

MAY 2008

Dear Friends,

It's all about Jesus. ...for there is no other Name under Heaven whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12.

With "green fruit" people (folks who have no religious background whatsoever) we can move into a relationship that is based upon our commonalities as fellow human beings.

In what appears to be a "ripe fruit" encounter, we must discern what half-truths have taken up lodging in that person's belief system then carefully move toward conversations that clarify who Christ really IS. With both kinds of people, we must earn the right to be heard. The question for me is: "How much am I willing to concede in order to lengthen this relationship?"

Recently, my Father brought me to a screeching halt in my desire to build a relationship with a local leader who is a person that does not believe that Christ was and is Immanuel: God in the flesh. This person's invitation had been to partner in presenting a Gospel Concert for the public. The condition: "You must not bring up the Name of Jesus, however, for we must not offend anyone who attends". I realized that I had just been left out of the partnership in planning this event. Not only had I been left out, but my Jesus had been left out, so marketing this performance as a Gospel Concert was a bald-faced LIE in which I would not participate. It took several days to figure out how to drop out of the event with Truth and grace, still giving room for other Christians to participate. You see, we believers-in-Jesus are increasing in our community, and like the early believers, we "must be stopped from spreading this thing any further among the people". Acts 4:17.

Read it if you like, Acts 4:12-20 and ask yourself this question: What was the REAL offense of John and Peter to the Sanhedrin? Then follow that question with this one: Are you willing to leave out His Name in order to be accepted by "religious people" and to gain popularity with the general public?

Who is Jesus to you? Do you breathe Him in and out every day, or are you breathing in everything the world, the flesh and the devil tell you, then dispensing the same? Matthew 15:11 declares: "What goes into a man's mouth does not make him unclean, but what comes out of his mouth, that is what makes him unclean."

Fight fair, now. Use God's Word and not your own. Your own will be laced with pride and defensiveness and those fleshly cousins never will bear fruit for the Kingdom.

— Jo