

Special Forces: Day Eight

Basic Training: Unit Two

Tactics

Targets of Opportunity

The scene is at night around a warm fire in a forest clearing somewhere in Pennsylvania. The entire team is there, relaxing in the base camp after a day of practicing patrolling skills. It's a peaceful environment, free of hostile enemy, hence the warm fire. The team medic, John, started asking me questions about some things he had heard from a girl from Boston he had been dating. It sounded to me like she had been telling John about the church's and some of its doctrine. Anyway, I was able to answer his questions because I was very familiar with the teachings of that particular denomination. However, my discussion with John was just the tip of the iceberg!

Key Verse

"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction." 2 Timothy 4:2 (NIV)

The Holy Spirit opened another door that evening, faster than a SWAT team blowing the doors off a room full of bad guys'. What started out to be a friendly discussion around his questions turned into an opportunity to present to John the simple Gospel of God's love through Jesus Christ, without all of the man-made denominational trappings. That's not all! There were at least six other men in that base camp, some of whom could not help but overhear my discussion with John. Being eager to share the Gospel and being prepared with a knowledge of God's plan of salvation led to an opportunity to present that precious Gospel both actively to John and passively to other team members!

That isn't the end of the story. If God engineered the situation, and I just happened to be hanging around willing to be used as an instrument, I am sure that more followed in the hearts of the men who listened that night. I may never know exactly what, but I'll just leave that up to God. As the Apostle Paul put it...

"What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe - as the Lord has assigned each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it Grow." 1 Corinthians 3:5,6 (NIV)

So What?

As soldiers we were well trained and ready to engage targets of opportunity on the battlefield. I firmly believe that is all God asks of us - to be well trained and ready. He doesn't want His precious message of salvation forced down anybody's throat. You don't have to stand on street corners handing out tracts and asking passersby where their souls are headed when they die. He just wants us to grow in grace and be ready. He has given you: a heart to share what He has done in your life; His word in order to learn more and more of his grace; and He presents opportunities for you to share what he is doing in your daily life.

God has chosen us, his children, to plant seeds for his Kingdom. I'm sure God is more than capable of manifesting his love and power without us. That makes his choice of using us pretty astounding. By the way, there's is historical precedent here, straight from the Bible.

"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled men (not pastors or chaplains), they were astonished and they took note that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13 (NIV)

If you're living for Him, and have shared the Gospel with someone you care about but haven't seen results, don't worry about it. God's working! If you desire to share the Gospel but can't seem to find an opportunity, don't worry about it. Ask God to open doors and just be ready. God's working! It wouldn't surprise me one bit if now and then God even shows you the increase!