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Chart Talk: Episode 4 – How To Share The Gospel

Lance: Welcome back to Chalk Talk – this week we are going to talk about pattern recognition. Which is kind of a strange church topic – but I'll get there – Now Jim they say the difference between a good quarterback and a quarterback that doesn't make it into the NFL is his understanding of where the players are on the field before he throws the ball. It has been said that Joe Montana had great pattern recognition – I mean as soon as he saw what was happening he would be able to throw the ball to a spot and be able to hit the receiver – even though the defense was trying to do maybe something else– so pattern recognition is a huge thing and it is almost at a subconscious level. You are talking about – you are talking about winning someone to the Lord – you are talking about sharing the gospel with somebody – what is the pattern recognition to where you say to yourself this person is ready to hear the truth about the gospel and they are ready to know Jesus – what are you looking for.

Jim: Well I don't know that that's a skill set that I've got down – there are times where it's just so obvious – and there are times when I've just completely missed it – I don't think anybody gets that down perfect – I think the first thing that you have to do is you have to say I have been called to be an ambassador– I accept that that is my role– that God is the great chess master and He is putting me into play – He has asked me to play a part in His message and He is putting me into play – so am I aware of that and are my eyes open at all. And here I'm not just talking about me I'm talking about every believer –

Lance: You're not saying that God is manipulating but you are saying that we have a role to live out his will – isn't that right?

Jim: Well – "manipulation" – that's kind of a negative term – God is maneuvering – He wants to save the world He has saved us for a purpose – He has called us to be His ambassadors – our job is to say not my will be done but Yours Lord – I am available for You to use me. And I know that if I pray that prayer – God's going to bring people into my life – He's going to bring strangers, He's going to bring people – and my job is to recognize – remember – I am His – I have prayed that God would use me, where is that going to happen – and again is not just for me – this is Christians in general –

Lance: Right

Jim: We are called to do this – and so then there are a couple of things – first of all I want to love people well – I want to be the kind of person that is alert and awake to the needs of others –

Lance: And do you pray about that? Or how do you do that?

Jim: Yes – I think every day you pray about that – you remember who you are – that's why I need the Word to remind me – because my flesh will just start moving to activity – even when I listen to on the radio – I want everything I can – in my life – to remind me, friends, music, who I am – because if God wants to use me then people's salvation is at stake and I want to be available to be used – again God may just use me to plant a seed and somebody else gets to play the part – and if I miss it, God can bring a person....

Lance: Sure

Jim (continuing): somebody else, or bring them back again – you know so I don't want to make it sound like if I blow it they're going to hell – but if God wants to save somebody He's going to do it and He wants to use people – and I am a part of that team.

Lance: Right – and you are owning that responsibility – and part of that responsibility is you are aware...

Jim: I am aware – And so then secondly I try to be friendly – I try to look for opportunities – sometimes, you know I'll be on a plane and there is no opportunity – I ask questions – "how are you doing?" – And they don't want to talk and so I am like "OK – I guess I can take a nap" but there are other times when – just this last week I sat next to a guy and he took his phone out and he's reading his Bible and I said "what are you reading?" and he said "I'm reading the Bible" and I said "well what are you reading in the Bible?" And it led to a two-hour conversation that went by in like 15 minutes it felt like. So your looking for opportunities, you're aware, you are saying "Lord is there something You want me to do here?" You are looking for needs – in other words, if somebody looks down [*depressed*] or if somebody falls down – or if somebody's having a hard week – it can be just "I'm praying for you."... "How are you doing?"... you're just taking the time to notice the need and see if there is an opportunity by asking an extra question – not – you know – like the Samaritan – you know they went on the other side of the road [*the priest and scribe*] to get away from the problem because they were too busy. Am I willing to stop for a minute and ask another question – and again I want to say nobody does this perfectly, there are many times when I have missed it – but am I growing in this. And so I am aware I am available and then I'll just ask questions – if it leads to a spiritual conversation I'll just ask, "well what you believe about that?" You know I'll even say things like – "could I share with you my story?"... "Could I share with you what Jesus has done in my life... why I'm a Christian" – and I will just tell the story – and again if they want to argue – I'm not into arguing – if they have real questions and they are willing to listen – I'm going to try my best. Sometimes I don't have the answers for that and I'll say "I don't know about that but I do know this – "... I'll say – "can I get your number?... let me call you back on that... Because that's a great question..." I want to empathize with them – be available to them.

Lance: That's great advice Jim – thanks for that – so again, be aware, look for opportunities and be ready to share the gospel.