

Announcements:

1. Carpet update—Feb 7
2. Annual Meeting and Potluck
3. AWANA's Family at 6:30pm—Thursday
4. Kingdom Man study—Saturday

Mission Minded: EQUIPPED TO GO

2 Timothy 3:17

This is the third and final week of our short, not deep enough study of what it is to be mission minded. But, I believe this 30,000 foot view gives us an understanding that we are to be mission minded, why we are to be mission minded, and how to be mission minded.

Jesus, when He gave some of His final parting words to His disciples, He told them what He wanted them to do. He gave them their mission. And, that mission is given to me and to you. Here it is: “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” That is Matthew 28:19-20, known as the Great Commission. It is the mission you and I have been called into. We are called to be discipled and we are called to make disciples.

Our mission at Glide Baptist is to REACH people with hope of God. That is the “Go” of the Great Commission.

These are people that don't know Jesus. They are outside the church, not connected to the things of God and not really connected to the people of God. We have to go to them, they are not coming to us.

The second level of our mission at Glide Baptist is to CONNECT them to the family of God, which we looked at last week. These are people that interest in God and the things of God has begun. They may not yet know God, but God seems to be working in them, waking them if you will to who He is and who they are and their need for Him. This is the stage of interest, but not full commitment. Their maturity in the things of God is still pretty adolescent: faith in God is based on how they feel about things of

faith and what they are getting out of it. The goal is to reveal and help walk them to and alongside them into the deeper things of faith.

This is the 'baptizing them' in the Great Commission. Baptism is simply an immersing into. Baptism is simply an outward testimony of what God is doing on the inside. God through Jesus has washed us clean from our sin by His blood that was shed on the cross. He died and then rose from the dead, now and forever alive. Baptism is the picture of our having been washed clean by the blood of Christ, dying to our old life, and being raised to eternal life living for Christ. It is telling the world that we are committed to following Christ, that He is our savior and that He is our Lord and King of our life. Baptism doesn't make us part of the family of God, but it is an outward action that reveals we are already part of the family of God and committed to growing in Christ and growing in the family of God. Our hope is that those in this stage of CONNECTING will be saved and baptized.

The third stage of maturing in Christ is EQUIP'ping believers for the work of God. This and the fourth stage of 'GO'ing' we will tackle today. First, let's look at EQUIP'ping. This is the 'teaching them to obey' of the Great Commission.

Equipping believers is the work of God and the responding of the child of God to that work to grow in their faith. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians tells us who does the work. Philippians 2:13 says, "For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him." Who is working in you? God. What is He doing? Giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

Hebrews 13:21 puts it this way, "may He [God] equip you with all you need for doing his will. May He produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to Him. All glory to him forever and ever! Amen." According to this verse, who equips you? God. He equips you to do what? Every good thing that is pleasing to Him.

Listen to Colossians 2:6-7, "And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness." We have a part to play. We must follow Him, putting ourselves into a posture

of surrender, willingness, and submission. We 'let'. In other words, we not only make it possible, but actually put ourselves into the position for our roots to grow deep in truth and not only choose, but make the commandments of Christ what we live our life by. And what is the result, what is it that God does in us? "Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness." Thankfulness is an outpouring of inner joy, or scriptural happiness.

Do we let our roots grow down deep into self help books, church programs, wisdom of friends, being a 'good' person, this pastor or that pastor, or this new way of doing church or that old way of doing church? NO! Our roots grow down in Him: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. How do we do that? In His revealed word of God. In His revealed will to us.

2 Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right." This verse tells us a few things.

- 1) Scripture is inspired by God. It literally means inspired by Him, straight from Him. He divinely, sovereignly guided the writers to what needed to be said and revealed to us, but they wrote it through their personality and circumstances. It is, in its fullness, not to be added to or taken away from, God's written word to us.
- 2) It is useful for teaching. It reveals to us who God is, His attributes, what He did and does. It is the cannon, or measure, the standard to which all supposed truths are to be held up against.
- 3) It reveals who we are. We are sinners. We are not God. We are people who need God. We need saving from our own divisive nature. It reveals to us that we are not inherently good, but have wickedness within us from birth. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires."
- 4) Scripture corrects us. It points us in the right way of living. It points us to God's will for our lives. It is the revealed will of God. When people ask what is God's will. Look it up. It's in the Bible. It is the Bible. Sure, you should pray. Prayer is an intimate connection. Prayer is where scripture becomes very intimate and real and scripture makes prayer very intimate and real. Prayer without knowledge of

scripture is like having a relationship with someone over the phone. You can talk to them where you are the one doing most, if not all the talking, but you never really know them or their heart. It's a very one-sided relationship, or at best an extremely immature relationship that leaves the imagination ability to dream up all kinds of untruths.

Listen to the next verse in 2 Timothy 3. Listen to verse 17, "God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." What is God using? Scripture. For what? To equip. To what purpose? To do every good work.

Ephesians 2:10 says that God created us to do good works that He has planned for us. "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." These good things are connected with the spiritual gifting that God through His Spirit has given each one of us. Each of us has been given a part to play in the body of Christ.

Our greatest joy comes when we are who we are to be and we do what we were built to do. We will find our greatest happiness in being with Who we were meant to be with and who we were meant to be. When we step into that kind of worship, joy will bubble up. It will overwhelm you. It will empower you.

That is why Philippians 2:13 isn't a burden. But like a weight lifted off of you. I'll read it again, "For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him." Now, take that in context to a verse that is often quoted as a promise that God will do what we want, because we focus on the last half of the verse instead of the first half. Psalm 37:4, "Take delight in the LORD, and He will give you your heart's desires." If I were to rewrite that verse, it would be this, "Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you your heart's desires which is what God created for you to long time ago, and He will give you the power to do it."

How does this fit into the EQUIP'ing part? I want us to understand being equipped as believers is solely based upon God's Word, because God's word is what will equip you to do good works. It will grow, challenge, strengthen, reveal, and refine within you. And as that process takes place and you surrender and submit to that process, your going to be filled up to the point where you will overflow. It will no longer be about you. It will

naturally spill over on others because you will have not only been touched by God's love, not only experienced God's love, but know God's love so deeply you will want others to experience and know what you experience and know. And in so doing, the world around you will see Whose they were meant to be and who they were meant to be.

John 12:34-35 will become exceedingly real. It says, "So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

Those in this EQUIP'ping stage are:

- These are believers.
- They are learning to trust that God is their source of life and happiness.
- They are growing into being faithful servants that pour into the movements of God. This is areas of ministry within the church first, and then also outside the church.
- They give their resources of time, finances, and abilities to the cause of Christ. This is our spiritual gifting that each believer has been given. It's our tithes and offerings. It's our sacrifice of serving when there was something else we wanted to do.
- They are people of the book. They grow from the Truth. They may use other sources to aid understanding God's Truth, but the Bible is their ultimate, foundational source. This is personal time in scripture. Being in a small group Bible study discussing Scripture and it's application in our life. This is going to Sunday School.
- They are concerned about the unity of the body more than being right. And, likewise, they are not so concerned about the unity of the body that they forgo Biblical truth, but instead welcome it and stand up for it, because unity of the body is based on Biblical truth.
- They experience and know God's love and they want others to experience and know God's love...so much so it naturally overflows out of them into their everyday life.

That brings us to the fourth stage, GO'ing out to restore a world looking for a lasting hope. People everywhere are looking for hope. This is not a new phenomenon. Feeling secure, feeling like you have what you need in this world tends to shadow our need for a lasting hope. Our need for a lasting hope isn't realized as much as when there seems to be no more hope, when things are so bad that we just don't see any good coming from it.

Those moments of despair and loneliness. That is why I believe all that has gone on in this last year especially amidst the chaos of our country, God is opening the door for salvation to spring up.

People are losing hope. What they once placed there either conscious or unconscious hope in is being dashed against the rocks and destroyed. Many are finding what they once placed their hope in is like a house built upon the sand. Listen to Matthew 7:24-27, “Anyone who listens to my teaching [Jesus’s teachings] and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

Our hope is found in Christ. Our hope is found in His Word because it is the revealed word form of Christ. Have you seen Jesus Christ? I have not physically, but in word form, yes. How do we bring hope to people? Give them God’s Word. It reveals our need for Him. It is the final piece to the puzzle. It is our greatest tool. There is power in these words (hold up Bible). Why? Because it shows us who we are, who we were meant to be, what that need is that we are looking for, and who God is.

As you grow in Christ and the things of the Lord, and as the people around you see the growth, God becomes real. Understand that it will offend, because Christ is in you. The offense isn’t always going to be harsh, at times it will be gentle and filled with grace. Your role in it is not to hide the growth. Your role is to allow the growth to be seen.

Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 5:13-16, “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”

“Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.” As you have chosen to submit to Christ, to being equipped, God will use you. People will see God at work in you. People will experience God at work through you. It will be seen and felt.

Why do I say lasting hope? Because as Hebrews 9:27 says, “And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment.” We all have a destiny...it’s either in Christ or apart from Christ. There is hope in this world, and there is a hope that is lasting.

Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Every knee will bow. Some in the blessing, some in the curse. Romans 3:23 says ‘we all have sinned.’ None of us has will skate by. Listen to verses 25-26, “For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he makes sinners right in his sight when they believe in Jesus.”

Romans 5:8 says, “ But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.”

Romans 6:23 says, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Mankind needs restoring. We have the medicine for the deadly disease.

Psalms 33:20 and 21, says, “We put our hope in the Lord. He is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name.”

1 Corinthians 1:27 says, “To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

1 Corinthians 5:19-20 says, “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”
We are ambassadors for Christ. You and I. It isn't what we say, it isn't what we do. It is what Christ is doing in us and through us. You and I are just the representation of God in Christ Jesus to this world.

As one moves through the stages, trust in God grows. Maturity in Christ and trust are tied together.

The goal is not to label people, but the goal is to give a tangible and understandable method for us to help people grow in the Lord.