

A Gospel-Mobilized Church

October 2, 2016

To KNOW Christ and one another more deeply,
To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW as followers of Jesus.
- CG Mission Statement

Worship:

Option 1: Psalm 139

Option 2: Watch/listen to **"We are the Body"**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYOCdVI9m1Q>

(A psalm and a song to help your group as you worship. Choose whichever is best for your group...you can read, watch, or sing!)

Psalm 139

- ¹ You have searched me, LORD,
and you know me.
² You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
³ You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.
⁴ Before a word is on my tongue
you, LORD, know it completely.
⁵ You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.
⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.
- ⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.
¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
and the light become night around me,"
¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.
- ¹³ For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully
made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.
¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, God
How vast is the sum of them!
¹⁸ Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand
when I awake, I am still with you.
- ¹⁹ If only you, God, would slay the wicked!
Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!
²⁰ They speak of you with evil intent;
your adversaries misuse your name.
²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD,
and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?
²² I have nothing but hatred for them;
I count them my enemies.
²³ Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

Icebreaker

Share about a time you did something really well. How did it make you feel?
In general, do you see yourself as a spectator or participator in life?

Text for Discussion: Ephesians 2:10, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13

Turn in your Bibles and read the passages aloud together.

Aid for Discussion: Sermon Summary

Last week, we talked about how we the church profess Jesus as Lord and have been sent by Him on mission. We are called to serve others. But if this is true, why don't we see this more? Our modern, consumeristic mindset explains some of why so many of us are passive. Some of us feel inadequate, ill-equipped, unqualified, or intimidated – that someone else could do a better job. Yet these reasons are just as self-focused as those of the consumer; these reasons focus on ourselves instead of God and others.

So why don't we serve more? Our view of the Gospel is too narrow, too small. God hasn't simply given us a ticket into Heaven; He has made us a new creation. Our salvation doesn't stop with the forgiveness of sins. It includes the righteous people we become and the righteous things we will do. Our salvation is not a moment-in-time gift. We receive it every day we grow in Christ and do good works, because our good works are not what we do for Him – they are His gift to us.

It's not that we are a perfect fit for these good works. God makes use of real people, not perfect ones. Our ministry is not in spite of who we are; it flows out of who we are. But we weren't made to be useful by ourselves. We were designed to work as part of a family in harmony together. We can't move into a deeper relationship with God without moving toward relationship with other Christians. Part of God's gift to us is that we get to participate in a critical way as parts of the team. Each of us is needed for the whole to function correctly.

It is important to remember that this is God's gift to us. Ephesians 2 isn't telling us to gain and develop wisdom or discernment or healing powers. This passage isn't showing us how to earn these abilities. We mistakenly feel like we are giving back to God by serving him, but this chapter is telling us that God has given us these various gifts. He is the giver. It is a privilege to have spiritual gifts and to be included in His mission. When God wants to bless our church, He sends each of us. We are stewards of His grace – a display of the Holy Spirit to each other. We are God's gifts to one another, and those around us are God's gifts to us. This is what God has done for us and in us.

Yet for many of us, we don't believe God got it right. We feel deeply inadequate. We don't believe we have gifts. We don't feel useful or needed. We feel hesitant. We allow our flaws to define us. But do not dismay. Our Creator and Redeemer is greater than any of this. He uses our flaws for His good purposes. God is sovereign and mighty. He is an artist, and we are His workmanship. We may feel broken, but we were perfectly made by God just as we are to do the very things He has made for us to do. The question is: Do we believe it? Do we believe in the grand picture of the Gospel? If so, then it is our identity and privilege to serve – not out of obligation or duty or fear or guilt. We serve in the joy and freedom that comes from recognizing all that the Lord has given us.

Guiding Question of the Week

(This question is intended as a target for the whole conversation. Do not ask for responses now. It will be repeated later in the study.)

How does your understanding of the gospel shape your view of mission/service?

Questions for Discussion

(Remember it is better to wrestle deeply with two good questions than gloss over many. Sub-bullets are intended for potential follow-up.)

1. If someone *outside of a church context* asked you, "What is your mission in life?" what would you (*honestly*) say to them?
2. Pastor Paul noted that "mission is a part of the gospel." Has that been true for you? If so, how?
3. **Guiding Question:** How does your mission in life (as you described it above) expand your understanding of the gospel?

- Is your mission framed up primarily in individual terms, or does it include a community? Why?
4. In Eph. 2:10, do you interpret this as “God saved us by His grace, and as a response we are called to do good works; or do you see that the good works are God’s gifts to us? Why or why not?
 5. There are several areas of the church that are in need of leaders/volunteers (kids, prayer team, CG leaders, etc.). Were you drawn to any of those as he mentioned them? Here are some upcoming possibilities:
 - Sunday Serve Fair: Oct 9
 - CG New Leader Training: Oct 29
 - Boxes of Love: Begins Oct 30
 - Spiritual Gifts Workshop: Nov 12
 - Kids’ ministry and youth ministry volunteer opportunities: Anytime!
 6. Pastor Paul reminded us that “your ministry is not in spite of who you are, but flows out of who you are”. What does your heart beat for? What gets you excited? If you could serve (even create a ministry) in virtually ANY area of mission (inside or outside of the church), what would it be and why?
 - As each person shares their ideas, go around the room and say one gift you see in each member of the group.

Application Time

(Turning our thoughts into actions)

Hand everyone in the group a piece of paper. Ask them to brainstorm a one-month experiment for themselves to help them dip their toe in the water of service/mission, as expressed earlier (i.e., once a week volunteering in a ministry/organization, etc.). Have everyone read their “theoretical experiment.” Ask if anyone would actually like to do the experiment, and if they would like to have the group ask them about how its going during meeting times over the next month.

Praying for One Another

(Here are some ideas from the study to help focus your time in prayer as a group. Use by themselves or along with other prayer requests.)

- Option #1:
 - In a spirit of prayer, Read 1 Cor. 12:12-17 slowly, followed by Eph. 2:10.
 - Pray for each other based on the desires expressed in application questions #5 & 6 above.
- Option #2:
 - Pray these truths over each person in your group (maybe each person can take a sentence and pray it for the group?)
 - You are God’s workmanship and He’s made you a doer of good works
 - Your good works are God’s gift to you
 - You were given spiritual gifts
 - You were saved into a body, a community
 - You are useful and needed in Christ’s body, His church
 - You are God’s gift to us