

Summary of the Essentials

I like to preach through books of the Bible...but you know that we have not been doing that over the last several weeks. We have been in our Essential's series.

1. Why? Because the church is in dire straights in the west
2. 70+% are plateaued or declining and the majority of the 30% are growing by transfer growth.
3. Operation world map and research shows that North America is one of the few places in the world where Christianity is growing slower than the birth rate.
4. We are entering into difficult times. If the church is going to flourish, we need to grasp these essentials!

This morning we are going to look at each of the essentials we have covered over the past week, just to drive each one of them home one more time. I hope that you will recognize, that the reason I am using an entire Sunday to review what we have already seen, is because I am really convinced that these are essentials.

1. I hope that you will become convinced that these are essentials in your life and in this church.
2. These have to go with us! Not stagnate in a sermon!!

PRAY

What are the essentials that we have covered? Obviously, my list is not exhaustive. The Bible is filled with essentials. But we have looked at some that I consider essential over the past several weeks. What are they?

I. The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20 *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

1. We have a master with all authority in heaven and on earth
2. We have a mission
 - a. Locally
 1. as you go make disciples
 2. Am I personally embracing Christ's command to make disciples?
 - b. Globally
 1. Make Disciples of all nations—all people groups
 2. Have I embraced the mission, personally, as my own?
 - b. Baptize them
 - c. Teach them to obey
 - d. THE VISION BULLSEYE
 1. Maturing in the Word
 2. Making Supplication
 3. Meaningful Fellowship
 4. Ministry
 5. Miracles
 6. Magnifying God

3. We have the Means
 - a. I am with you even until the end of the age.
 - b. In essence Jesus is saying, I am with you as you obey this commission until this mission is accomplished.

The question is, “Will we embrace the Great commission?” The future of FBC depends on it.

II. The Gospel Message

1 Corinthians 15:3-8

1. **He died for our sins and was buried** v3-4a

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried,

He died for our sins (because of our sins) and was buried...

1. Our sin deserves death. We deserve to die because of our sin!
2. Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death*
3. But here, we learn that someone else died for our sins...not us! v3-4a

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried

1. 2 Corinthians 5:21 *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

2. He died for our sins and was buried.

2. **He was resurrected and he appeared** v4b

and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

The resurrection was the Father’s announcement that He had received and approved of His sacrifice.

5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; 8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

1. This is one of Paul’s first letters!
2. Some of those 500 who saw Jesus were still alive and could have said, Paul is lying!!
3. But they did not.
4. If they could have paraded the body of Jesus through the streets on that Sunday afternoon, Christianity would have been doomed
5. Instead of a body, they found men and women testifying... “I saw Him!” “I did too!”

Charles Colson said, “*I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Every one was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren't true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world—and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible.*”

He was resurrected and appeared! This is the gospel in a nutshell.

1. God is Holy, We are not Holy, Christ came to make us holy, and you can be holy by repenting of your sin and trusting Christ
2. Have you understood, believed, and embraced this message?

III. The Great Cost

There should be an Expectation of Suffering

1. 2 Timothy 3:12 *Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted*
2. Matthew 5:10-12 *Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

Things are clearly getting worse. What if everything changed?

1. Things are worse today than they were a year ago.
2. And they were worse one year ago than they were 3 years ago.
3. The trajectory we are on is leading us to difficult days.
4. Are we ready to pay the price of following Jesus?

IV. Confidence in Scripture

1. Do we have confidence and assurance in the reliability and truthfulness of this book?
 - a. How can we fulfill the Great Commission without confidence in Scripture
 - b. How can we believe in the power of the Gospel for salvation without confidence?
 - c. How will we ever suffer for Christ's sake without confidence in the Word?
2. The Inerrancy and Sufficiency of Scripture.
3. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*
 - a. Teaching begins with reprove....stop!
 - b. It consists of correcting...re-calibrate!
 - c. It continues with training...keep going and growing!
4. Is Scripture the first place you go to when you need counsel, guidance, direction, or answers?

Do you have confidence in the Word?

V. Affection for Jesus Christ

Are you passionate about and increasing in affection for Christ?

1. Have you read the accounts in Rev 2 and 3? There is idolatry, sin, and more, and yet, Ephesus is the only church he threatens with extinction...and why???
 - a. Not because they were a bit off doctrinally...they were sound!
 - b. Not because they were stumbling and falling...they were standing firm.
 - c. Not because they were weak...they were steadfast and persevering

- d. But, because they were no longer in love with Christ!
2. They had fallen out of love with Christ.
 - a. They were doing and believing right, but they were not feeling right!
 - b. Now ask yourself this question: **Are you passionate about and increasing in affection for Christ?**

Matthew 13:44 *The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

VI. False Teachers

1. Matthew 7:15. *“Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”*
2. Acts 20:29-31 *I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be on the alert...*

VII. Unity

1. We believe this is such an essential for future flourishing that we started looking at unity in depth this past Wednesday night as a church.
2. Please don’t underestimate the importance of these Wednesday night gatherings.
3. If we are to flourish into the future, we must be unified!
 - a.



- b. Keep your eyes on Jesus...keep your eyes on Jesus!

Unity in **THE GOSPEL**.

1. Unity? Keep your eyes on Jesus.
2. Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face, And the things of earth will grow strangely dim In the light of His glory and grace