

Unified Purpose: Our Vision

Feb. 18, 2018

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: Lectio Divina

(Here is a passage to help your group as you worship. You can go through it together or in groups in meditation and/or in prayer)

Read through the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:35-40) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). Share in a prayer time thanking God for the way He has loved you, and called you.

Icebreaker

Tell about your first day of school, or the day you got your drivers' license. How were those "trajectory setting" moments for you?

Text for Discussion: I Cor. 15:1-6; 20-26

Turn in your Bibles and read this passage aloud together. Use a different translation than the one you used in the opening worship exercise above.

Aid for Discussion: Sermon Summary

What is at the core of what it means to be a Christian? Jesus was clear: the church exists to make disciples of Christ. This means a transformational new way of life, where our souls are called to love and trust God, obeying Him even when we don't feel like it or understand why. Our Father yearns for us to be real life apprentices of Jesus who by grace and by choice are learning from Him how to live in the Kingdom of God, today. This is the "main thing" of Christianity.

Jesus' parting words were The Great Commission. *"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you"* (Matt 28:18-20). Jesus is with us and in us through the Holy Spirit, giving us the power to be His witnesses. But we fall short of this commission when we mistake a critical part of the Gospel (that Jesus died for our sins to reconcile us to God) for the whole, because it places us at the center of the Good News. This focus on ourselves leaves us aware of what God has saved us from but at a loss of what God has saved us for.

What then should it look like to be a disciple at (and an engaged member of) Pacific Crossroads?

We worship publicly and privately – as a way of life to re-center our hearts.

We are involved in intentional community – formed around knowing each other and helping one another to love and follow Christ.

We live lives of mission so all may know Christ. We want to carry the light of Christ into every sphere of our lives.

What is the vision of Pacific Crossroads? Lives transformed by God's power renewing Los Angeles for Christ. The mission of our church (our plan to accomplish this vision) is "By God's grace we exist to *gather* people to Christ, to *grow* disciples in Christ, and to *send* forth disciples of Christ." To see why this is the vision and mission of our church, we must understand how and why the Gospel is a grand invitation into a new way of life.

What is the Gospel? It's not moralism, believing our good behavior earns God's favor; the Gospel is the good news of what God has done for us in Christ. Nor is it a question of personal salvation and a fixation over who's in and who's out. Following Jesus should never be thought of as secondary to our salvation.

The Gospel starts in the Garden of Eden. We were created to worship God and to be His royal ambassadors to His perfect creation. But we disobeyed, usurping His authority out of a desire to rule as gods ourselves. Our fall affected all of creation, and we were cast out of Eden. Through Abraham, God began the nation of Israel – called to know and follow Him so that through them the world might be blessed. God set them free by grace then gave them the law out of His love. And even though He gave them the earthly king they desired, this became a story of a long, slow decline until the Israelites were exiled from the promised land. What then of God's promise to raise up a king who would rule the world in kindness and goodness forever?

Jesus is the culmination of this single, unfolding story of God's mission to redeem and repair His beloved creation. He followed God's will completely, bore the punishment we deserved, and gave us the gift of His perfect life. We therefore stand fully clothed in Christ's righteousness, as a community called to make disciples of Jesus. This is the Gospel: a magnificent story of love that we have been invited into – the victory of crucified King Jesus who was raised from the dead to bring new life to the world. And so, we walk hand in hand with our Savior as His disciples until He comes again.

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.)

What is the gospel, and how does it impact my life every day?

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.)

Opening questions...

- If you were to give a one sentence summary of “the gospel” what would it be?
- What is the difference between moralism and the gospel? (moralism = the gospel is doing right things).
- What is the difference in reductionism (i.e, “personal salvation”) and the gospel? (Personal salvation = where I go when I die).
- Rankin mentioned in his message the “4 Act” way of thinking about the story of the Bible...
 - What does Act 1 (creation) have to do with the gospel? (Read Genesis 1)
 - What impact does this have on your life every day? What impact can it have?
 - What does Act 2 (fall) have to do with the gospel? (Read Genesis 3)
 - What impact does this have on your life every day? What impact can it have?
 - What does Act 3 (calling/Jesus) have to do with the gospel? (Read Romans 5:8, and Galatians 4:4-7)
 - What impact does this have on your life every day? What impact can it have?
 - What does Act 4 (redemption of all things) have to do with the gospel? (Read Luke 24:1-12; Rev. 21:1-5).
 - What impact does this have on your life every day? What impact can it have?

Closing Exercise...

- What part does the community of the church play in how the gospel works itself out in your life?
- Spend some time in prayer, thanking God specifically for how this church has blessed you; and praying for the next steps ahead for Pacific Crossroads.

Experiment of the Week

Memorize I Cor. 15:3. Spend time in meditation on it each day this week; journal about what the 4 act gospel means to your life.

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.)

- See “Closing Exercise” above...