

ULTIMATE UPGRADE: Share your story

The phone was invented in 1876. This ground-breaking technology allowed people to instantly talk to one another 100s or 1000s of miles away. (Prior to this, people had to communicate over long distances by mail). But with the spread of telecommunication, people could now instantly tell the stories of their lives: their likes & dislikes, facts & opinions, joys & sorrows, blessings & challenges, triumphs & tragedies. Of course nowadays, with the invention of the internet & social media (texting, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.) people can share pictures, videos & all sorts of details about their lives. People share just about everything from the meal they are about to eat, to details about one's latest romance, to updates about family member's illnesses.

We are also blessed to live in the freest country on the earth, a country where our rights are spelled out & protected by the Constitution (1787) & Bill of Rights (1789). These documents are foundational to our country & were created to protect the rights of all US citizens from an out-of-control, tyrannical government. Folks, we are so incredibly blessed by God to be living here in the United States and we should never take our freedoms for granted. We are free to share our lives with each other as we see fit.

We're free, but we are in a battle - a spiritual battle (**Eph 6:12**). And it strikes me that we can share just about anything about our lives, but when we mention one name, people get offended: that name is Jesus Christ. That's the name that offends the devil & those who are doing the work of the devil. That name offends the politically correct. But the Name of Jesus is the only name by which anyone can be saved (**Acts 4:12**). The devil wants people to be eternally separated from God, to be eternally lost. But Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of Satan (**1Jn 3:8b**) & save us (**1Jn 5:11**).

So, Satan wants us to shut up about Jesus. He wants churches to shut down, he wants the Journey to close down. Satan doesn't want you to hear about Jesus & he doesn't want you to tell anyone about Jesus either. That's why the one name - Jesus Christ - is so universally attacked these days. Nobody is coming out against Buddah, Mohammed, Gandhi or any other spiritual leader. It's only the Name of Jesus that is offensive. And isn't it ironic that among those spiritual leaders, only the name of Jesus that is a swear word now???

Jesus is love, peace, grace, goodness, mercy, healing, new life, truth, forgiveness, & the only path to heaven. Satan is the opposite: hate, war, destruction, evil, accusations, blame, destruction, lies, death & hell. Satan wants you to disregard, discount & disrespect the Name of Jesus Christ because Satan wants you to destroy you. Christians, young and old, Satan wants you to shut up about Jesus, like we saw in the skit tonight. But that's not God's plan. In **Revelation 12:11**, we learned that the martyrs in Jesus Christ "*conquered him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb [Jesus Christ] and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.*" Our testimonies about what Jesus has done in our lives spear the Good News of Jesus & defeat the devil. God wants us to proclaim Jesus Christ - to tell the world about Him (**2Tim 1:8a NCV; 2Tim 4:2a CEV**) So tonight, I want to give people a chance to briefly share their lives in Jesus with us. Let us proclaim the power, love, transformation, hope & new life we have in Jesus (**Ps 66:16**).

Key Verses

Eph 6:12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

Acts 4:12 (CEV) Only Jesus has the power to save! His name is the only one in all the world that can save anyone.

1Jn 3:8b But the Son of God [Jesus Christ] came to destroy the works of the devil.

1Jn 5:11 (ESV) And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

2Tim 1:8a (NCV) So do not be ashamed to tell people about our Lord Jesus...

2Tim 4:2a (CEV)...preach God's message. Do it willingly, even if it isn't the popular thing to do.

Ps 66:16 (GNT) Come and listen, all who honor God, and I will tell you what He has done for me.

Discussion Questions

1. What did you think about tonight's skit? Do you feel pressured to shut up about Jesus in the world today? How so? Why?
2. Why is the Name of Jesus Christ considered offensive by so many today & used as a swear word so much? How come the names of other spiritual figures aren't considered offensive?
3. Read Acts 4:12, 1Jn 3:8b & 1Jn 5:11. A.) How has Jesus Christ set Himself apart from all other spiritual leaders in history?
4. Read 2Tim 1:8a & 2Tim 4:2a. A.) Why does the devil want people to be quiet about Jesus Christ? B.) What happens when we share our testimony about Jesus?
5. Read Ps 66:16. What testimony tonight about Jesus Christ impacted you the most & why? Have these testimonies drawn you closer to Jesus & closer to accepting Him as your Lord & Savior?

PRAYER: Father God, I pray that the testimonies about Your Son Jesus that were spoken here tonight go deep into the hearts of all of us here. I pray that all hearts are opened to Your Son Jesus Christ. You sent Jesus here to give us eternal life through His sacrifice and to destroy the works of the devil. Tonight, Father God, I pray that all of us here receive Jesus Christ as Savior & Lord. I also pray that a new spirit of boldness & confidence be released upon us all here tonight so that we can proclaim your Son Jesus Christ to this lost & broken world wherever we are. Lord God, we rebuke the lies & deceptions of the devil in the Name of Jesus & call upon Your Holy Spirit to fill us all like You filled the first Christians nearly 2,000 years ago. Thank you Father for all these things, in the Name of Jesus we pray. Amen.