

WHAT'S HOLDING YOU BACK? **John 12: 12-16**

What makes people hesitate to share their faith? Here are some of the fears people have shared.

- I am afraid I might do more harm than good.
- I don't know what to say.
- I may not be able to give snappy answers to tricky questions.
- I may seem bigoted.
- I may invade someone's privacy.
- I am afraid I might fail.
- I am afraid I might be a hypocrite.

Perhaps the most common fear, however, is that of being rejected. A survey was given to those attending training sessions for the Billy Graham crusade in Detroit. One question asked, "What is your greatest hindrance to witnessing?" Nine percent said they were too busy to remember to do it. Twenty-eight percent felt the lack of real information to share. None said they didn't really care. Twelve percent said their own lives were not speaking as they should. But by far the largest group were the 51 percent whose biggest problem was the fear of how the other person would react! None of us likes to be rejected, ridiculed, or regarded as an oddball.

Throughout Jesus' entire ministry among the people and his training of the disciples he held in his heart this hope: That Peter along with the rest of his disciples would lose their earthly ambitions and become feeders of sheep fishers of men.

The very first words of Jesus when he and Peter met at the waters was, "Follow me, and I will make you a fisher of men." His very last words to Peter, again down at the waters of the Sea of Galilee, and after his resurrection, were, "Feed my sheep, Follow me." From beginning to end this is the mission of the Church.

My we be faithful to share with others the God News of Jesus. May our words and actions glorify our Lord and king.

God bless,
Pastor Barbara