

Has the Church Lost It's Purpose

“Building Faith”

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

*God Commands Me in His Word – Love Him with All my Heart, My Soul, My Mind
- and to Love One Another as Myself*

Introduction: This morning I want to once again remind us that without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith is the fabric that makes up the believer.

- A. It is by faith that we are saved believing not only that Christ died for our sin but that His blood justifies us before a Holy and just God! Faith alone by Grace alone through Christ alone!
 - Now that is Christianity 101
 - That is sweet milk of God's Word
 - That is the beginning of a life with Christ
- And that is the Good news of Jesus that needs to be shared with a lost and messed up world!
- B. But in there seems to be a sudden drop off after in the emergent church, the seeker friendly church after that.
 - 1. Maybe before I move forward maybe I should explain those to terms:
 - The emergent church basically is a movement that says that as the culture changes a new church should change in response basically the culture dictates the purpose of the church.
 - This movement is born out of man being uncomfortable with scripture in how it relates to culture so scripture is adjusted or ignored and replaced with motivational speeches and teaching on how to believe in God and live a happy life and it is dangerous and even addictive!

- It put man in charge and does nothing to increase man's faith and trust in God!
 - The Seeker Friendly Movement: The seeker friendly "model" is simply consumer based. It is an effort to mold the church it to something that a non-believer would be comfortable with and would not feel threatened and then try to slip the gospel to them almost a bait and switch kind of thing.
- What is dangerous about the seeker sensitive model is two- fold one is if you are going to choose between what God says the purpose of the church is and how it should act and an unbeliever really, second how hard is it going to be for the unbeliever to find Christ then grown in the faith is there is not much different going on in the church than in the world.

Transition: Here is where I am at!

- A. The Church is believers not a place where believer go but as we spoke last week not only are they individuals but a body a gathering and that gathering has multi purposes and one of the purposes I believe that is getting lost in modern Church culture is that of build or grow in faith.
 - 1. And one of the big reasons is that unbelievers can't grow in faith and so many of churches today are concentrating on trying to get the church to look as much like the world as possible so to draw the unbeliever mean while the gathering may grow but there faith does not.
 - The Church has a definite calling!
- I. The Calling by Faith vs. 11**
- A. In the first chapter of Hebrews we see that God has worked in different times in different ways that is undeniable.

1. But He has always worked by calling placing a call or request or a drawing on whom He has chosen for a particular mission.
 - Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and God called him to by faith build an ark...
 - Abraham was living just fine when God called him to up and leave the land and go to a place that that he would tell him later...
 - God called Joseph and Mary to believe Him that all things are possible with God to go ahead and stay together and be Jesus earthly parents.
- List goes on and on but after the day of Pentecost we something change God begins to call through the church His bride to do His will.

2. We see that God so designed His body that although salvation remains an individual thing each is a part of his kingdom the church and by that each has an individual calling but each individual calling makes up the calling of the church!

B. Now Paul says here that he prays that God would count you worthy of your calling.

1. Now who in this room would raise their hand and say they are worthy of anything?

- We are not worthy as we think of worthiness he is not using this word to say that we are somehow deserving it is more like that we suitable.
- And the only way that we can see ourselves suitable to carry out the calling that God has placed on our lives and the life of the church is by believing that God is the one that will accomplish it.

- *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.* Philippians 1:9

- So here we get back to how do we increase our faith as a body to exercise the calling of the church?

2. How about this: Instead of self-help speeches, inspirational and motivational talks, here is how to be happy cheerleading.

➤ How about this:

- *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*

Romans 10:17

- I recently heard a pastor say that if you cry out to God He will help you it does matter if you know who He is or not.

- That's not true if you don't know Him then you don't believe Him and there is no faith and it is by faith in Christ that God works in our lives!

➤ The Church's calling is to worship God, to equip the believer to live and to witness for Christ and we must grow in faith to be worthy of our calling and we can only grow in our faith through the Word of God!

Transition: And if there is a calling then there is a work!

- And fulfil every desire for goodness and the work of faith 2

Thessalonians 1:11c

II. The Work of Faith vs 11

A. Every good work of God accomplished by God through His church must be accomplished by faith!

1. Works is the out pour of our faith:

- Listen to what James writes concerning faith: *18 But someone [c]may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." 19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. 20 But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?* James 2:18-20

= Paul writing to these folks at the church at Thessalonica about their calling and their desire to have goodness work of faith.

- Listen Church if a church is not growing in faith then what ever it is calling good works are not good works at all but are simply good business practices at best.

2. A church cannot grow in the faith by changing to meet the standards of the culture it create a watered down version of Christianity!

- Charles Spurgeon once said if anyone ever preached anything new don't listen it is false!

B. But for a church to fulfill the purpose for God call it there has to be an increase of faith and the evidence of that increase of faith is in the good works of the church!

1. So then the question as we spoke before you being the toe or the ear or the left ear or whatever part of the body that God has desired you to be what kind of faith do you have that God has you right where He wants you and what kind of evidence of it is showing in your participation in the life of the church!

- Get to Work, believe God and go to work!

2. You see the church is where our faith should build each time we gather together when the service is over we should have more faith not because the pastor was entertaining or we had a live band or because we finally broke 100!

- No our faith should be stronger and we should go to work for the cause of Christ because the Word of God compels us to not because we compromised the Word of God so in case an unbeliever comes they wouldn't be offended and leave!

- The Church is not for unbelievers it is for believers to build their faith to equip to do good works so that they can live lives pleasing to God so that others can see the love of God and receive the Gospel of Christ!
- Go Out and share the Gospel!!!!
 - We are raising a generation of believers that are weak in their faith because we have them on a milk only diet!
 - For fear that we might say or do something that might scare an unbeliever away!
 - There is no room for compromise!
- But Pastor there is no need to say that homosexuality is wrong if there are homosexuals in attendance, there is no reason that sex of any kind outside the bonds of marriage is wrong if there are folks living together in the congregation, you don't have to say that drunkenness is wrong, how in world to you expect to grow a church in our contemporary culture when the church looks so different from the rest of culture no one's going to buy into that!
 - How are we going to grow in faith if we do not preach the whole council of God and only pick out the parts that won't be offense to the seeker the answer is that we simply won't.
 - And chances are we will not grow into a mega church of thousands of people but if we grow in faith we will be compelled to do the work of God and in that God is pleased regardless of our number!
 - Church we do not have to apologize for the sharpness of the Word of God it is what it is and it is not going to change and it will build your faith and it will result in amazing work for Christ because there is nothing more powerful than faith!

Transition: Now I love when Paul uses this word power with faith comes power:

- *11 To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power,* 2 Thessalonians 1:11

III. The Power of Faith verse 11-12

- A. Often throughout Scripture we see Jesus say your faith has made you whole.
1. The Bible say by faith we are saved!
- Faith is a powerful thing!
 2. Truth is faith is what controls our lives we pretty much do what we have faith in!
 - Ladies why do you stick with pretty much the same household products...
 - That's right because you believe in them they have power over you buy me you know I work! That is a positive example!
 - Addiction whether physical or mental your body or your mind is convinced you believe that you can't do without it. That is a negative example!
 - Now when it comes to faith in God is our faith powerful enough that we not only want to do work that God has called us to do but our faith in Him powers us forward compels to accomplish that which He has set before us.

= Church we will do what we believe the question then becomes what do we believe!

- B. So then is it not the church's responsibility to equip the believer with the Word of God. (Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of God) so that the believer is empowered to do that which God has called each of us to do as individuals that make up the body of Christ.

Close: Let me close with some of these thoughts:

- A. There is a calling to the church to grow to grow in faith and faith only increases one way by the Word of God!
- Has the church lost our purpose: It is frightening to me huge gatherings of people sit and listen to self- help messages that never rightly divide God's Word by rather take a verse or two then tell people how to happy any way they want to live!
- B. There is a Work in the Church to be done as a result of growing in faith but if there is no work then we must begin to question are we grow in faith.
- And it frightens me as a Pastor what are we doing wrong when it is pulling teeth to get someone to go in the nursery and sing Jesus loves to our babies or to come by and help clean up this amazing facility that God has given to worship in.
 - Or why no comes and says pastor I want to start a ministry to feed hungry people will you help me get it going.
 - Or why no says pastor I don't know if I am a toe or a foot but I want to do something because I believe God so much I want to do something for Him!
- Have we failed, have we lost our purpose, has church just become something that we fit in on Sunday morning if we are not doing anything else is that how strong our faith is?
- C. Church there is power in Faith as a Church we must set as our part of our mission as one of our Goals to grow in faith.
- Without Faith it is impossible to please God and without God's Word it is impossible to have faith!