news.

But who will they hear it from? And I pray that maybe, as a church, as we look at our vision, that we will bubble out of us so much that people are drawn to us.

I took the dog out on Friday morning. Friday morning, it's nice to go out in a dry weather, isn't it, lately, with the dog. Makes a bit of a change. And I got to the top of the hill and I was suddenly confronted by balloons.

And I thought, my goodness, that's really cheery. There's balloons at the top by the bowling club. Not the sort of normal thing that you see outside of the bowling club.

Balloons on a Friday morning. And as I got closer and I saw that there was a small gathering around these balloons, people had stopped to read the notice.

[ 8 : 34 ] And it was for a women's group that was meeting here on a Friday morning. And it was inviting women to come and have cakes and enjoy themselves.

I thought, that's good news. I was really encouraged by that. Albeit that I'm not a woman and I couldn't attend. But I was still pleased for you all of those who could attend.

But I thought, what a great way of sharing the good news. It was bright. It was alive. It said who we are. And we are being disciplined.

And I want to encourage you this morning. Whatever stage we are at, whatever stage we may be, that we are being prepared to share that good news.

And we have got good news to share. And I want to encourage you this morning to know the good news and live the good news. Maybe we're all at different stages of where we are in our discipleship.

[ 9 : 44 ] But I want to encourage you and whoever's listening on this podcast, wherever you are, God has given you authority to share the good news.

And he will empower you afresh in the power of the Holy Spirit. They had the theory and then came the power of Pentecost.

And they didn't care who knew. And they were given opportunities which they had never, ever thought they would have to share the good news in different languages, in different ways.

And maybe like me, for many years, you had this little closed idea that you should just go and maybe embarrassingly hand somebody a tract with Scripture on it and then run away. Maybe God is showing us a new way in which he will give us words. He will give us ways. He will give us opportunities. He will put us in places that we never, ever thought that we would be. [10:48] And then, in the power of the Spirit as we pray, he will give us words that will draw people not to us, but to him. I'm going to end with a story because it is something that is really, I feel, sense for many of us that have thought, what difference do I make?

Because we become vulnerable. That's what he was saying to his disciples. Go out, be vulnerable, but in the power of the Holy Spirit, I will give them message which is authentic, which is real, which is powerful, which is lasting, which is empowering, life-giving, and life-sharing. There was a pastor who was in World War I and much of his job was to minister to those who were dying, to minister to those who were in the trenches. And he remembers very clearly, and as he wrote, that he held an 18-year-old in his arms as he was dying. And this young lad had said to him, will you do one thing for me, Pastor? Will you promise me one thing? And he said, yeah, whatever it is, just tell me. He said, I want you to go to this person at the end of the war, and I want you to go and tell them that by sharing the good news with me all those years ago has made a difference into the way in which I can die today because I know Jesus is my saviour.

[12:28] And I have no fear. Would you go and tell him that? And he promised him and he said he would. And after the war was over, the pastor made his way to a small Welsh village in the valleys and found this man and his wife and found them out and told them the story.

The man broke down and cried and he said, I feel so ashamed because I've been a Sunday school teacher all my life and yet three years ago I gave up because I didn't think I was making a difference.

Can I encourage you this morning, can I encourage all of us that we are anointed and we are appointed to go and share the good news in every season, wherever that is. and we ask to do that and maybe this morning as we take communion you would ask to do that afresh in the power of the Holy Spirit. to do that. To do that I would observe that you otherwise tend to be a normal service or to the other part without taking any acry and keeping a bit zie them because you have you have a acord of the Afterwards to do it you and