

Matthew 28:18-20

I want to spend the next several weeks looking at some Essentials: Essentials for the future of FBC.

1. I cannot stress to you the importance of this series.
2. It is, in my humble but accurate opinion Essential.

Here is why...

70% of churches are declining or plateauing.

- A declining church with an attendance of 200 or more declines at a rate of 4 percent each year.
- A declining church with an attendance of less than 100 declines at a rate of 7.6 percent per year.
- A declining church with an attendance of less than 50 declines at a rate of 8.7 percent a year.

In the words of Thom Rainer, "It's a death spiral. Once the declining church goes below 100 in attendance, its days are likely numbered. Once a church declines below 100 in worship attendance, it is likely to die within just a few years."

The majority of Protestant churches had less than 10 people commit to Jesus Christ as Savior in the past 12 months. That's fewer than one person per month.

1. According to a map developed by Operation World and their research, North America is one of the few places in the world where Christianity is growing at a slower rate than the birth rate!
2. Times are a changing....and they are changing fast.
3. If we are to flourish in the future, there are some Essentials we must, not only believe, but embrace.

This morning, we need to see the importance of embracing the Mission. I want to announce some exciting news as we do. You are doing an excellent job when it comes to financially supporting the mission.

1. 12% to CP, Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, and DRBA.
2. 1% of every penny goes to our own church's mission efforts: \$2300 per month!
3. \$3152 mission offering Sunday evening!

You are doing a great job of supporting the mission...and that is a vital part of it...but I want you to ask yourself this question this morning. Have I embraced the mission as my own? Personally?

READ/PRAY

Have I embrace the mission, personally, as my own? I hope that you will. We see three reasons in this text.

I. We have a Master

There is not a soul anywhere on earth that has more authority than the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. President
2. Pope
3. Prince, King or Dictator.

This doesn't just mean he has more authority...but that any authority that anyone has must come from him because He has all authority!

1. President's authority comes from Jesus
2. Greatest Prince....worst dictator...from Jesus
3. Pilate was told by Jesus, you could have no authority if it were not given to you from above

Where does He have this authority? Revelation 5

1. In heaven? Yes! Revelation 5:6-12
2. On Earth? Yes! Revelation 5:13
3. Even the king's heart is in His hand and He turns it wherever He wills.

If we have a master, we must be slaves: His slaves!

1. That is how Paul described himself over and over again...a slave of Christ.
2. Some of your translations may say "servant" or "bond-servant," but the Greek word is doulos which literally means "enslaved" or "male slave."
3. Paul's sole purpose in life was to please His master.
4. That must be our purpose as well, for we have a Master and His name is Jesus.

You cannot have two masters...

1. Matthew 6:24 *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."*
2. 2 Peter 2:19 *for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved*
3. Where are we focusing our energy, time, dreams, vision, resources, and loyalties?

The things that we tend to focus our energy, time, dreams, visions, and resources on generally are temporal. We are slaves to stuff...temporal things. What about eternity? How much do we focus on this life?

1. China....we don't pay property taxes, but in 70 years the government will take it back.
 - a. Imagine if we lived like this?
 - b. Everything we have will be gone in 70 years.
2. I sympathized with her and she said, I don't care if they take what I have. I have a Father in heaven who is building me a home that will last forever and no one can take that away.
3. A true slave of Christ living for eternity.

II. We have a Mission

1. Go therefore

1. The mission is rooted in going.
2. From the throne above...Isaiah 6
3. From hell below....rich man and Lazarus
4. From round about us....Macedonia
5. From within...woe is me if I don't preach the gospel
6. From the Word of our Master and King...
 - a. Matt 28:19-20 *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...*
 - b. Mark 16:15 *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*
 - c. Luke 24:46-47 *....repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

d. John 20:21 *Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you*

e. Acts 1:8 *You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses...*

7. Jim Elliot shared the clarity of the call when he wrote, “*Consider the call from the Throne above, “Go ye,” and from round about, “Come over and help us,” and even the call from the damned souls below, Send Lazarus to my brothers, that they come not to this place.” Impelled, then, by these voices, I dare not stay home while Quichuas perish. So what if the well-fed church in the homeland needs stirring? They have the Scriptures, Moses, and the Prophets, and a whole lot more. Their condemnation is written on their bank books and in the dust on their Bible covers. American believers have sold their lives to the service of Mammon, and God has His rightful way of dealing with those who succumb to the spirit of Laodicea.*”

2. And Make Disciples of all nations

1. We are going to talk more about making disciples locally next Sunday, but this morning I want us to focus on the need to make disciples...of all nations
2. OF all the nations.
 - a. This doesn't mean as many as possible.
 - b. Or pick a country.
 - c. But every country! The disciples understood this because they scattered!
3. Paul is constantly on the move as well.
 - a. Romans is a missionary letter to the church at Rome to move them to give to his upcoming mission trip to Rome and beyond to Spain! Gentiles! Gentiles!
 - b. Romans 15:8-25
4. The ultimate mission of the Great Commission is to gather the nations around the throne of God!

3. Baptize them.

- a. This is the logical progression.
 1. Go
 2. Make Disciples
 3. Baptize them
- b. Baptism is a public profession of a personal transformation.
- c. Col 2:12 *having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.*
- d. This was the pattern in the NT.
 1. Acts 2:41 *So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.*
 2. Acts 8:12 *But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women*
 3. The Ethiopian Eunuch, the Philippian Jailer, and Lydia

4. Teaching them to obey

- a. Teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you.
- b. The one who knows 90% but only obeys 10% is less mature than the one who knows only 10% and obeys 90% of what they know.

III. We have the Means v20b

I am with you even until the end of the age.

1. When is the end of the age?
2. Matthew 24:14 *This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.*
3. In essence Jesus is saying, I am with you until this happens.

We have Jesus with us...With us when we are doing this!

1. There are roughly 6000 unreached people groups on earth totaling more than 2 billion people
 - a. Unreached does not equal unsaved. There are unsaved people everywhere!
 - b. Unreached means that they have little to no access to the gospel.
2. There are between 1200 and 3000 unreached, unengaged people groups
3. We have the means to reach them!
 - a. Not money
 - b. Not resources
 - c. Not talent or energy
 - d. But JESUS. He is the means.

Conclusion:

This is something that we must not only nod to...or write a check for...or say we believe in: we are mission minded. NO. This is something that we must embrace if this church is to survive!

1. It is a matter of obedience: We have a master!
2. It is necessary for our unity: The bullseye and baptism
3. It is our purpose: The means...I am with you in this...it's Jesus' purpose for us, so it should be our purpose as well.

Will we embrace our mission? The future of FBC depends on it.

Invitation:

1. Commit to Pray
2. To give
3. To go
4. To send