



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

“1st Things 1st: The Mission of the Kingdom”

Ps Rice Brooks – Jan. 26, 2014

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- Has a stranger ever tried to talk to you about religious faith of any kind? If so, how did it go?
- Have you ever talked to a stranger about your religious faith? If so, how did it go?
- Could you communicate your basic religious faith or conversion in only two minutes? (Someone do it now.)

WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at bethelbrentwood.org/media.

If the Gospel is true, then we will be passionate about God, the things of God, and the mission of God. God's covenant with Abraham especially involved his plan to bless all the nations of the earth. All of Israel's history builds upon this foundation culminating in Jesus the Messiah, who came to seek and save the lost from all nations.

St. Patrick was an English youth who was captured and sold into slavery in Ireland. He escaped and went back to England. But back in England he became convinced that God was calling him back to the land of his former captors as a missionary. As he obeyed God and willingly exchanged his freedom for being a servant to the Irish, Ireland experienced a massive spiritual awakening. Patrick's influence was so great that Ireland went on to play a major role in saving Western civilization. The proliferation of monasteries resulted in the preservation of much of the literature of the ancient world, including the Bible. And their missionaries travelled all over Western Europe bringing the Gospel and converting large numbers of people in many nations. These missionaries laid the foundations of Christian faith in much of Western Europe. Patrick's willingness to make himself a servant to others has impacted the world to this day.

For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23 ESV)

Paul never compromised his faith or his obedience to God, but he adapted himself to the many different kinds of people he encountered in order to gain a hearing for the Gospel. Paul understood that by communicating the Gospel to people, he himself would share in its blessings. The irony is that we are not to chase or seek for blessings, for we will only end up dissatisfied. Instead, we are to pursue God and his kingdom above all things. If we do this with all our hearts, then the blessings of God will actually overtake us because God has commanded it.

The Blessings of the Gospel

True Revelation of God - The Gospel gives a greater revelation of God's nature, character, and ways than would otherwise be known. In the Gospel we have the greatest revelation of God's love, mercy, and graciousness.

Explanation of What Destroys Us - The Gospel also reveals how terrible sin is, and how much it destroys our lives. God's commandments are for our good. That which God forbids is ultimately destructive to us. The Gospel reveals what we need to avoid to spare us harm.

Our Only Remedy - The Gospel provides us with the only solution to our terrible crisis of sin. Only Jesus both satisfies God's justice on our behalf and provides God's righteousness for our benefit. There is no other solution acceptable to God.

A Certain Hope - The Gospel gives us an eternal hope beyond the terror of death. It is a hope that is sure, certain, and guaranteed. We can have confidence concerning future immortality and eternal life.

A New Lifestyle - The Gospel changes us from the inside out. God gives us new desires. His Word and his Spirit guide us, encourage us, train us, and empower us to walk according to the new nature God has caused to be in us. We have been born again.

Security & Protection - God is our greatest defense. Our passion for Christ and active commitment to his mission are honored by God. He is our security and our protection. His promise to Abraham belongs also to us because of Jesus Christ: "I am your shield, your very great reward!"

God had also told Abraham that he would spare Sodom for the sake of ten righteous persons. If Lot and his family had turned merely six other people to the Lord, there would have been ten including his family, and a whole city would have been spared God's judgment. Evangelism is actually to the benefit of entire communities.

Our Response

There is spiritual food that doesn't come from mere listening and learning. It doesn't come from pastors, church leaders, other people, or even our own family members. It is spiritual food that comes from obedience to God, including involvement in his mission. Jesus said, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me," meaning of course, the Father. As the Father sent Jesus, so also Jesus has sent us. We too have a mission and a sending from God. We too have spiritual food to eat that only comes from advancing the Gospel.

PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.

- Have you reached across barriers to bring someone the Gospel or lead them in following Jesus?
- Are there any people in your life who you should be reaching with the Gospel? If so, how might you effectively become more relatable to them?
- What are some common mistakes that we sometimes make when we are talking to others about our faith?

PRAYER (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- That God would open our eyes and hearts to the spiritual needs of others all around us.
- That God would give us boldness to talk to anyone about Jesus.
- That God would give us wisdom to know best how to relate to people for the Gospel's sake without compromising our conscience.