

Announcements

1. In two weeks we have our annual meeting.
 1. Budget is on back wall
 2. Next week you will get reports to look through
 3. We will have food to.
 4. All should come to. Meeting is short, but good info. I will be sharing some important information with you in regards to our future
2. New Member's Class
 1. qualifications: a Christian, baptized after coming to faith, and commitment to Glide Baptist
 2. among many things, gives you the right to vote, all can have input, but you must be a member to vote
3. Evan and Ericka get married next Saturday at NUBF @ 11am
4. Next Sunday, Clay Tillman and Dane Tornell

Mission Minded 2022: Reach 2 Corinthians 5:19

Thank you Bill for stepping in last minute to preach for me this last week. That's a very hard thing to do, especially when the call comes at 6:30 in the morning.

We have started our five week series that I have titled "Mission Minded". I firmly believe that we are to be mission minded in our approach to our personal faith, mission minded in regards to the growth of other people's faith that are in the church, and mission minded in reaching people that do not believe that the Jesus of the Bible is the only way for salvation.

Last week, Bill talked about being mission minded. We, as followers of Christ, are given a call to be mission minded. Each of us is called to be a local missionary through our gifting, abilities, personalities, passions, experiences, in our location, and more.

Being 'mission minded' as followers of Christ is to be intentional in our lives to represent Christ. It's meant to permeate our whole life, because His message is for our whole life and changes our whole life.

The second aspect of being 'mission minded' as followers of Christ is the aspect of maturing in the Lord. It's a personal mission, but it is also a communal mission for the body of Christ. We have a responsibility to grow as individuals in Christ, and we have a responsibility to encourage other believers in their faith journey as well. Our faith is not compartmentalized to Sundays or our Christian ministry or with our Christian friends.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians uses the word 'ambassadors'. We are ambassadors of Christ; representatives of our heavenly King pointing people to and promoting the things of the Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 says, "And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!"

Catch that, we have a task of reconciling people to God. He gave us the wonderful message of reconciliation not for us to keep to ourselves, but to share with the those around us. We are His ambassadors, His representation, His spokesman. An ambassador is simply someone who goes under the authority, in the authority, and with the authority of the one that is sending them.

God is making His appeal *through us*. He uses the believer to further on His kingdom. He is not using the believer to make His kingdom bigger so that His kingdom will finally win or have more power. God already has the power. God has already won. So, what is taking so long? 2 Peter 3:9 gives us some insight. It says, "The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise [promise to return and judge], as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent."

God, out of His great love, brings us into His ministry as partners in His wonderful and fulfilling work. God is making His appeal *through us*. We are tasked with a mission. And that mission is to call people back to God. That mission is to help people mature in the Lord.

Before we know Christ, we have a humanistic worldview. When we come to Christ, the goal is to grow into a biblical worldview, seeing through the eyes of Christ. The more humanistic our thinking is, the more our thinking will be based on 'what will I get out of it'. The more our thinking is biblically based, the more our thinking begins to resemble Christ's behavior and attitude which was a behavior and attitude of humility and serving. Humanistic thinking is about making something of yourself, making a name for yourself, being somebody, fixing yourself. Biblical thinking reveals we are somebody in Christ, we have a family, we have a name, we are whole, we have opportunity to walk in a new way of life.

We are ambassadors. We have been given a mission to share the message of reconciliation, and empower and encourage people to *mature* in that message of reconciliation; this is the process of evangelization and discipleship. What is reconciliation? It's making things right; fixing what is broken; it's two people with a problem between them and that problem gets fixed. What is the message of reconciliation? 2 Corinthians 5:21, which says, "For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ." In other words, Jesus fixed our problem.

In other words, you and I have sinned, we have done wrong. That sin separates us from God, it is what has brought spiritual death and has condemned us to eternity in hell, completely separated from God. And, in hell, the sinner will not experience any of God's grace, just His wrath. On earth, we at least get to experience some of His grace, He holds back the fullness of His wrath. Jesus, who never sinned, who never did wrong, said, "I will take your sin, I will take your judgment, I will take God's wrath, I will suffer your punishment and in exchange, I will give you my righteousness. I will give you a right relationship with God. He will no longer see your sin, instead He will see my perfection. Because of that, you will have eternal life and for eternity you will experience the fullness of His grace."

That is unbelievable love. That is the kind of grace that is found no where else. That breeds hope and brings peace into the worst of situations.

You and I have been given a mission. Glide Baptist has a mission. We have been called to evangelize and disciple. The picture that God gave me a few years ago that helps me to wrap my head around this is in the form

of steps or movement. It's a picture of a funnel. This funnel is my thought process of how and what we do as a church body.

We are called to love God and love others, that is what drives us. We want people to experience and know the love of God. As individuals we are called to do this. In Ephesians 4, Paul tells us we are called to 'walk in a manner worthy of the gospel'. In other words, talk and act in such a way that people, everywhere you are, see Christ in you. We are called to do this as individuals, in our everyday life: in our homes, in our jobs, at our schools, in our rooms, on our phones, through facebook, when we play sports, etc.

We aren't alone in this. God has given us support. God has also given us a church to do this with. This call to evangelize and disciple and *to be disciplined* also manifests itself in and through the collective body of individuals in Christ, when we come together as the church.

[SHOW SLIDE]

The whole thing is the process of evangelism and discipleship. The top is REACH, next is CONNECT, then EQUIP, and finally, GO or AS YOU GO. [By the way, this may sound familiar. These words are on the inside of your bulletin.]

At the top is the widest part. It is those that don't know Christ, those outside of the church. The narrowest part at the bottom is those that have a mature relationship with Christ and they are multiplying themselves; there are less people that fit into this category, hence it is the smallest part of the funnel.

Over the next four or five weeks, we are going to dig into this general vision of reaching, connecting, equipping, and going. This week we are going to look at the widest part of the funnel, REACH; reaching people with the love of God.

I hope to answer three questions:

Why do we REACH?

Who do we REACH?

How do we REACH?

...but let me first define this part of the funnel.

This group doesn't know Jesus. They do not have a relationship with Him. They may not even know who Jesus is, or at best have a distorted idea of Jesus and the church. They won't understand what we do as a church and they won't understand why we do what we do as a church.

I would like to mention also, that we must remember that we live in a post-Christian culture. We have to get it out of our heads that people today, especially the younger the person has understanding of Jesus, the Bible, Christian-ese, and the church. More people today than ever in the history of the United States are claiming to have no religious affiliation. They have been labeled the "Nones," because they mark the box on surveys that says 'Religious Affiliation: None'.

And, because of living and growing up in a post-Christian culture Biblical principles are not taught, the Bible stories that were once common are at best fables, and most likely if they know anything of the stories, it's a small, non-factual or twisted aspect of the story. And, it's not that they don't believe in a god or higher power, it just isn't for them. It may be right for you, but not right for them. Religion is too confining, to rules driven, and it boxes them in, there are many ways to god.

So, in order to reach many of the people today we have to move from expecting people to be at step 8 in understanding who Jesus is, we have to go all the way back to step 1, back to the very basics. We pretty much are going to have to think as a missionary that goes to some forsaken tribe that has no connection to the outside world and has only heard their made up stories of creation and mankind.

In Glide, I am not sure it's quite that extreme, but I am not convinced that I am that far off. That is not a putdown to our area, it's just simply the world we live in today. And, we can try and cast blame, but it will just hinder us, build up anger, and get us off topic. Besides, we must remember what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:14, "But people who aren't spiritual can't receive these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and they can't understand it, for only those who are spiritual (better said, who do not have the Spirit of God) can understand what the Spirit means."

We have two options here: 1) retreat and stay in our safe Christian bubble or 2) we lay ourselves out as a 'living sacrifice on the altar' and with the

response of Isaiah saying, “Here I am, send me.” One option will feel safe, but miss the power of God and the blessings of God and the other will experience the presence of God and see the hand of God at work and experience the blessings of God.

So...

Why REACH out?

1. God wants everyone to repent. 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord isn’t really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.”
2. Everyone is in need of salvation
 1. Because *all* have fallen short, Romans 3:23
 2. Because *all* are born dead to Christ and alive to sin, Ephesians 2:4-5, “But God is so rich in mercy, and He loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, He gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!)”
 3. There is no where to hide. There will be “judgment on those who don’t know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power.” according to 2 Thessalonians 1:9.
 4. All will stand before the judge to be judged. 2 Corinthians 5:10 “For we must *all* stand before Christ to be judged.”
3. We are commanded to reach out: Matthew 28:19-20 “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.”
4. There is no other message. There are not many ways to this God. It is only through Jesus Christ.

Who do we REACH out to?

1. Those without faith. Hebrews 11:6 “And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.”
2. All would be ideal, but the reality is those that God has put in your life, those that you have a relationship with, those that you will have a relationship with. As you go. Matthew 28:19 “As you go, make

disciples”. The people around you. Those that you have a relationship with.

3. Those in our proximity. Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (The idea: start in your location and then let it spread out farther from you)

How do we REACH people?

1. By believing what we believe in
 1. First, you must understand that the things you believe in as a Christian are facts.
 2. Second, these facts are not yours in the sense that they uniquely pertain to you or your perspective or experience, or in the sense that you made them up on your own, they are fact apart from you
 3. Finally, in Biblical evangelism we are not imposing anything.
 1. For some, we think we are imposing our beliefs on another. That is an underlying lie that has permeated our culture. What's right for me may not be right for you. I don't want to push my beliefs upon you because you may have other beliefs. What!?! How does that work? It can only work if Christianity is *not* the only way to God. Because, if it is, it is abuse, hatred, and absolute unloving to think sharing our beliefs is an imposition.
2. Realize there is urgency in the message.
 1. It's appointed once for a man to die, then judgment. We don't know what that day is.
 2. There is urgency in our message. I think we forget that sometimes. It isn't our responsibility to save the individual, that is God's responsibility. Our responsibility is simply to be faithful in our calling, to share God's love and hope found in the Truth. It's the Spirit's responsibility to convict. It's Jesus's responsibility to save. It's our responsibility to share. It's their responsibility to receive.
3. By our lifestyle:
 1. Matthew 5:14-16, “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.”

1. How we love matters. John 13:34, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”
2. The way we live matters. It can prompt people to pay attention, to ask questions.
3. Our lifestyle, collectively matters
 1. Quote by Mark Dever, “Live a life of committed love to the other members of you local church, as a fundamental part of your own sanctification and of your evangelistic ministry. Our individual lives alone are not a sufficient witness. Our lives together as church communities are the confirming echo of our witness.”
 2. That is why we do certain outreaches at the church. Bring those you are witnessing to to those events: movie nights, Trunk or Treat, potlucks, game nights, Men’s field days, Women’s coffee talk; the things that are less threatening, more fun and interactive, aren’t as deep and invasive.
 3. —OR—bring those other believers to them: to a dinner, for coffee, to help them...in other words be in their presence with other believers doing life things together.
 4. By the way, there is safety and strength in numbers. You are more likely to be an influence and less likely to fall prey to sin.
 5. There is diversity in numbers. They see Christ is not for a certain person or type of person, but He is for all from different backgrounds, sin issues, races, personalities, etc.
4. Through our words
 1. Acts 20:21 “I have had one message for Jews and Greeks alike—the necessity of repenting from sin and turning to God, and of having faith in our Lord Jesus.”
 2. Revelation 12:11 “And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony.” What are testifying to? What God has done.
5. Through God’s Word
 1. 1 Peter 1:23 “For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God.”
 2. Hebrews 4:12 “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.”

3. Romans road
4. Do a simple Bible study. There are tools out there. More people are willing to do a Bible study than what we think.
6. Share the gospel. Ask.
 1. Romans 10:14 “But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?”
 2. Too often we are are poor salesmen. We are not intentional enough. This is a crude analogy, but it gets the point across. A salesmen reveals the product, shows why the product is so great, and then leaves. NO! They don’t do forget the most important part. That would be ridiculous. They ask if you want to buy the product...and they don’t give up! We have the greatest message ever. An eternal message. The message of salvation. The message the reconciles them to Christ and pulls them out of hell. Ask.
 1. Some of you are thinking, “But, I don’t know what to say.” Yes you do. Don’t make it complicated, make it simple. Take time to figure it out now, beforehand. Come ask what to say. I won’t judge you...actually, I would be super excited for you.

God has brought you in to the impossible. Salvation is a miracle. It’s literally breathing life where death reigns. You are partakers in the work of God. You have been called into a task that you cannot complete on your own, but God promises to be with you, to work through you. He has called you into this task of the impossible. But, remember, God is a God who can do the impossible. Matthew 19:26 says, “Jesus looked at them intently and said, “Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible.”

Maybe you don’t have a burden for the lost? Go back to the gospel message, constantly. Look at your need for God to save you, that hasn’t changed. As believers we still sin, we still need God’s constant forgiveness and grace. Pray, ask God to understand your great need for Him and then ask God to give you a broken heart for those around you that understand they have a need for salvation. We really should be doing this anyways.

Maybe you don't believe God can save 'that person'. They are to gone or to hard hearted. God's forgiveness is not to weak for that person. It may take more work on your part. More patience. A greater strategy. More prayer and lots of wisdom and discernment. Did I say patience?