

Practical Christian Living

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[0 : 00] We are at a crossroads at Christ Family Church. If we count leadership, the methodology, the way we do church, and the direction of the church, if we put all those together, then we've been around just for a little over two years.

I know some of you have been here a lot longer than that. Sid, Ruth, a couple others. But we count January 2009 as our birthday, if a church has a birthday.

We're almost halfway through our third year. And God is blessing us even through the summer, when if you would have asked us in March what summer would have been like, it wouldn't have been like this.

We thought May through July would be maybe 20, 30 people. And that's kind of been the last couple summers. So we're super excited about what God is doing and how He continues to amaze. Just the fact that Nathan and I have the ability alone to do any of this and be part of this is a sign of God's grace to us. First three years of a new church plant are an important time for several reasons.

[1 : 12] And I'm only going to give you two this morning. The first one is the newness starts to wear off. You buy a pair of jeans, you wear those jeans, you get holes in the jeans and then they're no good, except unless you buy jeans with holes in them and then they're perfect.

But with a church, the newness tends to wear off. Now, for us, there wasn't really newness. We didn't move from California.

God called us here and found a building and started a church and 300 people showed up. There wasn't this big, giant, good story to tell. But we now see how God has been doing some great things among us.

We must always be dependent on God and plead with Him to continue to bless here at Christ Family Church.

For a church, the newness sometimes tends to wear off and then people tend to leave. And, you know, you can just kind of fill in the blanks. The other reason is usually a church reaches a point between two and three years where more people need to be involved in ministry, serving and volunteering.

[2 : 24] Now, up to this point, the elders, the leaders, some people, the wives of those can handle most of what the needs are. But as the church grows, we come into a transition year or years, getting people in places, getting ministry set up, getting gifts matched up with what they're doing, what people are doing.

I'm getting, as Nathan said last week of you here, getting program, non-program started. It's just just a couple of reasons. With that said, this morning, I want to talk about this summer, the fall, the future of Christ Family Church by discussing a topic that many times have been mentioned in here at Christ Family Church.

And that is missional church. What is missional church? It's a word. Missional is a word that's thrown out a lot in evangelicalism. There's books written on it.

People blog about it. People start churches based on it alone. College Bible study is even doing a Bible study that that topic comes up a lot on Thursday nights.

The idea is nothing new. It's biblical. It is New Testament and it is Old Testament. Think of Abraham or Abram at the time where God told him to get up and go.

[3 : 45] Didn't tell them where, but to go. Missional is the idea that all of us, young and old, rich and poor, tall and short are all missionaries.

We are the sent ones. Turn to Matthew 28. You guys, if you know anything about our direction, you know where we're headed.

We're going to be in Matthew and then we're going to be in Titus. Matthew 28 is the last chapter of the book of Matthew. And at the end of the chapter, Jesus gives what we call the Great Commission to his disciples.

And he says, And Jesus came and said to them, Go, therefore, Another way to say it is, In your going.

Another way to say it is, As you go. We are the sent ones. We are the ones to go. Now, Jesus is speaking to his disciples, so you can make the argument that he's talking to his disciples and we aren't disciples.

[5 : 13] I'm sorry, you're wrong. If you are a Christian and you are his disciples, and this applies to you. This is what's so powerful about the Great Commission. Verse 18 says that, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Go, therefore. So, Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and earth. So, in light of that, now go. So, out of Christ, we go and we minister and we share the good news of the gospel.

Jesus gives them authority. And they go and reproduce followers of Christ. And if we go back, You and I are descendants of those disciples.

Okay? We are disciple descendants of the first 11 disciples. So cool. If you just think about it that way. Now, we can live on the legacy of these men by making disciples ourselves.

We must obey what Christ has told us. And here clearly, go. In your going, as you go, as you live your life, make disciples.

[6 : 21] So, when was the last time that you had an evangelistic conversation with someone? When was the last time that you talked about the gospel outside of this building or community group?

Now, these are questions that have to be asked. We have to ask these questions of ourselves. Of each other. If we are the sent ones. If we are to be missional.

To be missionaries. Then we have to look through that lens as we live. As we go. No matter where that is. We have to be like missionaries to a foreign land.

Even if we have been here our whole lives. We still have to act and live like missionaries. Being missional puts the emphasis on what happens outside of this building.

What happens outside of these 14 acres. Far more important than what happens in here. Our mission field is where we work.

[7 : 26] Where we live. Where we play. And is where we have been sent. So, now turn to Titus chapter 3. Titus chapter 3.

Paul lays out for Titus. What a healthy missional church looks like. It's right after the Timothys. Right before Philemon. In Titus chapter 1 is about qualified leadership. Guys who are in leadership positions must be qualified.

They must be placed there by God. So, you have to have the proper leadership. Now, qualified not in schooling or training. I'm one that's not been to seminary.

But in life. In integrity. Does their life match the qualifications of Titus 1 or 1 Timothy 3? Chapter 2 is about proper teaching.

[8 : 29] Sound doctrine. Is discipleship happening? Is the Bible being preached and taught? Or are all of us being tossed to and fro by every wind and doctrine as Paul writes to Timothy?

And then we come to chapter 3. Chapter 3 is all about missional living. Living as missionaries. Being the sent ones.

So, let's read chapter 3. We're going to skip a couple verses. And then we'll dig in. Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities.

To be obedient. To be ready for every good work. To speak evil of no one. To avoid quarreling. To be gentle. And to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

For we ourselves were once foolish. Disobedient. Led astray. Slaves to various passions and pleasures. Passing our days in malice and envy. Hated by others.

[9 : 29] And hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared. He saved us. Not because works done by us in righteousness.

But according to His mercy. By the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. Whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior. So that being justified by His grace.

We might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy. And I want you to insist on these things. So that those who have believed in God.

May be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. But avoid foolish controversies.

Genealogies. Dissensions and quarrels about the law. For they are unprofitable and worthless. As for a person who stirs up division. After warning him once and then twice.

[10:26] Have nothing more to do with him. Knowing that such a person is warped and sinful. He is self-condemned. Down to verse 14. And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works.

So as to help cases of urgent need. And not be unfruitful. All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.

Now this chapter is very practical. For writing of Paul. Paul. It is very practical and very clear. There is not a lot of hidden meanings here.

So these. I think I have five points. Nothing special. Nothing deep about them. Very very practical and applicable to our lives. To be missional. To live a missional life.

To be a missionary. The first thing we have to be is a good citizen. And that is found in verse 1.

Have to be a good citizen. Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities.

[11:30] To be obedient. To be ready for every good work. No matter what side of the fence you fall on. Okay. This world is full of division.

So no matter what side you fall on. Democrat. Republican. Right wing. Left wing. Conservative. Liberal. Doesn't matter. There is division. And there are a lot of people who think the answer to. Is to just reject the rule. Reject the rulers. Fight for freedom. Those in charge. Forget them. With that thought. In Matthew 22.

The Pharisees come to Jesus. Now the Pharisees thought. That the Messiah was going to come. And they were going to save. The Messiah was going to save them from this. Rule. That they were under.

From Rome. And the Pharisees thought. Okay. Let's try to trick Jesus. So they asked him a question. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar. Or not.

[12:31] And thinking that. That if Jesus claims to be the Messiah. If he claims to be God. If he claims not to be of this world. Then he'll answer. Blaspheming Caesar.

And then they could turn him in. And it's said that they marveled at his response. Jesus says. Whose likeness and inscription is this?

And they answered him. Of course. That it's Caesar. Therefore. Render to Caesar. The things that are Caesar's. And to God. The things that are God's. In other words. Submit to the rulers.

And the authorities. God has placed the kings. He has put them in power to rule. So whether you are under suffering. Or in plenty.

God will be just in the end. Right now. Our job is to submit. To those authorities. This word of submission. Is a military term.

[13:30] Lining up under the direction. Of the person in charge. So in this context. It's a perfect fit. We are to line up underneath. The leaders that God has put there.

Being missional. Accepts the leaders. And we know that God is sovereign. And he has put them there. Being missional. Missional.

Accepts the leaders. They may be right. They may be wrong. They may be left wing. They may be right wing. But we accept them. As our leaders. And Jesus knew.

When they asked him the question. He knew who Caesar was. He knew about the taxes. He knew about how. How much he wasn't a people leader. Caesar was.

Was all about Caesar. He knew that. And he still said. Render to Caesar. What is Caesar?

Missional living is about. Seeing the world. Through a different lens.

[14:24] Now it doesn't mean. We accept injustice. We fight injustice. It doesn't. We help those who are affected. In injustice. It doesn't mean. We don't love the homeless.

We fight for the homeless. It doesn't mean. We accept abortion. We fight against it. And we vote against it. But all of that. Is done. Under the submission. To authorities.

And rulers. We pay our taxes. We don't cheat. On our taxes. We vote. We support. The city officers. We pray. For the leaders. You love the city.

By loving the leaders. By supporting the leaders. And by submitting. To the leaders. So not only.

Are we a good citizen. But we're also. A good neighbor. Look at the second part.

Of verse one. And then verse two. Says. To be ready. For every good work. To speak evil. Of no one. To avoid quarreling.

[15:20] To be gentle. And to show perfect courtesy. Toward all. People. We have a message. That needs to be proclaimed. We have a sermon.

That needs to be preached. But no one will listen. If we are jerks. In the community. And to our neighbors. When was the last time. That you did something. For a neighbor.

Without wanting. Or expecting something. In return. Now. That's. That's. That's. That's a hard question. To answer. It's a hard question. To be asked.

And I'm asking it. And I want you to know. That I've already asked myself. That question. When was the last time. That you were willing. To do that. Living.

As a missionary. Not only must be nice. We must not. Not only be nice to people. But we also. Must know. The people. We must know. Our neighbors. Know those around us.

[16:16] To speak evil of no one. Avoid quarreling. Does your mouth have a filter on it? Does your brain have a filter on it?

Do you go out of your way. To argue? Do you gossip. And slander people? Now. If God sent you. If you left. Dahlonega. Georgia. And God was sending you.

To the Sudan. In Africa. As a missionary. You are not going to go. And talk negative. About the people there. You're not going to start. Calling names.

And talking negative. About the way things are done. And you're going to go there. And you're going to love people. And you're going to be part of the community. And you're going to try to help that. So why are we doing anything different.

Here. If we are missionaries. Here. Then we must live the same way we would. In Sudan. Or in New Zealand. Or in Australia. Or in wherever. That is.

[17:12] We've. We've romanticized these. Big trips that we take. When here. We're called just as much as we're called to there. It says be gentle.

A fruit of the spirit. And listed in Galatians 5. Another word for gentleness. Is considerate. We should be willing to defer to others. Even if that means to lose status.

Or the upper hand. We like the upper hand. To show perfect courtesy towards all people. Another way that is said.

Is show true humility. This means that we have the willingness. And ability to look to the needs. And desires of others. Do you look to others. And try to fill their needs.

Are you selfless? This. It says. Toward all people. Now this is not hyperbole.

[18:13] Paul's not exaggerating. When he says all people. He means. All people. Christian. Non-Christian. Mission of living is centered on a greater good.

A life that speaks to the lost around us. With word. And with deed. To all people. Now we've all been. Everybody in here has been to either a coffee shop.

Or a restaurant. Okay. I can safely say that. Do you care more about the ingredients. And the way that the barista is making your coffee.

Or do you care more about the barista. Her himself. Do you care more about the food. That is being provided for you. Or do you care more about the server. Who brought it to you.

Here's some. Let me find it. Here's some practical. Practical ideas for living missionally. By being a good neighbor. Okay. This is from Jonathan Dodson.

[19:15] Who's lead pastor in Austin. Texas. At a church that he planted a few years ago. Says. Eat with non-Christians. Do you eat with non-Christians.

Do you have lunch with your co-workers. Do you invite neighbors over for family dinner. Do you cook out and invite Christians and non-Christians.

Says. We have to flee the Christian subculture. Okay. Now I don't know if this applies to a lot of us. Maybe some of you college students. And maybe somebody in here lives really close to town.

Walk. Don't drive. Walk places. Say hello to people you don't know. Strike up conversations. Take interest in your neighbors.

Now you certainly can walk around your neighborhoods. Be a regular. Instead of hopping all over the city for gas and groceries. And haircuts.

[20:12] And eating out. Be a regular somewhere. Smile. Ask questions. Build relationships with people. Be a regular. Talk. Talk.

This made me laugh. Talk to your co-workers. It made me laugh because. I put blinders on when I get to work. I mean. I only work with one person. Then that's me. So it would be kind of weird if I talk to myself.

But if I've got something. If I've got a task at hand. I'm headed at that task. And only that task. So I tend to not talk to people. I just want to go and get it done. And you know.

People have problems and issues. And then they make your life a little more difficult. And talk to your co-workers. Take your breaks with intentionality. Show interest in them.

Take your breaks with intentionality. Participate in city events. Go to fundraisers and festivals. Cleanups. Summer shows and concerts.

[21 : 09] Study the culture. Pray for the city. And then lastly. Serve your neighbors. Help a neighbor by weeding. Mowing. Building.

Building a cabinet. Fixing a car. Serve your neighbors. Simple ways of being a good neighbor. Let me be straight with you though.

These are great ideas. These are great things to be done. But if we're not people of integrity. Meaning our talk and our walk line up.

Then they're worthless. Then they speak more to our depravity. Than they do to the gospel. They speak more to how bad we are. Than how good God is. Our words must line up with our actions.

Inside. And out. So. We're supposed to be a good citizen. But not only a good citizen. A good neighbor. Next.

[22 : 11] We're supposed to do good works. Let's look at the second part of verse 8. We'll read verse 8. Verse 14. But kind of highlight the second parts of these verses.

Now of course. All of this. That I've kind of. Given you. Has been good works. They've been good things. But look at verse 8. And verse 14. Says the saying.

The saying is trustworthy. And I want you to insist. On these things. So that those. Who have believed in God. May be careful. To devote themselves. To good works.

These things. These things are excellent. And profitable. For people. Now good works. Is a theme. That is repeated. Throughout Titus. Chapter 2.

Verse 7. Chapter 2. Verse 14. Chapter 3. Verse 1. Verse 8. Verse 14. All use this term. I didn't expect you guys. To write that down. All.

[23 : 07] Of those. Use. This term. Good works. Paul knows. The need. For missional people. To do good. As well as be good. Here's the good news.

Ephesians 2. 10. Says. For we are his. Workmanship. Created. In Christ Jesus. For good works. Which God. Prepared. Before him. That we.

Should walk in them. So God. Has. Created us. To do good works. He has made us. And he's. Prepared it. Before him. That we should. Walk in them. Now.

I've. Touched on this. Already. But one thing. I want you to see. Is that. The end of verse 8. Says. All people. Says. All people. Devote themselves. To good works.

These things are excellent. And profitable. For all. People. Or for. People. Christian. And Muslim. Doesn't matter. Democrat.

[24 : 01] And Republican. Verse 14. Says. And let our people. Learn to devote themselves. To good works. So as to help. Cases. Of urgent need.

And not be unfruitful. Cases. Of urgent need. How many cases. Do you know of? Are you asking? Am I asking?

Cases. Of urgent need. And it says. Good works. So that. We. Would not be. Unfruitful. Living. Missional lives. Changes. Everything. No longer. Can we just coast. We must do. For the sake. Of the people. Around us. For the sake. Of the community.

And for the sake. Of the gospel. So not only. Are we supposed. To do good works. We're also supposed. To have a good head. On our shoulders. Verse 9.

[24 : 58] Look at verse 9. It says. But avoid. Foolish controversies. Genealogies. Dissensions. And quarrels. About the law. For they are unprofitable. And worthless.

Now Crete. Is where Titus is. And at this time. A pretty large problem. With false teachers. The teachers arose. They arose. Out of the church. In Crete.

And just started teaching. Things that were a little off. They were in one of two camps. They either added to the gospel. Which means. For example. Would be. Gospel plus circumcision.

Or gospel plus. Following or obeying the law. Galatians. Is all about. Fighting against that teaching. You need to obey the law.

Also. Along with Jesus. Jesus is good. But you also need. The other camp though. Are people who take away. From the gospel. Those who believe the gospel.

[25 : 53] But. But say that it's too harsh. They say that. That they need to soften it. Because. So the hearers. To follow. They say that it's too brutal.

It's too bloody. It's too serious. It needs to be sugar coated. Or softened a little bit. Look at Titus chapter 1. Verse 10 and 11. It says.

For there are many. Who are insubordinate. Empty talkers. And deceivers. Especially those. Of the circumcision party. They must be silenced.

Since they are upsetting. Whole families. By teaching. For shameful gain. What they ought not. To teach. They are teaching.

For shameful gain. They did this. For personal gain. So Paul tells Titus. Tells the elders. And to the church. In chapter 3. To avoid. Foolish controversies.

[26 : 49] To turn from them. To walk the other direction. He puts a seriousness. To even entertaining. The conversation. So not only. Don't have the conversation.

Of controversies. But don't even entertain them. Don't even. Think about them. Genealogies. You see. Another. Next thing on the list is. But avoid foolish controversies.

Avoid genealogies. Now he's speaking of the genealogies in scripture. Now. Paul is not discounting. Genealogies. Matthew chapter 1.

Starts off. By saying. Matthew. The genealogy of Jesus Christ. The son of David. The son of Abraham. He's not saying. They're not good. There's good things in them. But.

These people were wasting their time. Trying to interpret them. When there really wasn't anything to interpret. So they were wasting their time.

[27 : 45] On something. Way over here. And ignoring the gospel. The word dissensions. In verse 9.

The next word. Dissensions. Do you know anyone who argues about everything? And anything? They just love to argue. Now I'm. I'm a product of that.

I have two brothers and a sister. We're two years apart. We argued about everything. To the point now. I kind of enjoy arguing with them. Just about anything. And. My wife has called me out on it. Several times. And said. You're. You're being. You're being an idiot. You're just arguing. Just argue. And I'm glad she has. I'm glad. It's part of God's sanctification. I'm glad she has.

Called me out on it. But do you know. People like that. These people will disagree. Just to disagree. And within the church and community.

[28 : 41] Is not beneficial for anyone. Or any message. In fact. Paul says. At the end of verse 9. Says. For they. This list.

Are unprofitable. And worthless. To live a missional life. A life as a missionary. We must know the truth.

Avoid the false teaching. By not allowing them. Into the church. To teach. Clear. You guys would all agree with that. Whether you. You believe. Half of what I'm saying or not. You would say.

Let's avoid false teachers. In the church. But here's the thing. You can only avoid something. Either. If you either know the truth. To combat.

The teaching. Or you know the counterfeit message. It's one or the other. You either. Know the truth. Or you know the counterfeit message. That they're trying to. Teach.

[29 : 38] The problem with the latter. Problem with. With knowing the counterfeit message. Is how many counterfeit messages. Do you have to know. I mean. How many false teachings.

Are there. Out there. Now. Some of you have heard. This illustration before. One of the ways. That the. A bank. Will train its tellers. Is not to show them. A lot of counterfeit bills.

Because there's probably. Thousands of different. Options out there. They'll show them. The real. 50 or 100. Or whatever it is. And they'll make them know it. Back and front.

Left and right. Everything about it. So that when they see something counterfeit. They know exactly what it is. It's counterfeit. And let's put it aside. This is wrong. This is not the true.

Dollar bill. Or a hundred dollar bill. Likewise. We have to know the truth. And how do we do that? Found in verse 3 through 7. And that's the final point.

[30 : 34] For a missional life. We have to have. Or we have. A good. Message. Verse 3 through 7. Paul says. For we ourselves were once foolish.

Disobedient. Led astray. Slaves to various passions and pleasures. Passing our days in malice and envy. Hated by others. And hating one another. But when the goodness.

And loving kindness of God. Our Savior appeared. He saved us. Not because of works done by us. In righteousness. But according to his home mercy. By the washing.

Of regeneration. And renewal of the Holy Spirit. Whom he poured out on us richly. Through Jesus Christ our Savior. So that being justified by his grace. We might become heirs.

According to the hope. Of eternal life. Now Paul. Always. Most of the time. Gives you. The indicative. Gives you.

[31 : 30] Who God is. And what God has done. Followed by the imperative. What we are to do. In light of that. Okay. So. Who God is. Then he follows it with. What we're to do. Ephesians is usually the go to example.

The first three chapters. Are who we are in Christ. The last three chapters. Are what are we going to do. In light of that. Okay. Here. Paul kind of throws it in the middle. He gives us to do. In the first two verses.

To do. In the last few verses. And in the middle. Gives us the indicative. What God has done. So. In verse three. He tells us who we are.

Or who we were. Before Christ. For we were ourselves. Once foolish. Disobedient. Led astray. Slaves.

To various passions. And pleasures. Passing our days. In malice. And envy. Hated by others. Hating one another. Horrible people. Wretched.

[32 : 26] Verse four. Tells us what God did. But when the goodness. And loving kindness. Of God. Our Savior. Appeared. Verse five. Says. He saved us. Not because of works.

Done by us. And righteousness. But according to his own mercy. By the washing. And region. Of regeneration. And renewal. Of the Holy Spirit. God did that for us.

Six and seven. Tells us why. Whom he poured out on us. Richly. Poured out on us. Richly. Through Jesus Christ. Our Savior. So that being justified.

By his grace. We might become heirs. According to the hope. Of eternal life. If I can become an heir. You can become an heir. If you can become an heir.

Then you can become an heir. And if you guys can become heirs. Then they can become heirs. Anybody around us. Those you work with. Those you live next to.

[33 : 23] Those you walk down the street with. Can become heirs. And that's the point. We have a message to tell. We have this great message to proclaim.

In 2 Corinthians chapter five. Paul says. In verse 11. He says. Therefore. Knowing the fear of the Lord.

We persuade others. Knowing the fear of the Lord. We persuade others. We. Guide them. We push them. We prod them. We try to talk them into.

This message. And seeing it. What is this? The fear of the Lord. What is this truth. That he's speaking of. Eternal.

God is made with hands. Eternal. A house. Made with hands. Eternal. In the heavens. He who has prepared us. For this very thing. Is God. Who has given us the spirit.

[34 : 24] As a guarantee. God has done. A lot. For us. We. Have this message. To share. And we must persuade. People. Verse 14.

Of 2nd Corinthians 5. Says. For the love of Christ. Controls us. For the love of Christ. Compels us. Is another way to say it. Let us.

Let the love of Jesus. Control us today. Now. I know. That some of these things. That were said.

This morning. Have been hard. They've been hard. For me. To even.

Think about this week. And. And. Write down. They're not easy. I mean. To shake up.

Or challenge. The way that we live. Is not. It's not enjoyable. But we're called. To do it. We're called. To be different.

[35 : 21] We're called. To look. Through a different lens. Friends. And the gospel. And the love of Jesus. Compels us. To do so. Compels us.

To go. As we go into a time. To celebrate. What Christ has done for us. And I ask the guys. To come up. And get ready. For the Lord's Supper. As we.

As we celebrate. This. Let it be done. In reverence. Not in foolish pride. There. There are some. In this room. That.

That maybe need to repent. Of some things. Eating of the cracker. Jesus's body. And drinking of the grape juice. Jesus's blood.

Is to be done with clean hands. And pure hearts. So examine yourselves. This morning. And when you are ready. When God tells you.

[36 : 14] You are ready. Partake of this glorious celebration. Let me pray. Let me pray.