**Elevator Speech: The Hope that Is in Me**

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“Always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you about the hope you have. Be ready to give the reason for it. But do it gently and with respect.”

(1 Peter 3.15)

Context: I am a peace activist. In some situations, people ask, “Why are you here?” and each time, before I go, I contemplate how I would answer that question, should someone ask.. I assume this exercise is similar. Are we ready to “give the reason for the hope that is in us?” If not, this is an opportunity to prepare an answer, should someone ask.

Here are questions to consider as you work at your own “elevator speech” testimony or Jesus-story:

What is God’s project? (How does God want things to be in life?)

What is the problem? (How would you describe what Jesus came to save us from or for?)

How did God through Jesus fix what was broken in your life? In the world?

What can we do to be part of God’s project? (OR What can you specifically do as part of God’s project?)

Here’s one example:

The God I worship created the world and everything in it good. Since then, things have gotten pretty messed up because of sin and violence. It got so bad that God came to earth to fix things. God came to us in Jesus. Jesus showed us God’s way—a way where love heals bodies, minds and relationships. Someday even God’s beloved, now messed-up creation will be the way God originally envisioned it again. Jesus was God with skin on and he was so committed to loving others that even the possibility of death didn’t convince him to stop. The powers that be were threatened by what he said and did, so they did him in. His death showed us that sin and evil have power here, but his resurrection shows the world that evil doesn’t win. Love has the final word! So, we’re called to be part of Jesus’ movement. We can be Jesus’ friends, following his way of love, which also brings peace, justice, and wholeness to the world wherever Jesus’ friends are at work.

If someone offers a follow-up question about how I have personally experienced God’s love, I am inclined to talk about how, little by little, God has healed the fear in me. Anxiety runs pretty deep in my family. There are reasons for that. I think genetically, some of us in my family are even wired to be fearful. God has been healing me of this through prayer, meditation, reading, counseling, and friends. Freedom from fear is a true gift of God.

What’s your elevator story of the good news found in Jesus?

Resource: Kreider, Alan, “Tongue Screws and Testimony,” *Missio Dei*, No. 16, 2008, pp. 1-30. Available online at: https://assets.mennonites.org/Downloads/MissioDei16.E.pdf