

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1-20-13 AM NOTES
"THE MINDSET OF THE CHURCH"
1 PETER 2:9-12
#3 in Series, "The Church as It Was Meant to Function"

Matthew 28:19-20 (NKJV) "19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age."

2 Timothy 2:2 (NKJV) "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

Mindset—A way of thinking that determines somebody's behavior and outlook.

1 Corinthians 9:14 (HCSB) "In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should earn their living by the gospel."

1 Timothy 5:17-18 (HCSB) "17 The elders who are good leaders should be considered worthy of an ample honorarium, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says: 'You must not muzzle an ox that is threshing grain', and, 'The laborer is worthy of his wages.'"

1 Thessalonians 2:9 (NKJV) "For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God."

Acts 18:3 (HCSB) "and being of the same occupation, stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade."

Tentmaker—A person whose mission here on earth is to glorify God by making disciple-making disciples, but is not on salary from a church or missionary-sending organization.

I. The Tentmakers' View of Their Mission in This World (vv. 9-10)

1 Peter 2:7a (NKJV) "Therefore, to you who believe, *He is precious...*"

A. Tentmakers Are Chosen Priests (v. 9a)

Revelation 1:5b-6 (NKJV) "5 To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

1. A Priest Represents Men Before God
2. A Priest Represents God Before Men

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II. The Tentmakers' View of Their Attachments to This World (v. 11)

A. Tentmakers View Themselves as Sojourners in This World

Philippians 3:20a (NKJV) "For our citizenship is in heaven..."

Colossians 1:13 (HCSB) "He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son He loves."

B. Tentmakers View Themselves as Pilgrims in This World

“If a man has Christ in his heart, Heaven before his eyes, and only as much temporal blessing as is just needful to carry him safely through life, then pain and sorrow have little to shoot at.”

—William Chalmers Burns

III. The Tentmakers' View of Success (v. 12)

A. A Life of Integrity (v. 12a)

1. Integrity in Our Vocation

Colossians 3:23 (NIV) “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.”

2. Integrity in Our Relationships

1 Corinthians 16:14 (NKJV) “Let all *that you do* be done with love.”

Philippians 2:3-4 (NKJV) “³Let nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

3. Integrity in Stewardship

B. A Life of Fruit (v. 12b)

1 Peter 2:12 (NIV) “Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV) “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

“A command has been given, ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.’ It has not been obeyed. More than half the people in the world have never yet heard the Gospel. What are we to say to this? Surely it concerns us Christians very seriously. For we are the people who are responsible...If our Master returned today to find millions of people unevangelized, and looked, as of course He would look, to us for an explanation, I cannot imagine what explanation we should have to give...Of one thing I am certain—the most of the excuses we are accustomed to make with such good conscience now, we should be wholly ashamed of then.”

—A Tract from the early 1900's

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1-20-13 AM

“THE MINDSET OF THE CHURCH”

1 PETER 2:9-12

#3 in Series, “The Church as It Was Meant to Function”

Review: We began this series by looking at the model church which was the first church. It is described for us in Acts 2:42-47. We saw in this first church the foundation for a church that obeys Christ's great commission. **Matthew 28:19-20 (NKJV)** “¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all

things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Last week, we saw that the church that is functioning as the church was meant to function is a multiplying church. We saw the command for the church to multiply in the great commission is in the words of Jesus, "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you". Disciples are to make disciples who make disciples who make disciples who make disciples. That is how the church multiplies. We spent a good deal of time also looking at the mechanics of multiplication from **2 Timothy 2:2 (NKJV)** "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." The Gospel went: Paul → Timothy → faithful men → others. We also saw our plans for providing a framework and equipping for multiplication through 222 groups. That brings us to our last message in this series – the mindset of a church that multiplies and thus functions as the church was meant to function.

The mindset of a church that functions as the church was meant to function is the mindset of a tentmaker. That statement begs for some explanation. We need to understand two things. First, what is a "mindset", and second, what is a "tentmaker" and what does making tents have to do with fulfilling the great commission? Let's begin by looking at that word "mindset". The dictionary defines **mindset** as "**A way of thinking that determines somebody's behavior and outlook**" [Encarta Dictionary]. When I use the term "mindset" I am referring to a person's way of thinking that determines their approach to all of life.

What then does "tentmaker" have to do with a person's mindset? That term made its way into Christian vocabulary from the example of the Apostle Paul. Paul traveled throughout the Roman Empire for some 20 years proclaiming the Gospel, making disciples, and planting churches. Some churches supported him with sporadic gifts (the church at Philippi being one example), but for the most part, he was not supported by gifts or a salary from the JMB (Jerusalem Mission Board). Paul made it very clear that it was good and proper for full time Pastors and Missionaries to be paid. **1 Corinthians 9:14 (HCSB)** "In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should earn their living by the gospel." **1 Timothy 5:17-18 (HCSB)** "¹⁷ The elders who are good leaders should be considered worthy of an ample honorarium, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. ¹⁸ For the Scripture says: 'You must not muzzle an ox that is threshing grain', and, 'The laborer is worthy of his wages.'" Paul, however, was led of God to go a different way. He said in **1 Thessalonians 2:9 (NKJV)** "For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God." I don't know all of the reasons God led Paul to take no salary, but I believe that one reason was to give an example to every Christian that God desires to use all Christians to make disciples and not just the workers paid by the church. What was Paul's vocation with which he supported himself? **Acts 18:3 (HCSB)** "and being of the same occupation, [Paul] stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade." The Greek word translated "tentmakers" is broader than the English translation. It means one who works with leather and most tents were made of leather. Among the Jews of the first century, every boy was taught a trade no matter how wealthy the family was (sounds like a good idea to me). Paul had been taught to be a tentmaker. When Paul gets to Corinth, he finds other tentmakers and sets about making tents to make enough income to support himself while he made disciples and planted a church. In recent Christian tradition "tentmaker" came to refer to a person whose purpose was to make disciples, but used his trade or talent to supply his needs. Referring back to Acts 18:3, did Paul go to Corinth to make tents? No, he went to make disciples and plant a church. His tentmaking was simply the way he supported himself so that he did not have to take a salary from a church or group of churches. I repeat that Paul said that it was very appropriate to take a salary for those who were in leadership in the church and needed to give full time to equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, but he gave us an example of what God has designed for the church as a whole.

Let me bring this "tentmaker" mindset into the 21st century. I warn you that what I am about to share is going to sound radical, but I believe it is biblical. I believe that **every Christian** should have the mindset of a tentmaker. We should see our vocation as the way we support ourselves and our families and have

funds to give to the Lord through His church so that needs can be met and some can give full time to shepherding the church and equipping the saints and planting new churches. Your true mission is not to be an engineer, a sales rep, a truck driver, a school teacher, a nurse, or a factory worker who may possibly give a little time to the Lord's work – your true mission is to make disciples. That is one of the specific reasons we started First Baptist Academy. We wanted to equip young people with a biblical worldview and a passion for making disciples so that whether they went from FBA to a technical school, to a college to prepare for a vocation, to the military, or into a job right out of High School, they would see their true calling, their true mission in life is to make disciples and their vocation is to support themselves, their family, their church and for their vocation to be a platform from which they can make disciples.

Don't misunderstand; Tentmakers believe that the product they make or the service they provide is very important and pleasing to God in itself, but their primary focus is the effect they have on the eternal destination of the peoples' lives they have an opportunity to impact. All work that does not promote sin is pleasing to God. Your vocation in and of itself is important to God. However, a tentmaker's eyes are always on the eternal, and not the money made, the material things accumulated, or the accolades they have received in carrying out their vocation.

Let me give you the Scriptural basis of the radical sounding approach to life I have just described to you.

I. The Tentmaker's View of Their Mission in This World (V9-10)

The context of 1 Peter 9-12 is **1 Peter 2:7a (NKJV)** "Therefore, to you who believe, *He is precious...*" All that is written in verses 9-12 is directed to true disciples of Jesus Christ, to those to whom Christ is precious. When Christians begin to see themselves as God sees them, this tentmaker mindset begins to make more sense.

A. Tentmakers are Chosen Priests (V9a)

If you are a disciple of Jesus Christ, you were chosen by Him. You may say, "But I thought that I chose to turn to Him and trust Him and follow Him". You did, but it was God who chose you and sent His Spirit to open your blinded mind to your true condition of being in sin, without righteousness, and headed for judgment (John 16:8-11). It was God who drew you to the Savior and gave you the grace to enable you to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. We were chosen to be priests to our God, a set apart people ("holy nation"). I want us to focus on that phrase "a royal priesthood".

In the Old Testament, God had a priesthood for His people (the descendents of Aaron from the tribe of Levi); under the New Covenant, all of God's people are priests to Him. **Revelation 1:5b-6 (NKJV)** ⁵"To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." Let me give you a very simplified version of the function of a New Testament Priest.

1. A Priest Represents Men before God

The Old Testament priest would bring the sacrifices of the people before God to cover their sin. The New Testament Priest does not bring sacrifices because Jesus is the final and sufficient sacrifice. Today, we bring men before God primarily through prayer. We have access to the very throne of God's grace (Hebrews 4:16). As New Testament priests, we bring those we work with, go to school with, live close to, have contact with, or those we are burdened for before the God who can save them and bring them into a relationship with Him. When we talk to God about people, we are bolder to talk to people about God!

2. A Priest Represents God before Men

That points primarily to the sharing of the Gospel and making disciples. As priests of God we become His mouthpiece by proclaiming and teaching God's Word to both the lost and to true disciples.

B. Tentmakers Proclaim Praise (V9b-10)

The purpose for our existence is to glorify our Lord by proclaiming the praises of Him who has saved us. The word translated "proclaim" is an unusual word that is used only here in the New Testament. It means to advertise or publish. The word translated "praises" means excellencies (NASB). Our purpose is to advertise God's excellencies and lead people to Him through Christ. Our purpose is not to make money

or to make a name for ourselves; as long as there is one knee that has not bowed in submission and worship to our great God, He has not received the glory He is due. We are to proclaim, to advertise, to publish the praises, the excellencies of Him who called us out of darkness unto His marvelous light. We are to proclaim that our great God had taken nobodies like us and made us the people of God. He has taken sinners under judgment and has given us mercy. That is why we exist. Tentmakers proclaim His praise as they pour their lives into making disciples of those in darkness.

II. The Tentmaker's View of Their Attachments to This World (V11)

When you adopt and develop this tentmaker mindset, you will be in constant tension with this world value system we live in. There will be a constant battle to refuse the world's values and the world's seduction to be conformed. There will always be that sense that we are swimming against the current. What is the tentmaker's view of their relationship with this present world?

A. Tentmakers View Themselves as Sojourners in This World

A Sojourner is an alien who is in a country that is not the country of his citizenship. We are to always see ourselves as foreigners here in this world system. If you feel at home in this world you definitely have not developed a tentmaker's mindset. At salvation we are made citizens of God's kingdom. **Philippians 3:20a (NKJV)** "For our citizenship is in heaven..." Our mission is to proclaim the Gospel to bid people come out of this world's kingdom (which is really the kingdom of darkness) and be transferred into the Kingdom of God's Son. **Colossians 1:13 (HCSB)** "He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son He loves". The tentmaker then teaches and models for these new citizens their resources as kingdom citizens and teaches them how to please the King. This is a good description of discipleship.

B. Tentmakers View Themselves as Pilgrims in This World

A pilgrim is similar to a sojourner. A pilgrim is one on a journey in a foreign land who is headed home. The opposite of a pilgrim is a settler. A pilgrim travels light, because he knows that this isn't home. A pilgrim refuses to hold tightly to anything connected to this world. Pilgrims are continually reminded that this is not home. One of the enemy's most effective tactics to rob us of this tentmaking mindset is to cause us to forget that we are pilgrims. When we forget that we are pilgrims, we begin to be consumed with our "dream home", our "dream car", our "dream vacation", our "dream job" and we pour ourselves into obtaining all that we dream of and soon we forget that this is not home. Our focus is not the mission of fulfilling the great commission, but the fulfilling of our dreams. For many professing believers, Heaven is not going home to where we long to be; it is an interruption in our plans here. William Chalmers Burns said, "If a man has Christ in his heart, Heaven before his eyes, and only as much temporal blessing as is just needful to carry him safely through life, then pain and sorrow have little to shoot at." I would add, "Then materialism and becoming a settler here will never get a foothold in our life".

Notice in the last part of verse 11, a sojourner's and a pilgrim's approach to life enables us to abstain from fleshly lusts that wage war against the soul. These "fleshly lusts" are much more than desire for sexual immorality. The word "lust" refers to any strong desire that seeks to control us. It includes the lust for more things, the lust for prestige, the lust for worldly success, etc. Pilgrims aren't trapped by those things; pilgrims have their minds set on their mission and their heart on going home.

III. The Tentmaker View of Success (V12)

Here is a description of a tentmaker's success. He is dealing with our conduct here in this world where we are not citizens but are sojourners and pilgrims.

A. A Life of Integrity (V12a)

The word "conduct" means lifestyle. It refers to what you do both in the light and in the dark. The word "honorable" refers to that which is admirable. Let me give you a few areas where we must apply this command to be honorable in our conduct.

1. Integrity in Our Vocation

When we do less than an excellent job for our employer we are in a sense stealing from him. Our opportunities for fulfilling our mission of making disciples are hindered if not destroyed by a lack of integrity in our work – complaining, laziness, etc. **Colossians 3:23 (NIV)** “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men”. A part of the tentmaker’s success is doing his or her tentmaking with excellence.

2. Integrity in Relationships

A successful tentmaker is known for their honesty and truthfulness in relationships. Their “yes” is yes and their “no” is no. Their lives model **1 Corinthians 16:14 (NKJV)** “Let all *that you do* be done with love.” That means that there is always an others focus and an obedience to **Philippians 2:3-4 (NKJV)** “³ *Let nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” The workplace, the school, and the home become a laboratory where the truths of Scripture are lived out.

3. Integrity in Stewardship

How you use the money you make at your “tentmaking” speaks volumes to those who observe your life. If everything that you hold the title to really does belong to God and you are just the steward of it, then that will be obvious by the lifestyle you choose and the simplicity of your life. Stewardship involves the testimony of the tithe from our wages and then a lifestyle of giving over and above the tithe as God provides more and more. A steward knows that an increase in our earning does not excuse an increase in our standard of living. It simply gives us opportunity to increase our giving.

B. A Life of Fruit (V12b)

This verse seems somewhat complicated at first glance but I believe that it is simple to interpret. **1 Peter 2:12 (NIV)** “Live such good lives among the pagans [a life of integrity] that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.” I think that the context makes it clear that the day God visits us is the day He visits lost sinners to save them. He is saying that because of our integrity in the place of our tentmaking false accusations against us fall to the ground unbelieved because of our life of integrity before the lost. Not only will they not believe the lies, because of the good works some will respond to the visitation of God in their lives and become disciples of our Lord. Jesus said basically the same thing in **Matthew 5:16 (NKJV)** “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

CONCLUSION

Let me share a dream I have that I believe reflects God’s will. I dream of the day that we raise up young people who choose a vocation that will allow them to work in countries closed to the gospel so that they can use the platform of their vocation to have access to those who have never heard to make disciples of them. Not only do I long to see this in closed countries, but in the lost cities of our nation (Example of Matt Galyon in Boston). I have a dream that when people retire, instead of golfing and fishing and hunting and traveling for exotic vacations, they go to the hard places, the dangerous places and make disciples until they go home.

In the early 1900’s James Fraser was a brilliant engineer and gifted pianist. However, he left the comforts of England to spend his adult life in China among the Lisu people. What moved him to make this radical change in his life? It was when a small tract was placed in his hands that God used its content to change James Fraser’s whole mindset. Here is what the tract said: “A command has been given, ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.’ It has not been obeyed. More than half the people in the world have never yet heard the Gospel. What are we to say to this? Surely it concerns us Christians very seriously. For we are the people who are responsible If our Master returned today to find millions of people unevangelized, and looked as of course He would look, to us for an explanation, I cannot imagine what explanation we should have to giveOf one thing I am certain – the most of the excuses we are accustomed to make with such good conscience now, we should be wholly ashamed of then.” [Quoted in *Retreat or Risk*, Page 90-91].

What Are you going to do about this mission God has given each of us in the great commission? I pray that God makes us a church of tentmakers.