

SLIDE 1. Series: Everyday Disciples

Teaching: *How Do We Share the Gospel as a Lifestyle?*

Sunday October 20.2024

Unpacking the disruption of Sunday Oct. 13 service by the "self-appointed prophets" who came in late and stood up and spoke out several judgments upon SLC:

- a. That people should leave a church who would hire a female pastor.
- b. That I (Rob) was deceiving SLC with false teaching.
- c. That SLC needed to repent, or we would burn in hell.

First: Thank you. Thank you, Don Kroeker for your attempt to connect and understand our 2 visitors – father and son. And thank you, Don, for taking a mic. at the end of our service to help us understand who they were – and to invite us to love and pray for them. It was a fitting and living application of the message.

Thank you, Tony Guenther (and Dave Wiens) for escorting our visitors to the exit – to keep us from further disruption and condemnation.

Second: Context. These 2 men are part of a cult with several other men who exist to rebuke the churches in the area for their misreading and misapplication of the bible. We are not the first – and we will not be the last. They hold to a conservative and literal understanding of the Scriptures.

For instance - they condemn men with long hair and women with short hair, and women – altogether - on staff at a church. They believe there are 2 covenants with God: one for men and one for women.

Third: Counsel. These 2 men are so convinced of the rightness of what they are doing and saying that it is not likely that any of us would be able to convince them otherwise. Anything is possible with God – but He needs willing vessels.

They are known by local media and are controversial characters who seek to rebuke and judge and condemn churches and believers.

For these reasons – we will escort them to the exit once again if they should return, and we would recommend that you avoid them if you run into them in public (and yet to pray for them). Pray that God would soften their hearts. Pray that God would heal their anger and hurt. Pray that they would remember that it is God's job – alone – to judge the living and the dead. Pray that they could become men who could disagree agreeably.

Additional thoughts f. Pastor Bryan.

QUESTIONS.

PRAYER.

In our Fall Teaching Series – EVERYDAY DISCIPLES – we have so far talked about how to love others as loved ones of God, how to forgive others as we are forgiven by God, how to experience God in our midst, how to one another each other, and how to disagree without being disagreeable.

As always – our teachings at SLC are available via podcast on Apple Podcast or Spotify or on our website – where you can also find transcripts of the same.

This morning – we will talk about how we can share the gospel as a lifestyle.

Next Sunday – we will be hosting a mini-missions fest – featuring our global ministry partners – when we will have live and video updates – and a chance to pray for each of them as those we support.

Throughout the Sunday mornings in November – I'd like to invite you to come and be ready to share your prayers along the lines of what we talked about when we talked about experiencing God in our midst – to share prayers of HELP / THANKS / WOW – where WOW means those times when you have had a sense of God blessing you or you've had the Spirit-led sense of partnering with Him to do something good!

Let's get to it: *How Do We Share the Gospel as a Lifestyle?*

Or – we might ask: How do we *evangelize* as a natural part of our *discipleship*?

Let's define a few terms...

SLIDE 2. The gospel in a nutshell is the "good news" that: **God sent His Son to show us His love, to save us from sin, to set up His Kingdom, and to shut down religion – so that we would live a full life with God.**

It is more than this, but it is not less than this.

SLIDE 3. Evangelism = "euangelion" (transliterated f. the Greek) = **to announce good news.** See slide 2!

Evangelism is a *proclamation* of good news.

SLIDE 4. Discipleship = the process of moving from unbelief to belief in the gospel – in every area of life. From not knowing God at all to progressively knowing Him and trusting Him with every aspect of your life.

Which – we might think – begins when we hear the gospel for the first time, but I think we could make the argument that it begins the day we were born.

We are born into a beautiful and complex world - which – the bible says – points us to its Creator.

SLIDE 5. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse (Ro. 1:20).

I'm not sure when we gain understanding of the Creator based on His creation (or at least seek to know Him based on what He has made), but it seems to me that this invitation to know God is at work long before we ever hear the gospel proclaimed to us for the first time.

And then there is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to "convict the (unbelieving) world of sin" as John alludes to in his gospel.

SLIDE 6. *And when he* (the Holy Spirit) *comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment* (Jn. 16:8).

The Greek word for "convict" that John uses here ("elenxei") means "to rebuke, convince, or accuse."

So far as the movement from unbelieving to believing is concerned, the Holy Spirit is constantly at work exposing the sin of not-yet believers, naming it, and calling it out – so that they would look at it, know the truth of it, and seek a good news solution for this bad news.

So, long before we hear or proclaim the gospel – God is at work – hinting at who He is through His creation – and establishing the need for our salvation through His Spirit.

SLIDE 7. *God has whetted the world with an appetite for Him.*

Or – we might say, "God has set the table for us to invite others to know Him."

As disciples – people who have moved from unbelief to belief in the gospel - *we get to* "euangelion" – *we get to evangelize* – *we get to* announce the good news – the gospel – which is – that God sent His Son to show us His love, to save us from sin, to set up His Kingdom, and to shut down religion – so that we would live a full life with God.

But somewhere along the line we separated evangelism out from discipleship – like it's some kind of add on – something relegated to those with a gift for evangelism (like Emmie) or for those who are confident and articulate about their faith (like Wilma) – when it is – in fact – much more like one leading to the other.

We have forgotten or ignored that the GREAT CO-MISSION (a mission in partnership with God) isn't just for these kinds of people – it's for *everyone* who has moved from unbelief to belief in the gospel.

And it's for *everyday!*

Therefore – what is the "therefore" there for?

It is there for us to be assured of what Jesus says just before He says "therefore" - that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him (Mt. 28:18) – which is to say – that He has the authority to send us on the mission that He does – with a promise – that He will be with us to the very end of the age!

SLIDE 8. *Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you* (Mt. 28:19-20).

GO – said Jesus to His 11 remaining disciples, not somewhere else, but as they “go about” their everyday lives...

MAKE DISCIPLES – join God in His work of introducing Himself to the world through the world He created and through His Spirit who convinces the world of their need for God-by baptizing and teaching those who would move from unbelief to belief in the gospel.

Leaving us to simply declare it: that God sent His Son to show us His love, to save us from sin, to set up His Kingdom, and to shut down religion – so that we would live a full life with God.

It sounds so simple, doesn't it? And it is! It might be as simple as B-L-E-S-S.
BLESS those around you.

SLIDE 9. B is for Begin (with Prayer).

Thank God that He has vicariously introduced Himself to the world.

Thank God that He is convicting the world of their need for Him – so that you don't have to! Not your job or mine to rebuke, convince or accuse unbelieving people of their sin. Leave that work to the Spirit of God.

Thank God that He is with us on mission.

Ask God for help with unbelievers we're doing life with, people we're caring for, tough conversations we're having, and leaders we're developing.

Ask God for the courage to speak when the time is right.

Ask God for the wisdom to know when the time is right to speak.

Ask the Spirit for help. Listen for the Spirit's direction. Obey what the Spirit tells you.

Or you could simply say, “Lord, make me a blessing!”

SLIDE 10. L is for Listen.

Listen for “people of peace.”

“People of peace” is an expression we might borrow from Luke 10 – when Jesus sends out 72 disciples on mission.

SLIDE 11. *When you enter a house, first say, "Peace on this house." If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages...*

SLIDE 12. ...When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you... But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into the streets and say, "Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you" (Lk. 10:5-11).

By application – we might say that it is wise to listen for people in our lives who are interested or seeking – peace - as a measure of whether we should say more – and to give ourselves permission to not say anything or to stop talking if we are not welcomed.

Discern who you are talking to and determine if they are able to listen.

SLIDE 13. E is for Eating with others.

There are 21 meals in a week. There are 52 weeks in a year. That's more than 2000 chances per year to sit with someone and disciple them – no matter where they're at in their journey from unbelief to belief in the gospel!

More than 2000 opportunities for fellowship. That's not even including SNACKS!

Table fellowship is where we can meet with others to eat, to face each other and to sit shoulder to shoulder, and to talk about life and limb.

The only question is, "Who does God have in your life to invite?"

Speaking of which - I get a chance to sit down and eat with a # of young adults after the service this morning. We meet once a month for what we call P4 – a time for us to eat **p**izza, drink **p**op, **p**onder a topic, and **p**lay games.

Last month we talked about how to discover our passion. This afternoon, we're going to talk about how to form healthy relationships. Just go-ing about life together! Discipling one another.

SLIDE 14. S is for Serve.

Look for opportunities to serve: to serve others or to serve alongside others.

Either way! Serving gives you a chance to get to know people.

We can serve our neighbors by dropping off food or mowing their lawn or shoveling their driveway. We can serve our neighborhood by being the go-to neighbor: the one who holds the spare key, the one who is happy to lend whatever, the one to whom children go to because it's safe.

We can serve our neighbors in our neighborhood by throwing great parties! God loves a good party. There are 7 O.T. festivals. Jesus first miracle was turning water into wine at a week-long wedding feast. We can be those neighbors who bring a better wine. Neighbors known for their generosity.

And we can be neighbors in our community who work alongside others to get to know people in our community – just as many of you do.

I spent several years, for instance, volunteering alongside others at the Salvation Army in Chilliwack @ Christmastime. One thing I got to do was walk Hamper recipients through the Christmas Hamper assembly line.

I'd introduce myself by name and ask them theirs. Person to person, not helper to recipient. We'd walk through the line – picking up bread and milk and a turkey voucher (amongst other food stuffs) and a box or two of toys if they qualified. In that short time – I would get to know a part of their story (whatever bits they'd want to talk about).

Then I'd see some of them in town and we'd both go, "Hey! I know you."

SLIDE 15. S is for Sharing Stories.

We're praying. We're listening. We may be eating together. We're serving. And - we can share stories: Bible stories. Our coming to faith story. Stories about how we integrate faith and life these days.

Stories like Jesus used to tell: relevant and to the point – because we have listened for their longings and losses as well their readiness to hear.

Some things to think about for telling our stories...

a. Sometimes a question is better.

Pastor Bryan tells the story of a student who thought she was bisexual. Instead of sharing a definitive story condemning the idea he simply inquired, "Tell me more about that!"

She reasoned, "If I'm not willing to date someone then do I really love them!"

To which Pastor Bryan asked, "Do you love your mom?"

Which led to a great conversation about the different kinds of love.

b. Staying in a conversation is better than pushing for a conclusion.

In 2019 – the Barna Group explored the top qualities non-believers and lapsed Christians look for in a person with whom they would want to talk about faith matters. The top qualities were "listening without judgment" (62%), and "not forcing a conclusion" (50%).

However, only a minority of those surveyed said that the Christians they knew possess these qualities.

Sharing the gospel is relational, not transactional. We're not selling flooring! It's about content, but it also (and maybe more these days) about credibility and trust.

As one writer put it, "A Christian who listens well builds a foundation of trust and can discover questions about God that can be explored in authentic conversations" (Q Place, *Sharing the Gospel Today*, FRI 01.2022, Fran Goodrich).

c. Take the long view.

Used to be, Christians could simply explain the way to salvation with a tract and lead someone to pray “The Sinner’s Prayer” to be saved.

Times have changed. And while I would never limit what God can do at any time, nor what a praying, Spirit-led, courageous person might use as a tool to lead someone from unbelief to belief in the gospel, nor where that person is or isn’t on their journey of faith – it has been estimated by some that it takes up to 25 people to introduce a person to Jesus Christ.

The first person thinks he did nothing, and the last person can think he did everything.

Stay with it. You never know when you might be that last person.

16. How do we share the gospel as a lifestyle? Begin with prayer. Listen. Eat with others. Serve. Share stories. We can go about this everyday: God whetting the appetite of our family and friends; God with us.