Series: Life on Mission

Message: 02 Building a Gospel Foundation 1 Corinthians 15\_1-4

Text: 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Theme: Outreach

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Location: Christ Community EFC

**If you would, please turn in your Bible to 1 Corinthians 15, p.961.**

Last week we began our sermon series—Life on Mission by painting the big picture.

We began by painting a big picture of our big God.

Psalm 46:10 says: “**Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth**!”

God is God and were are not. Because of who God is, He will be **exalted** (held high and lifted up, esteemed in His rightful place) **among the nations** [and above all]…**the earth!**

A life on mission is a life that is centered on God, a life that seeks to worship and glorify God in everything we do.

In the big picture we saw that God has a plan to reach the lost and that plan includes you.

God is redeeming back and restoring a people for Himself.

In His divine plan, God has placed you right where you are so He can use you to reach those people He has put around you.

Life on mission is about intersecting the gospel intentionally into our everyday routines.

In the big picture, we looked at the current reality of our country, culture, and the North American church.

Those who have not experienced God’s grace and love are lost and blind. So it is no wonder the world is such a dark place.

It’s not the world’s fault that the church in North America is on decline. It is our fault, the churches fault because by in large we have not been living a life on mission—God’s mission.

We have been on our own mission. We have been consumed with our own mission and our own agendas.

As with the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel vision, God can and will breathe life backing to the American church if we will call on Him and are willing to live a life on mission!

Before we dive into this morning’s message has anyone hear ever been bungee jumping? Anyone?

Of all the things that I have ever wanted to do in life, I’ve got to say that I have never had the desire to bungee jump.

Here is a short video of a guy making his second jump. Watch what his “friends” do to him.

[Video]

Just as he leans back and starts to fall his “friend” yells “Oh NO!” Then, another guy throws a loose bungee rope off the bridge making the jumper think his rope has come untied.

As he jumps his friends make him think that the other end of the rope is not anchored to the bridge. What a scary feeling that must have been.

As we jump into a life on mission I want to make sure you are anchored to something solid. I want us to be like the wise man who built his house upon the rock.

I want you to have a solid foundation on which you can build a life on mission.

So this morning we are Building a Gospel Foundation for a life on mission. There are four implication that come out of the gospel message.

The fist implication is that: **The Gospel Must Be Foundational**

Paul first preached the gospel in the city of Corinth, a port city in Greece, during his second missionary journey in around AD 50.

In AD 55, while in Ephesus, Paul gets word of some spiritual and moral problems along with some theological questions the believers in Corinth are dealing with.

As chapter 15 begins, Paul points to a foundational truth, a truth that if the Corinthians had focused on in the first place they would have eliminated all the issues that Paul addressed in the first 14 chapters.

Listen to how Paul starts this chapter 1 Corinthians 15:1: “**Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand,**

Paul is taking the Corinthians back to the foundation, the basics.

He reminds the church in Corinth of the gospel message he preached to them and the now stand…have put their faith in.

**Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved**

[This being saved refers to the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, our sanctification and freedom from sin that our salvation brings]

Paul continues: “**if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.** [Either by believing a lie this gospel s a false gospel, or have not truly believed the gospel to begin with]

**3 For I delivered to you as of first importance** [refers to the degree of importance not in sequence of time] **what I also received:**

It begins and starts here! **that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures**.”

That last phrase “**that he was raised on the third day**” speaks of the resurrection that Paul will spend the rest of this chapter defending.

This three part statement is the summary of the gospel message: Christ died for our sin, was buried, and rose again.

This is the summary, the starting point but there are implications for the rest of our lives that spring from this summary.

The Gospel is the announcement of good news that transforms a life!

It is the starting point, the sustaining point and the finishing point to living a life on mission.

An everyday missionary who is not grounded in the gospel is no missionary at all because he or she does not have good news to proclaim.

Being an everyday missionary is impossible without a solid gospel foundation. The gospel is like a bungee cord that keeps the jumper connected to life.

Just as a jumper cannot leap off the platform without being securely fastened to the bungee cord, a follower of Christ cannot spring into missions without a gospel foundation.

Without a gospel “cord,” our mission’s efforts will be in vain.

The Gospel is not something we simply “get,” it is something we grow deeper in throughout our lives.

It is not a one-time act or confession we make. It grabs hold of us and transforms us.

It is not just a message of the forgiveness of our sins but the message of the new life we now live in Christ.

If the gospel is not genuinely the foundation and motivation of our mission, we will likely falter and get off track.

Everyday missionaries with a solid gospel foundation understand that missions is not a periodic mission service project or a task to be taken care of by a professional church staff, it’s living intentionally on mission every single day of the week.

God has not just saved us so that one day we will go to heaven. He has redeemed us for His purposes and the gospel propels us to proclaim the good news to others.

When taking on the risk of living selflessly and intentionally each day, it is the gospel truth and understanding that Jesus is already our great reward that serves as motivation.

When we accept the gospel message and put our faith in Christ that is not the end of the story, it is the beginning.

The next implication of the gospel message is that: **Spiritual Maturity is Essential**

**Turn with me please to Hebrews chapter 5, p. 1003.**

Our world doesn’t need more people who know more facts about God, but rather people who are falling deeper in love with who God is.

The recipients of the book of Hebrews were told in chapter 5, verses 11-14, that even though they should be teachers by now, they still needed someone to teach them about God.

Hebrews 5:11: “**About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.**

**12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, 13 for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child.**

**14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.**

Instead of being able to eat solid food, the writer said that like infants who couldn’t feed themselves, they still needed milk.

This passage paints an alarming image of an older child or adult who still drinks formula from a bottle.

One truth from Hebrews 5 is that although there should be a correlation between the amount of time a person has known Jesus and their spiritual maturity, it doesn’t always work that way.

There are many believers whose maturity falls way behind their spiritual age.

Starting at where people are spiritually, we have to go back to the basics of Christianity to make sure that believers understand these **basic principles.**

We need to understand The Supremacy of God

God is King and able to do what He says He will do. God is at the center of His mission.

If we believe that God is supreme, then we are in a good position to mature spiritually.

Our desires and decisions will be submissive to Him, fostering a lifetime of repentance and realigning our hearts towards His heart and Kingdom.

We need to understand The Sovereignty of God

God is sovereign and involved in every aspect of His creation from providing food for us, (Matt. 6:11) to knowing the number of days we will live. (Psalm 139)

All of our talents are a result of God’s goodness to us. (1 Cor. 4:7)

Everyday missionaries must understand that God is at work in the world and we are asked to respond in obedience to that work.

It is not up to us to determine the focus of our mission; it is up to us to follow God.

As long as we follow in obedience, we are in the center of God’s will.

Our everyday mission can be messy. Some days will be hard and not go as planned. It may seem as though we misinterpreted God’s plan and want to give up.

But it is in those moments, if we are faithful, we can trust we are right where God wants us to be.

Experiencing joy in the midst of trails is a sign of spiritual maturity. We can experience joy because we know that He is faithful to deliver on His promises.

James 1:2: “**Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials** …”

We need to understand the supremacy of God, the sovereignty of God and: We need to understand The Love of God

God is loving. He created mankind in His image. And even though we brought sin into the world by our rebellious acts, God still loved us.

Because of His holiness, He had every right to banish mankind from the face of the earth, but He didn’t.

In a mysterious act of grace, He chose to have mercy on His people and pursue a relationship with them.

In the Old Testament this relationship manifested itself in God’s covenant with Israel.

In the New Testament, the covenantal relationship with Israel came to completion through Christ’s work on the cross—not just for the people of Israel, but for all people.

Christ who knew no sin became sin for all people. He took upon Himself God’s wrath which was intended for us.

This was His greatest act of love toward His creation.

The gospel doesn’t just free us, it changes us.

Paul writes in Galatians 5:22: “**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.**

**24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit**.

When our lives are molded by the Holy Spirit, we will see the fruits of the spirit as described in Galatians. When we walk with Jesus, we consistently develop more and more of these characteristics.

Many define spiritual maturity by how much knowledge a person has about God. However, knowledge alone does not equal spiritual maturity.

Humility, obedience and mercy are more closely tied to maturity.

So the gospel message is foundation and spiritual maturity is essential.

The next gospel implication is that: **Biblical Community is Necessary**

Everyday missionaries need one another to carry out the mission of God.

As believers we may not be from the same bloodline, but we are to share in the truth that we are blood-bought and adopted into a family with God Himself as our Father.

We are to create a picture of biblical community; working together so that others see a clear portrait of who God can be as their Father.

Ephesians 2:19-22 we read: “**So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.**

**22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit**.

God never intended us to live out the Christian life alone.

Everyday missionaries weave biblical community into the fabric of their everyday living.

Together as believers we operate as a picture of gospel transformation to the world.

Here are some characteristics of people who are connected to biblical community:

* They are honest and transparent about their struggles with sin (James 5:16)

That’s a hard one, especially in our Facebook perfect post world.

When we feel “I’m the only one…who is a bad mom, blown it with my wife and kids, let a relationship go too far, whatever it may be.

We feel were are the only one, we are afraid to be judged than we can’t come to the church, the very place where are a supposed to find grace and healing.

We if we are all honest, we are all less than what our Facebook makes us out to be.

* They gracefully confront sin in other believers and humbly accept correction brought by others (Gal. 6:1-2)

Ever hear the phrase fight or flight? The gospel message compels us to move in, seek restoration, even when it might get messy.

But if we see someone sin, we avoid the situation, run away, don’t get involved. Or, we go on attack…you wronged me!

But the gospel message calls us to move in, with humility, willing to do the hard thing with the hope of restoring the one caught in sin.

* They willingly sacrifice to help others carry their burdens (Gal. 6:2)
* They celebrate each individual and see the value of how God has used their life experiences to further His kingdom. (Rom. 12:6-8)
* They practice hospitality that nurtures relationships (Heb. 13:2)

The Gospel Must Be Foundational

Spiritual Maturity is Essential

Biblical Community is Necessary

The last gospel implication is that we must be: **Committed to Intentional Discipleship**

Everyday missionaries are committed to making disciples that make disciples.

Our role as everyday missionaries is to introduce people to Christ, actively be a part of their journey to become like Christ and to teach them to do the same with others.

We are to make disciples who multiply: disciples who make disciples.

While on earth Jesus offered a clear explanation about His role and our role in the Kingdom. Jesus promised to build the Church.

In Matthew 16:18 Jesus says: “…**I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it**.

As for us, we need to focus on the instruction that Jesus gave to His disciples—and ultimately all believers.

Matthew 28:19-20: “**Go … and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.**”

**Conclusion**

A life on mission is a calling of abandonment; the willingness to take on the mind of Jesus and set aside our old life and our preferences and follow God—going wherever He asks and doing whatever He asks us to do—even when it doesn’t make sense or doesn’t seem like it will be successful according to the world’s standards.

That means holding our own plans and ideals loosely.

As we pursue God’s mission, we must be willing to throw aside our personal wants and desires and take on the mind of Christ each and every day as we follow Him obediently.

We must ground ourselves in the gospel as we study Scripture and apply it to our lives as we pursue spiritual growth and maturity.

We must surround ourselves with biblical community, investing in relationships around us and applying God’s love and forgiveness to our relationships.

Finally, we must disciple others remembering that discipleship happens as we watch people and imitate them and as others watch and imitate us.

Just as we have been served by following those who are more mature, we have the great task of helping those who are behind us to take the next steps towards a deeper relationship with Jesus.

**Benediction**

**“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.” (Num. 6:24-26)**