

Our Purpose

Acts 17:27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

I. Restore Our Vision

A. Our field

1. Sunday night, I spoke to the church on Restore Our Vision. It is time to recapture our 2021 Field Focus, to remind us of what we are called to do, to refocus on the vision of who we are and what our purpose is as a church.
2. I feel the Spirit telling us, it is time to restore our vision so we can see the victory God has chosen us for at such a time as this.
3. As Jesus began His ministry, it brought a clash between Him, as the Lord of Glory, and the former dictator of evil:

Luke 11:20 But if I with the finger of God

cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

4. And the kingdom of God is still expanding by the church taking up the battle for the kingdom in their cities all over the world: *Matt 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*
 5. The field God has placed us in, our community of Brazil, from Terre Haute to Green Castle, from Carbon to Center Point, is our field of focus.
 6. Our theme for this year is **[image: 2021 Field Focus]**.
- B. Our Year of Jubilee
1. And an interesting fact that we need to grasp is that the Brazil UPC was founded in 1971 sometime in August.

2. So as of next month, our church will be 50 years old, which makes it our Year of Jubilee.
3. Ancient Israel celebrated the year of Jubilee every 50 years where liberty was proclaimed:
*Lev 25:10 And **ye shall hallow the fiftieth year**, and **proclaim liberty throughout all the land** unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall **return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.***
4. And in the 50th year, possession of fields that had been lost due to hardship sales or injustice, were redeemed and returned to their owners.
5. I feel that in 2021-2022, we can pray that the principles of the Year of Jubilee will apply to our field, and God's redemption will return rightful ownership of this field back to Him, and family reunion!

6. Our **field vision** had been laid aside because of the surrounding enemies of the coronavirus, fear, and isolation, but now must be restored in our Year of Jubilee so we can **redeem the field**.
- c. Our strategic focus
 1. Our strategic priorities, endangered kids and youth, those enslaved by a lifestyle of drugs, and feeding the poor, are visions that must be revived.
 2. It is time to refocus, regroup, and relaunch our mission, our field vision, in our year of jubilee.
 3. We will be announcing a period of fasting and prayer in the month of August, asking the church to help us grasp the vision for our city.
 4. During our time of fasting and praying, we will be asking you to pray for God's direction and blessing on the strategic

focuses for the kingdom of God He has called us to.

5. And as you fast and pray, I will ask that you participate in the vision of the BUPC and write down and submit ideas for ways we can minister to our church and to our community that we can consider for implementing.
6. Secondly, I am also asking that some of you consider consecrating your life more wholly to the Lord, and participating in ministry opportunities in the church.
7. Our ladies' and men's ministries need volunteers for projects they want to implement.
8. The music department needs musicians and singers.
9. Our media department needs helpers in the sound booth.
10. The children's and youth departments need teachers and teacher's assistants. You notice we had to change the format of VBS

this year, and that was partly due to fewer volunteers.

11. And I need to say that anyone who works with children or youth must, in addition to a godly consecration, be able to pass a background check and drivers pass a driving record check.
12. This is our Year of Jubilee and it is time to restore our vision of what the purpose of our church is, and then get on board to help make that vision a reality.

II. Our Purpose

A. Prevail

1. And part two of this message is address why we are at this task in the first place.
2. What makes the church something worthy of promoting in such a way? Why make such a big deal about it?
3. Think about this: If it was not for the church in town, what would be lacking? And with the church in town, what do we provide?

4. First of all, the church is God's church, not ours.
5. When Peter got the revelation of who Jesus was, the Christ, the Son of God, Jesus commended him for that vision.

Matt 16:15-17

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

*16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the **Christ**, the **Son of** the living **God**.*

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

6. Peter had received a revelation from God about what Jesus was here for.
7. The title, "Son of God" refers to God coming in human flesh—God in a human body.
8. And the title, "Christ," referred to His role as a Savior of the world who came to bear the sins of the world on Himself as a

sacrifice for sin. That referred to Jesus' role as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

9. And after Peter demonstrated an understanding of Jesus' purpose in coming, Jesus announced that very truth was the foundation upon which He was going to create and build something special on earth:

Matt 16:18-19

*18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and **upon this rock I will build my church**; and **the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.***

*19 And I will give unto thee the **keys of the kingdom of heaven**: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

10. And as I said earlier, our role is to expand the kingdom of heaven with the keys God has given us.

11. Jesus' death and resurrection is a key that unlocks the kingdom, and we as the church, are the valiant warriors who will take the kingdom by force.
12. The gates of hell will not prevail against the church, but the church will prevail against the gates of hell.
13. How does that happen?
 - B. Pull out of the fire
 1. It is when the church, putting on a godly compassion, seeks to spread the light, the love, and grace and mercy of God into our city, so we can make a difference here.
 2. Notice how Jude, the brother of the Lord, described the work of the church:

Jude 21-23

*21 Keep yourselves in the **love of God**,
looking for the **mercy of our Lord Jesus**
Christ unto eternal life.*

*22 And of some have **compassion, making a**
difference:*

*23 And others **save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.***

3. This is where we get the idea of loving the sinner and hating the sin.
 4. Compassion drives us to make a difference by spreading the love of God and the mercy of the Lord Jesus to those “spotted by the flesh.”
 5. That refers to those who walk in fleshly lusts and who participate in sinful acts.
 6. The church hates the sin for what it does to its victims.
- c. If not for the church
1. James said when sin is finished, it brings forth death.
 2. Paul said the wages of sin is death.
 3. Sin puts people in deadly bondage and according to the Book of Revelation, all sin will be cast to the Lake of Fire.

4. Let me read two passages that speak of that dreadful fate that awaits participants of sin:
Rev 20:13-15
13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.
14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.
5. *Rev 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*
6. Since that is what the end result of sin is, the lake of fire, and since sin's bondage even creates a hell on earth for its

prisoners, what is the church supposed to be doing according to Jesus?

7. The gates of hell will not prevail against the church, but since the gates of hell will prevail against sin, it is up to the church to use the keys of the kingdom to loose on earth those who have been bound by sin.
8. Let me read again what Jude said about the purpose of the church:

Jude 21-23

*21 Keep yourselves in the **love of God**, looking for the **mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ** unto eternal life.*

*22 And of some have **compassion, making a difference**:*

*23 And others **save with fear, pulling them out of the fire**; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*

9. So why should we be making a big deal about promoting the church in the community? So that we can make a

difference; so we can pull some out of the fire.

10. Not just by offering a meal to the hungry children and youth who come through our doors, and not just in offering groceries to families (which we hope to get restarted on a regular and continual basis), and not just teaching a class a curriculum on substance abuse recovery, but by literally pulling them out of the fire.
11. Sin has eternal, deadly consequences. And it is only the voice of the church that is left in this world that has that message to proclaim.
 - D. Is it hate or love?
 1. And the while the world may criticize the church, calling that a message of hate, and calling the church haters, it is in reality, the greatest form of love to proclaim the Savior of the world who came to die for sin.

2. And Jesus, the Redeemer, is the One who came to offer the sinner mercy that forgives sin through baptism in the name of Jesus, and offers the gift of the Holy Ghost that transforms a person from the inside from being a sinner into a saint.
3. Not in a vain, arrogant, and judgmental way, but in a humble, grateful, and thankful way.
4. Jesus did not place His church in the world to condemn the world. Jesus said:
John 3:17-18
17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.
*18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but **he that believeth not is condemned already**, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*
5. Those without God are condemned already, and they feel the judgment of that

condemnation without having to be told that.

6. That is the inner condition of their soul.
- E. The message of love and hope
1. And that is why in the verse that precedes this, Jesus said:

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

2. And just a few verses earlier, Jesus more fully described what it meant to believe in him so they could enter the kingdom of God:

*John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be **born of water [baptism in Jesus' name] and of the Spirit [receiving the Holy Ghost]**, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

3. And that is the message Jesus placed His church on earth to proclaim.

4. That is why it is called the Good News.
 5. The earth would be doomed to bad news only without the message of Jesus Christ offering everlasting life.
 6. Life that begins right now. And then in the resurrection that is to come, Jesus will make all things right. There is a time of rewards and judgments where the righteous of the ages will be rewarded, all the injustices this earth has ever experienced, will be made right.
 7. That is a message about good news that is worth proclaiming.
- III. The godless alternative to the church
1. Because the other reigning theory among the atheists is that there was no God who created all that is and certainly there is no plan for redemption to be expected.
 2. Their believe is that the universe and earth and life on earth was purely a result of random, accidental, purposeless

interactions between gravity and chemicals (they don't know where the gravity and chemicals came from) that through natural processes (they are unsure how there was a process without it being designed) generated the highly complex laws of physics.

3. And those natural laws of physics, through eons of time, created stars, and eventually through eons of time, those stars exploded and generated new chemicals and matter.
4. And eventually over eons of time, gravity, physics, and matter all came together to form planets.
5. And somehow on just one of those planets, randomly and accidentally, all the right ingredients collocated at a place in just the right environment that randomly formed, which caused those nonliving chemicals to spring to life.
6. And among those chemicals was the miraculously complex molecule we know as

DNA formed. And that DNA molecule self-created a highly complex series of chemical and digital programming steps that could reproduce itself with an exact replica over and over so that it could ultimately perform all the steps necessary to create living organisms.

7. Their theory is that it was simple at first, then through environmental necessity, it began to recreate itself into more and more complex organisms that succeeded in the environment, and ultimately, through these purely accidental and natural processes, formed plants, animals, and humans.
8. According to this theory, everything that exists came about without a Designer. And since life was random and accidental, meaning we are also here merely as an accidental consequence of nature, there is no such thing as human purpose.

9. And love? That is merely an illusion produced by chemicals that interact with neurons in the brain.
10. And joy? Again, that is caused by chemical reactions brought about by secretions of enzymes from various glands in the body.
11. And hope? There is no such thing as a soul or hope when we are merely biochemical machines living with an illusion of purpose and destiny, whose meaningless end is to dissolve among the other chemicals in the ground.
12. First of all, that theory requires a lot more faith than it does to believe:
Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth.
13. And also, of the creation of His crown jewel:
Gen 1:27-28
27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
28 And God blessed them, and God said

unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

14. I'd rather put my faith in God as Designer and Creator. It requires less faith than does the theory of godless evolution.
15. And that theory cannot offer or explain hope or purpose, and certainly no redemption, because according to that system of belief, there is no such thing as sin so there is no need for redemption.
16. In that view, we are no different from a worm or a ragweed.
17. But what the church offers is to this world is a Savior and Redeemer who loves us and created us with purpose.

IV. Conclusion

1. I want to close with a story about an encounter between a preacher of the

gospel of Jesus, and some intellectuals who had their own theories about god, and in fact were devoted to many gods, yet the true God was unknown to them.

2. Yet even in their ignorance of Him, they still erected an altar to Him:

Acts 17:23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

3. You see in a world that has many gods and many idols, there is still something significant missing from that picture.

4. But an altar is meaningless without **knowing the God of the altar**. And Paul sought to declare Him.

Acts 17:27-28

*27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:
28 For in him we live, and move, and have*

our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

5. *1 Cor 9:13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are **partakers with the altar?***
6. The church offers the opportunity for people to become partakers of the altar so they can find their purpose.