

11.03.13

November | 2013

A Time of Reflection and Evaluation

Over the past few weeks, I have been doing a lot of reflection and evaluation. As your Pastor, I am held to a higher standard of love and service to you, the congregation, than most others. The Lord has given me direct instructions which drives me and still remains my marching orders today. These orders come from Ephesians 4:11-16 (NLT), which says

¹¹Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹²Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. ¹⁴Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to

trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. ¹⁵Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶He make the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love."

This passage says that the pastors and teachers (along with the apostles, the prophets, & the evangelists) are gifts to the church. Sometimes I feel like a "curse" to the church. It grieves me greatly that we have seen over 50 people leave our church, with more contemplating leaving. Most of the people who have left must really be disappointed with the VIF ministry and experience that I have been working hard to implement, because they leave without saying a word to any of our staff. Some have come to talk with us, and these who have talked with us have legitimate reasons for leaving and we gave them our blessings as they left. For the others, we can only conclude that they have been disappointed and felt the need to leave. I am sorry for being a disappointment, but I do have to follow the instructions and commands that the Lord has placed on me.

Verse 12 says that my responsibility is "to equip God's people to do His work and build up the church, the body of Christ." I feel most badly about this aspect. We have had a good part of VIF go through T4T and Multiply, but it looks like it has simply

been another study that they have completed. Over and over again we stressed in both studies that we were trying to move people into a "life-style," not just the completing of a program. Up to this point, very few seem to have gotten it and I take the major responsibility for that.

I direct and administer over the passages and subject matters that Pastor Darren, Pastor Jeremy and I preach on. We have been working diligently to preach the "gospel" in as powerful a manner as we can. We lift high the authority of the Word of God, the Bible, and try to communicate that we all need to live our daily, private and public, lives in accordance with God's commands. **James 4:17 (NLT)**

"¹⁷Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it." Our job as Pastors is to reveal God's Word to you and then to encourage you to obey God's Word. We are putting you in great jeopardy if we only reveal God's Word to you.

This is another area where I feel that I have not done a good job. I am seeing more and more people give up serving the Lord through the church. It is getting to such a severe level that I am seriously praying through what ministries we will have to cut. If I were succeeding in leading VIF to be obedient to the Word of God, we would be having more and more people volunteering to serve in all of the

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Living Under Oppressive Laws

- I. Living as good _____ of this _____. - **Matthew 22:21b**
- A. Give to _____ – As Christians, we need to obey our _____.
 - B. Give to _____ – Our highest _____ is to _____.
 - 1. If there has to be a choice, then _____ wins out all the time.
 - 2. However, you have to do it _____ way, not _____ way.
 - 3. Willingly, take the _____ for _____ God.



- II. Living with a clear _____. - **Romans 13:1-5**
- A. God is even in _____ of _____ – that is why you can _____ to them.
 - B. Rebelling against _____ – means you are rebelling against _____.
 - C. There will be _____ for rebellion.
 - D. Doing wrong makes you _____ of government.
 - E. Do what is _____ so they will _____ you.
 - F. Work to keep a clear _____, especially before God.

- III. Living as people of God's _____ - **Matthew 22:37-40**
- A. Living in an unjust society, you must _____ God _____.
 - B. Loving God supremely means _____ Him.
 - C. Therefore, it means loving your _____ as you love yourself.
 - D. Your neighbors includes those who _____ you.
 - E. Remember that all of scripture _____ and _____ this.
 - F. This is a command of _____.

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needed areas. I am seriously looking at cutting back in several areas:

1. Cutting back to only one Worship Service on Sunday mornings.
2. Cutting out the child care services during the 1st Service.
3. Looking at how to minimize our set-up and tear-down each Sunday morning.
4. Looking at the possibility of giving up Wailuku Elementary School's cafeteria.
5. Looking at a reduction of my salary, followed by the reduction in programs, followed by the reduction of the other staff salaries. *(If I need to, I have worked bi-vocationally and even as a volunteer within the churches that I have served. I have enough strength and health left to do it again, if necessary.)*

As you can probably see, the situation is getting serious. I have not been able to convince you, the people of VIF, of the serious situation that we are getting into and it shows by the lack of involvement by many of you. When people see our Senior Citizens working hard, and many times in physical work, something is wrong when others will not work alongside of them. When people are working hard to fulfill our obligations to Wailuku Elementary School to put things back into a better shape than when we found it in the early morning, something is wrong when others just stand around and fellowship with no concern for those who are laboring. Not a bad situation if it occurs occasionally, but it is a very bad situation when it occurs regularly.

You see, I take the responsibility for training, encouraging, and leading you, the people of VIF, to be the kind of people that you are. I have failed in my responsibilities to train you up to do the work of the Lord. Therefore, since I have failed, I will either have to resign or seek to do a better job. My choice is to seek to do a better job.

I know that it is wrong to try and manipulate and coerce you into "doing things" for the Lord. My whole strategy has been to help

Two Thirds World Ministry



Mission Trip
November 2nd - 13th
We are ON MISSION FOR
CHRIST by building leaders and
shaping the future.



Women's Missionary Union (WMU)
of the Maui County Baptist
Association (MCBA) will be
sponsoring the Annual Baptist
Women's World Day of Prayer on:

**Monday, Nov. 4, 2013 at Valley
Isle Fellowship from 430pm--
630pm.**

You have the opportunity to pray
with sisters from the other Baptist
church for sisters in other places in
the world.

Please save the date!

and encourage you to have a consuming LOVE for Jesus Christ. Out of this love for Jesus Christ will come a life of service. I still believe this strategy to be correct. Therefore, since I believe that this strategy is correct, then I have failed in helping and encouraging you to LOVE Jesus Christ with all of your heart mind and soul. I believe that I have failed by not pointing out to you ways that you could express your love for Jesus Christ. I have not encouraged efforts that would regularly put opportunities to love and serve the Lord before you. My goal has been to see you, the people of VIF, fall so much in love with the Lord Jesus Christ that you would be the ones being instructed by the Lord to carry out acts of love, grace, and mercy that would bring glory and honor to the Lord. The Lord has revealed to me that until that time comes, I will have to be the one to bring some opportunities to you. It would be an attempt to sort of "prime the pump," so God's instructions to you would become crystal clear and that you would move in loving obedience to Him.

I know that in order to keep vital programs like child-care, Sunday School, and even our Worship Services going, you will have to step up and help. If I can serve, you also can serve. When I am not preaching on Sunday morning, I will be going to the nursery to serve in child-care. I will continue to go to Wailuku Elementary School Cafeteria at 6 AM every Sunday to set-up as long as I have health as well as continue to help with the tear-down each Sunday. I will even look to see how I can teach or be a substitute teacher in Sunday School. Because of my responsibilities for the Worship Service, this will be hard, but not impossible.

Dear people, I will not ask you to do something that I am not willing to do myself. So I plead with you, come and join me as we labor for the glory of the Lord together. I promise you, if I fail to carry out my responsibilities now, you will not have to fire me. I will resign. However, if this all seems wrong to you, then I remind you that you do have the power to fire me by voting me out.

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When the Lord commands us to do something, we have one of two choices, to either obey or disobey. Doing as He commands only partway or not as He commanded us to do is disobedience. Many times, obeying the Lord is very difficult. The Lord says that the Greatest Commandment is **Matthew 22:37-40 (NLT)** ³⁷*Jesus replied, 'You must love the LORD you God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹A second is equally important: LOVE your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.'* It is your supreme love for Jesus Christ and your burning passion to bring Him glory and honor that will cause you to obey Him, no matter how difficult or inconvenient His commands may be. It is your Love for Him that will give you the strength and courage to even lay down your life for Him, if necessary.

A church that is being obedient to God will show this by its involvement within the church. The church body needs all parts of the body to be functioning within the church in order to run. When one part of the body is not operating, the whole body hurts. This is what is happening within VIF. Our body is not functioning properly and therefore, we cannot do all that God has commanded us to do until all parts of the body are being obedient and functioning within the church. When God calls us to do something and we disobey Him, we are held accountable to Him and the blame lays on us and us alone. We cannot blame anyone else, but ourselves, for not doing as God has commanded us.

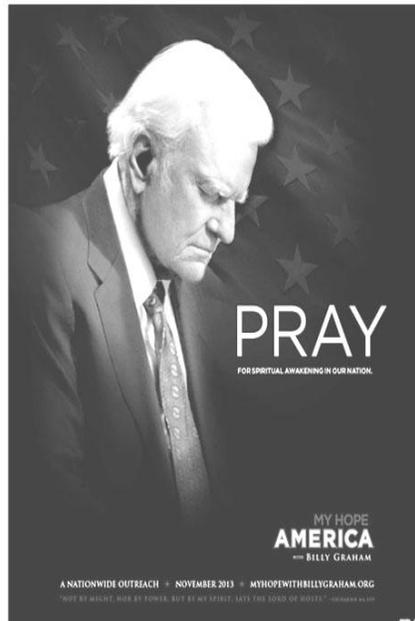
In Ezekiel 33, it says that I have the responsibility of being the Watchman on the wall. My responsibility is to cry out the warning, not to MAKE you obey the warning.

Ezekiel 33:3-4 (NLT) ³*When the watchman sees the enemy coming, he sounds the alarm to warn the people. ⁴Then if those who hear the alarm refuse to take action, it is their own fault if they die.*

You see, dear people of VIF, I have my

Program Broadcasting
Thursday, November 7th at
2:30pm on channel 51 (island of
Maui)

for more broadcast listings,
go to
<http://watchbillygraham.com/?#tv-listings>



***"Not by might,
nor by power,
but by my
Spirit, says the
LORD of
hosts."***

Zechariah 4:6 (ESV)

responsibilities, but you have your responsibilities as well. Therefore, I am sounding the alarm and telling you that things at Valley Isle Fellowship are not good. I have been mainly responsible for this state of affairs, but you also are responsible for your lack of loving service to Jesus Christ through Valley Isle Fellowship. If you believe that Valley Isle Fellowship does not deserve your loving service, then with a broken heart, I have to tell you one of two things, first, you may not even be a Christian if you feel no leadership from the Lord to serve through Valley Isle Fellowship, or, two, Valley Isle Fellowship is not the church that you belong in. If number two is your situation, then I would urge you to seek the church that God desires for you and serve the Lord in and through that church to the glory and honor of the Lord.

If God desires you to remain as a part of the body of Valley Isle Fellowship, then I urge you to get involved in serving. We need all of you!!! **1 Corinthians 12:26 (NLT)** ²⁶*If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.* My perspective on this is that Valley Isle Fellowship has all the resources that we need in order to do all that God commands us to do. This means we have it all, if all of us, as members of this body, do all that the Lord would command us to do. When even one part of this body is non-functioning, the whole body is affected. The well functioning of the church depends on each person doing what God instructs them to do. In all of my study of scripture I have never found a single passage where the Lord Oks doing nothing. Therefore, not only do we love the Lord, but we need to obey and serve the Lord.

My desire is that the Lord be honored and glorified through Valley Isle Fellowship. We are not there yet, but that can all change as we all turn our attention and our lives to loving and obeying the Lord. If you want to discuss this, or any other issues, my door is always open to you and I am more than willing to have a heart-to-heart talk with you. God bless you as you go on to loving and obeying the Lord with all of your lives.

Pastor Stephen Kaneshiro

Killing the Fuzzy Gospel —We've Got a Problem (Pt 1 & 2)

By: Jon Akin

Every problem that we face in our churches is a manifestation of an inadequate understanding and practice of the gospel. Giving problems? You've got a gospel problem. Can't get enough people to sign up for that short term mission trip? Gospel problem. Apathy toward your community? Gospel problem.

The Apostle Paul saw problems in the church as gospel problems. The gospel wasn't a simple three-step formula that was on par with saying "Abracadabra" to get people their Get-Outta-Hell-Free Card. Instead, it was the "principle article of all Christian doctrine" (Luther), and was something his readers could never move beyond. As Tim Keller puts it, "The gospel is not the first 'step' in a 'stairway' of truths, rather, it is more like the 'hub' in a 'wheel' of truth...The gospel is not just the minimum required doctrine necessary to enter the kingdom, but the way we make all progress in the kingdom. We are not justified by the gospel and then sanctified by obedience, but the gospel is *the* way we grow (Gal.3:1-3) and are renewed (Col.1:6)." Therefore, the Christian is either living out the gospel well, or living it out poorly.

The problem is that our churches are full of the "fuzzy gospel" and we have got to kill it. You know what the "fuzzy gospel" is, don't you? It's an understanding of the gospel that is imprecise, cloudy, and lazy. It has a vague notion that for some reason Jesus died, and for some reason I don't have to go to Hell now, and the details aren't all that important. The "fuzzy gospel" follower leaves the details to the professionals, meanwhile viewing the gospel as something for unbelievers that is tacked onto the end of a sermon.

Of course, it would be silly of me (and demonstrate my own lack of understanding of the gospel) to act like "everyone else" doesn't have it figured out. Every day I misunderstand the gospel. When I'm impatient with my wife, it reflects that I've forgotten the patience

God shows to me despite my sin. When I am slow to forgive my friend, it demonstrates that I think that his sin is somehow less forgivable than the daily sin I commit against my Savior. And when I'm too quick to assume that I "get" the gospel and others don't, it means that I've forgotten the many years of my life that I rejected the gospel, and those following years where I viewed it as nothing more than my punched ticket to Heaven. God has been so gracious to me, and I pray that I would always demonstrate that same graciousness to others.

However, this grace does not equate permitting gospel-laziness but rather compels us to challenge others in gospel-growth. Now you may be saying, "my people aren't seminary trained and if I used the words propitiation, imputation, or justification in a sermon they'll think I'm speaking in tongues." I say all this for the opposite reason, actually. I say it because I believe in the person sitting in the pew, and that they're capable of great things, and they're waiting, whether they realize it or not, for someone to take them seriously enough to teach them the gospel with the same specificity as Scripture does.

After all, they're experts in plenty of other stuff—you've probably got churches full of men and women that can tell you Adrian Peterson's number of rushing yards his sophomore year of high school or the various Vera Bradley patterns of the last decade. Now let's help them become experts in what is supposed to be the most important thing in their lives—the gospel. To steal a line from Matt Chandler, we must encourage people to become "experts in the gospel." This nonchalant, flippant attitude toward it has got to stop, and we have got to kill the "fuzzy gospel" in our churches.

Is there anything else in this world that people can attend on a weekly basis for years of their lives, yet still not have a grasp of the most foundational principles of the event? Can you imagine someone having season tickets to see Georgia football play for the past five years, attend every game without fail, and yet when the team comes out for warm-ups they say to

the person next to them, "I love it when they come out on the *court* like that. I sure hope they score more *runs* than Florida tonight"? It seems unlikely, but not so if we were investigating the church. We've got congregations full of lifelong attendees who don't understand the very foundation of the faith.

And if we have churches full of people who don't understand the gospel, we shouldn't be surprised when evangelism methods fail, discipleship is non-existent, and people are fighting over what type of

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Child Care Schedule

Team 1: Jennifer Egami, Corey Egami, Donna Nozaki, Elijah Douglas, Christian Motonaga

Team 2: Joycelyn Kiaha, Marion Kimura, Avery Yamada, Zachary Yamada, Kaiani Kiaha, Daniel Olaso

Team 3: Gretel Saraos, Rosie Quenga, Daniel Quenga, Shalia Mendez, Danica Cooley, Dyllan Caolie

Team 4: Karen Fontanilla, Janice Robello, Judy Giron, Jaydee Giron, Jules Giron, Kolbe Fontanilla, Alysha Fontanilla, Hannah Aiwohi

Team 5: Shayna Manlapao, Chevelle Moniz, Dayna Asuncion, Seth Yamada, Wayne Sniffen

Nov 3rd—Team 1 Nov 10th—Team 2
Nov 17th—Team 3 Nov 24th—None

Dec 1st—Team 4
Dec 8th—Team 5
Dec 15th—Team 1
Dec 22nd—Team 2
Dec 29th—Team 3

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tables we'll buy for the new fellowship hall. We don't have to search for why people won't tithe, care about missions, or have their heart break for their community. These are all gospel problems. If the gospel is the most important thing we could possibly understand within the Christian faith, and we have churches full of people who don't really understand it, then we shouldn't be surprised when our churches are perpetually ineffective.

My [previous post](#) dealt with the need for our churches to kill the "fuzzy gospel" – the imprecise understanding of Christ's work on the cross being meant only to save the sinner rather than sanctify the saved as well. Here are five practical ways that I believe we can kill the "fuzzy gospel" in our ministries:

Look in the Mirror

Let's not assume that the problem is entirely "out there." We each need to ask ourselves a difficult question: "do I really understand the gospel with excellence?" Have I preached as a functional moralist who communicates that we are saved by grace, but sanctified by good works?

One of the major turning points in my life was observing the willingness of men I admired to confess that they didn't always have a robust understanding of the gospel in their own ministries. Their willingness to repent and continue learning despite years of success challenged me to examine my own inadequate understanding of the gospel.

Quit Assuming People Get the Gospel

Just like we can't assume that we get the gospel, we also can't assume that our people get the gospel either. We often think that people have gotten the gospel and are ready to move onto something more complex in the Christian life because they have spent years, or even decades, in the church.

But can your people share their faith without relying entirely on a memorized presentation? Do they believe that they're

more loved by God because they attend church without fail and tithe? Do they understand that their sin is a gospel problem and not simply a "work harder at it" problem? If every Christian is to be Christ's ambassador, challenge people to understand the gospel well enough to be an effective missionary for him.

Preach the Gospel the way Scripture does

It should astound us how often Paul speaks the gospel in his letters. He saw the issues that churches faced as gospel issues. When calling the Philippians to unity, he crescendos with the cross as the ultimate motivation to be unified for the gospel (Phil 2. 1-11). When telling the Ephesians about Christian marriage, he didn't give three practical tips for making submission work, but instead calls for husbands to love their wives in the same way that Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:25). The gospel was the lens through which Paul understood the whole of the Christian life, and this was manifest in his writing and preaching.

Never tire of preaching the cross, no matter the biblical passage. If we are preaching through an epistle, preach the gospel with the same frequency and specificity as the text. If we are preaching one of the Gospels, realize that all four head to the same glorious finale. If we are preaching the Old Testament, remember Jesus' hermeneutics lesson on the road to Emmaus that the entirety of the Old Testament is about Him and His gospel (Lk. 24). A Jesus-less sermon is not a biblical sermon.

Counsel the Gospel for all of Life

When I began understanding the gospel's impact on the whole of the Christian life, a new question entered my counseling conversations: "how do you think the gospel speaks to this problem?" If a believer is asking my advice on some issue in his life, I'm helping him work through the practical nature of how the gospel speaks to this matter. It's one thing to make a blanket statement that the gospel is for all of life, but it's another to work people through those implications to help them see this for themselves.

We must help the man with the constantly nagging wife recognize that his love for her is not conditional on her behavior, and that he cannot remove his affection because she's complaining yet again. He must see that he is to demonstrate the unconditional love of the gospel in his marriage, and recognize just how ugly he has acted toward the Savior who has refused to let him go. The woman who still carries the guilt from aborting her child a decade ago must know the sufficiency of the cross to cover her sins, and that God is not pleased by her perpetual shame, but rather desires that she would understand the magnitude of redemption. The gospel speaks into the entirety of life—become well-equipped at pouring God's grace through Christ onto all of your counseling conversations.

Live out the Gospel's Implications and Invite Others to Observe

I hope that I have not given the impression that if one can rattle off impressive theological keywords like "imputed righteousness" then that person gets the gospel. He may or he may not. As we begin to grasp the impact of the gospel on the whole of our lives, we must invite others in to observe how it impacts everything that we do. Allow people to see how the gospel determines the way you treat your wife and discipline your kids. *Over tip* the waitress who did a poor job at your lunch meeting, making this a glimpse into the gospel that tells us that we are not accepted because of our performance, but rather in spite of our failures. Make your life one where you are intentionally discipling others by living out the gospel. Be deliberate in communicating that it is this that rules all that you do. The best means of killing the "fuzzy gospel" may be to simply invite others to see how the gospel transforms every area of our lives, speaking both to our successes and failures.

<http://www.baptisttwentyone.com/?s=fuzzy+gospel>

The Will of My Father is...

²¹"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does **the will of my Father** who is in heaven. ²²Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' ²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you, away from me, you evildoers!'" Matthew 7:21-23(NIV)

I have been a Christian for 23 years and earlier in my Christian life I came across these verses. What caught my attention was that "Christians" can be doing good things, even supernatural things, and still not enter into heaven. That wasn't even the worse of it when I read verse 23. So I was even more confused when Jesus said that he never knew those who called out to him and did supernatural works of God or what seemed like works of God. Words are not a substitute for obedience, and neither are religious works. Preaching, casting out demons and performing miracles can be divinely inspired, but they give no assurance of salvation. It is likely that even Judas participated in some, or all, of these activities, and yet he was not a true believer. In the last days, Satan will use "lying wonders" to deceive people from the truth¹. I want to discuss with you what, "The will of my Father" truly means. We hear this repeated many times but what is it? The final test is not what we think of ourselves, or what others may think. The final test is: *What will God say? Have you and I been doing God's will? Because that is the only way into the presence of God!*

Let's look at what the will of the Father is. Jesus gave us the answer in John 6:38-40, ³⁸"For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." According to what Jesus said, the will of the Father is to have

everyone look to the Son and believe in Him, for if they do, they will have eternal life. Remember, Jesus said that he came to seek and save those that are lost². So God's will is that we give people the opportunity to believe in Jesus and that is done by sharing the gospel. The context of Matthew 7:21-23 was to be aware of false prophets. Jesus was in essence saying, that though you may outwardly look like you're good, you are inwardly far from me. This is applied to false prophets as well as to we who call ourselves Christians. Obedience to the Father's will is the test of true faith in Christ. The test is not words, not saying "Lord, Lord," and not obeying His commands. How easy it is to learn a religious vocabulary, and even memorize Bible verses and religious songs, and yet not obey God's will. When a person is truly born again, he has the Spirit of God living within him³ and the Spirit enables him to know and do the Father's will. God's love in his heart motivates him to obey God and serve others⁴. We are to hear God's words and do them. We must not stop with only hearing (or studying) His words. Our hearing must result in doing⁵.

Have you ever thought that not sharing the Gospel, which is the Good News that Jesus Saves, is sin towards God? Have we realized that it is a command that Jesus gave to his disciples who later became Apostles, that they were to pass it on to those who believe in Christ? Earlier I said that words are not substitutes for obedience. Those who love the Lord will give the Lord, to others, who need the Lord.

Now, let me talk about believing in Jesus because that is the Father's will. Professing to believe in Jesus is meaningless unless it is accompanied by a change of heart, character and will. If there is no change, this could indicate, if we are to be honest, that our faith in Christ might not be true. If we have truly given our lives to Christ, believe that Jesus died for the forgiveness of our sins and that he rose from the grave to give me eternal life with the Father, people will be able to see the evidence of this overtime. In Matthew 7:21-23 it talks

about knowing people by their fruit. In the book of John there are two kinds of fruit⁶, one is an inner fruit which is a character to be like Christ as we are connected to him and the second is an outer fruit which pertains to an obedient lifestyle that reaches people with the gospel.

Let me share something from my heart. In the past, I used to think I was wasting my time with people who seemed to accept and believe that Jesus died for the forgiveness of their sins and then days and weeks later I would no longer see them. Over the past two years I have spent a lot of time in prayer with the Lord about sharing the gospel. I vented to Him my concerns and issues with the how to's and when I should do it. *But do you know that what God wants he always get?* So today I no longer question sharing the gospel. God called all people to a saving faith in Jesus, which is salvation. On top of that He called us, we who are already saved, to be his witnesses, the light, salt, Ambassadors of Christ to the world⁷. We continue what Jesus started which is to give people an opportunity to repent of their sins, believe in Him and follow to serve and glorify God. My outlook on things now is to share the gospel and to always give people the opportunity of eternal life through the death and resurrection of Christ. In some ways, I am at least giving them a 50/50 chance that they might truly believe in Jesus now or in the future. They have been presented with the gospel and they have a decision to make. My heart is to give everyone an opportunity of eternal life in Jesus Christ, God is the one who saves them not I⁸. This is why I no longer worry about them being saved because God has called me to share the gospel and let Him save them.

When a person says "yes" to Jesus, God then gives me the responsibility to disciple them⁹. However, if a person says "yes" to Jesus but does not want to be encouraged to be a disciple, then once again I do not worry, although, I do want them to become a disciple it is a matter between him and God. Remember this hard truth; you can

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only work with people and take them only as far as they are committed to go. However, I want to encourage you to ask them for a commitment because then you will be fulfilling the Great Commission. Always leave them with the decision to choose and decide what they will do. Pray that people will say "yes" and that they will commit their lives to follow and live for Jesus.

In next week's article I will give my personal testimony of when I shared the gospel with people. I believe that you might also be surprised with where, when and who I shared the gospel with. I am doing it so you can be encouraged and that we need to start to boast about what the Lord is doing openly to one another, so that we can encourage one another to boast about the Lord¹⁰.

In my article last week, I mentioned that there are four words to remember; love, reach, encourage and go; **love** God, **reach** people with the gospel, **encourage** and help one another to build a relationship of love, faith and obedience with God and Jesus and then send them off to **go** and make disciples for the rest of their lifetime. Always keep this in mind, "Reaching people with the gospel of Jesus is how God draws people to himself¹¹." We have this privilege and I hope you see it as a privilege to be used of God, to represent His son Jesus to the world, as the Savior who has come to rescue and free them of sin and eternal death, to freedom and eternal life spent with God Almighty.

I hope and pray that we will encourage one another to live our lives by doing the will of the Father for His glory and honor.

¹2Thessalonians 2:7-12, ²Luke 19:10, ³Romans 8:9, ⁴Romans 5:5, ⁵James 1:22-25, ⁶John 15:8, 16, ⁷2Corinthians 5:20, ⁸Acts 11:39-44, ⁹Matthew 28:18-20, ¹⁰1Corinthians 1:31, ¹¹John 6:44, 65

God Bless, *Pastor Darren Sarmiento*

Exodus... Pastor Stephen Kaneshiro

Some people have spoken with me about their concern over people leaving Valley Isle Fellowship, which I have been aware of for about a year. I have been seeing the numbers steadily drop in our morning worship services. In fact the numbers are dropping so steadily that it appears that I am killing VIF. Therefore, I write this article to let you know my perspective on this.

I have seen many people leave Valley Isle Fellowship during the nearly two years that I have been your Pastor. I have seen the regular attendance on Sunday mornings go from about 150 down to about 120. Some have left because God was moving them on to another church, others have left because they felt like they were not being cared for, some did not agree with the direction that I am leading VIF, while others have been going through tremendous personal hardships that make it difficult for them to stay focused on the Lord and on His work. However, most of those that left, are simply not happy with my leadership.

The Constitution and By-Laws of our Church say that the Senior Pastor is the only staff member that can be called and released by the church membership. All of the other staff members work at the pleasure of the Senior Pastor. Allowance is therefore given to the membership of the church to call for a meeting of the church and to vote to remove the Senior Pastor. Outlined in VIF's Constitution and By-Laws is the proper procedure for this to be done. However, you, the members of Valley Isle Fellowship have the right to call for my removal.

Let me be clear about my intentions on this matter. I am not planning to resign from Valley Isle Fellowship, but I will not try to stop or fight against any effort to call for a vote that would see me removed as your pastor. Also, if there is any effort to remove me, I will not hold ill feelings towards anyone that would be a part of that vote. I will not even try to defend myself in an effort to oust me.

I firmly believe that the direction that I am leading Valley Isle Fellowship is what God

has commanded me to do, therefore, I have no plans to change the direction of VIF. We will continue to push to win people to the Lord, to disciple them into Christ-likeness, and to encourage them to also win others to Jesus Christ and to disciple them into Christ-likeness. We will continue to push each person to live a sacrificial life unto the Lord and to reject a faith of convenience.

It comes down to one of two things, which could both be used for the glory of the Lord. If you disagree with where I believe the Lord is leading VIF, you could vote me out and perhaps the numbers will then start to increase and VIF could then begin to grow to the glory of the Lord. Or you can get behind the calling that God has given me to live a sacrificial life unto Him, to win people to faith in Christ and to disciple them into Christ-likeness.

Satan's strategy throughout the ages, has been to divide and conquer. He is doing that very same job here within Valley Isle Fellowship. I do not want and will not fight you. I am determined to love you as I continue to do what God is leading me to do. Even if I have to leave Valley Isle Fellowship, I will continue to love you and pray for you and even support you whenever the Lord gives me the freedom to. This is not a message of hate, rather it is a message of love. I love you and I am praying for you. God bless you and keep you.

National Collection Week November 18-25

How to pack your shoebox:

1. Use empty shoebox or small plastic container.
2. Determine whether gift for boy or girl.
3. Fill with gifts
4. Include \$7 donation per box
5. Place a rubber band around each box & drop off

Building a Church for the Generations & for the Cultures

1. A church that _____ rather than _____ the Generations - **Matthew 19:13-15**
 - a. brings _____ together
 - b. brings even _____ together (_____, _____, never _____)
 - c. brings the _____ together (from the _____ to the _____)
 - d. will _____ through the generations

2. A church that _____ Cultures - **Acts 2:5-6; Acts 2:7-11; Acts 2:14-16; Acts 2:41**
 - a. will _____ on scripture when culture _____
 - b. will _____ Culture according to _____
 - c. Culture refers to:
 - i. _____ and _____
 - ii. The _____, _____, and _____.

3. A church filled with the _____ of the Lord - **Psalms 19:14; 1 Peter 3:17; 1 Corinthians 2:3-5**
 - a. characterized by _____ at all costs
 - b. continually _____ over sin
 - c. continuously _____ for the Lord's _____
 - d. constantly _____ the _____ of the Holy Spirit
 - e. Always _____ to bring _____ and _____ to the Lord.

Notes:

CALENDAR

November

3 Sun ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i> ♦ 8am Service : Pastor Stephen ♦ 945am Service : Pastor Stephen ♥ 6pm Service : Pastor Stephen: Building a Church for the Generations & Cultures	17 Sun ♦ 8am Service : Pastor Jeremy - John 8:12-30 ♦ 945am Service : Pastor Jeremy - John 8:12-30 ♥ 6pm Service : Pastor Jeremy - Prayer that Changes the World
4 Mon ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i> ♥ 430-630pm: BWA Women's Prayer - Sanctuary	18 Mon ♥ <i>Operation Christmas Child Box Drop Off</i>
5 Tues ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i>	19 Tues ♥ <i>Operation Christmas Child Box Drop Off</i>
6 Wed ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i> ♥ 630pm: Youth Group - Sanctuary ♥ 7pm: Prayer Meeting in Annex	20 Wed ♥ <i>Operation Christmas Child Box Drop Off</i> ♥ 630pm: Youth Group - Sanctuary ♥ 7pm: Prayer Meeting in Annex
7 Thurs ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i> ♣ HPBC Annual Meeting (Oahu) ♣ 230pm: My Hope America (channel 51)	21 Thurs ♥ <i>Operation Christmas Child Box Drop Off</i>
8 Fri ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i> ♣ HPBC Annual Meeting (Oahu)	22 Fri ♥ <i>Operation Christmas Child Box Drop Off</i>
9 Sat ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i> ♣ 830pm: My Hope America (ABC Network)	23 Sat ♥ <i>Operation Christmas Child Box Drop Off</i>
10 Sun ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i> ♦ 8am Service : Pastor Darren - John 8:1-11 ♦ 945am Service : Pastor Darren - John 8:1-11 ♥ 6pm Service : Pastor Darren - Building a Church of Prayer	24 Sun ♥ <i>Operation Christmas Child Box Drop Off</i> Δ 9am Service : Pastor Darren
11 Mon ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i>	25 Mon ♥ <i>Operation Christmas Child Box Drop Off</i>
12 Tues ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip</i>	26 Tues
13 Wed ♣ <i>Two-Thirds World Mission Trip Team Returns</i> ♥ 630pm: Youth Group - Sanctuary ♥ 7pm: Prayer Meeting in Annex	27 Wed ♥ 630pm: Youth Group - Sanctuary ♥ 7pm: Prayer Meeting in Annex
14 Thurs	28 Thurs <i>Church Office Closed</i>
15 Fri	29 Fri
16 Sat ♥ 9am-12pm: G-Force at the Annex	30 Sat ♥ 9am-12pm: G-Force at the Annex

Legend

- ♦ Wailuku Elementary
- ♥ High Street Property
- ♣ Other Location
- Δ Waikapu Property

ANNOUNCEMENTS

11

Calling all women to the Annual Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer sponsored by the Women's Missionary Union (WMU) and the Maui County Baptist Association (MCBA), will be taking place on Monday, November 4th at the sanctuary at our High Street Property from 430pm until 630pm. You will have the opportunity to pray with sisters from other Baptist churches for sisters in other places around the world. Please save the date!

Calling All Students in Grades 1 to 5! - G-Force will meet on Saturday, November 16th from 9am-12noon at the annex. There will be a service project, Bible study, games & lunch.

Youth Fundraiser – Interested in supporting the Youth Ministry and helping the environment? The Youth are collecting empty ink cartridges or toners from your computer printer for recycling to support their various activities. You may drop off your empty cartridges in the lime green plastic bin by the door in the sanctuary.

Operation Christmas Child – Christmas is right around the corner and this year we are partnering again with Samaritan's Purse and thousands of churches across the globe, to send shoe boxes filled with toys, stuffed animals, school supplies and clothes to children around the world! You may never know the impact your shoebox will have on a child's life thousands of miles away from you but you can have confidence that the Lord has been using this ministry to reach children with the good news of Jesus Christ for 20 years and 100 million shoe boxes. Each box will be packed with a wonderful gospel tract that will share the good news of Jesus Christ and hand delivered by the local churches and missionaries around the world in some of the most closed societies to the gospel. So, please join us in this opportunity to share the love of Christ with a child this Christmas.

When is it due?

November 18-25

How can I get more information?

<http://www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/>

<http://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/frequently-asked-questions/>

Dear Valley Isle Fellowship,

On behalf of TwoThirds World Network and the mission team, thank you all for your encouragement, prayers, and support for the work being done in the Philippines. We truly are "Better Together" when seeking to obey God's call to be Ambassadors for Christ. We look forward to returning and sharing how God is moving. We humbly ask you continue to pray for us as we seek to minister in some very difficult circumstances.

In His Love,

Vince and Grace

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