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The Mission

2 Thessalonians 2.16-17

Series: The Pure Gospel

Rev. Andrew Hawkins, Ph.D.

The Village Church

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I. **The Mission Context**

- A. It was almost 10 years ago that The Village Church adopted our mission statement
 - 1. **We are building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ**
- B. It was the fruitful result of several years of study in which we recognized the overall mission of the Church of Jesus Christ
 - 1. **Matthew 28:18–20** (ESV) —
 - a. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
 - b. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
 - c. 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
 - 2. That text is perhaps best known as The Great Commission
 - a. The final and primary mission Jesus gave to the Church just before His ascension into heaven
 - b. Where He sits in the seat of authority
- C. Our purpose in the process was to seek to faithfully apply that mission in this particular community
 - 1. A community of seniors, the majority of whom are said to be “retired”
 - a. (Though you wouldn’t know it by the level of activity around here!)
 - 2. A community of people from a variety of backgrounds, spiritually and otherwise
 - a. Even in this room today, our congregation comes from more than 25 different Christian denominations
 - 3. A community of people who all have a story
 - a. People often ask me what it was like coming from a university community, with all of the young people, to a retirement community
 - b. My answer is always the same – you people are much more interesting!
 - 4. A community of people who are discovering challenges in this stage of life
 - a. We’re all coming down the home stretch
 - b. And that affects our perspective

5. And yet a community of people who are surrounded by ministry opportunity
 - a. For there are many among us who don't yet know the Savior
 - b. Neighbors who have need caring touch of those who can be the hands and face of Jesus in times of need
- D. And the recognition of the nature of this community led us to embrace our mission
 1. We are building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ

II. **The Mission Core**

- A. The core of our mission statement consists of three essential dimensions of the Christian life
 1. They are essential, indeed, for every Christian and every church
 - a. But in light of the nature of our community, they are even more important
 2. The three elements of our core concern how we deal with our past, our present, and our future
 3. Forgiveness, purpose and hope
 - a. Forgiveness – how we deal with our past
 - b. Purpose – how we live in the present
 - c. Hope – what our expectations and anticipations are for our future
- B. **Forgiveness**
 1. We, first of all, seek to be a community of forgiveness
 2. That means two things actually
 - a. It means we are to be **a forgiven people**
 - b. And it means we are to be **a forgiving people**
 3. To be a forgiven people recognizes that there is a vertical dimension to our lives
 - a. Vertical, in that we earth-bound humans have a relationship with God in heaven
 - b. And that, as the Bible teaches, and as we know by experience, our natural state is to be at enmity with God
 4. **Ephesians 2:12** (ESV) —
 - a. 12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ,
 - b. alienated from the commonwealth of Israel
 - c. and strangers to the covenants of promise,
 - d. having no hope
 - e. and without God in the world.
 5. **Romans 3:10–12** (ESV) —
 - a. 10 as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one;
 - b. 11 no one understands;
 - c. no one seeks for God.
 - d. 12 All have turned aside;
 - e. together they have become worthless;

- f. no one does good, not even one.”
- 6. And yet, in spite of that desperate state of affairs, God was at work reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death and resurrection of His Son
- 7. **Colossians 2:13–14** (ESV) —
 - a. 13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh,
 - b. God made alive together with him,
 - c. having forgiven us all our trespasses,
 - d. 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.
 - e. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.
- 8. So, in Jesus Christ, God has provided for the forgiveness of all the sins of all those who believe in Him
 - a. And so we seek to build a community of people who have cast themselves on the mercy of Jesus Christ
 - b. And have discovered the forgiveness that can only come by believing in Jesus Christ
- 9. **Psalm 32:1–2** (ESV) —
 - a. 1 Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.
 - b. 2 Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.
- 10. That is the essence of being a forgiven people
- 11. But there is also the dimension of being a forgiving people
- 12. **Ephesians 4:32** (ESV) —
 - a. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted,
 - b. forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.
- 13. This the horizontal dimension of being a community of forgiveness
 - a. Person to person
- 14. It reflects Jesus own admonition when He taught us the Lord’s Prayer
- 15. **Matthew 6:12** (ESV) —
 - a. 12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
- 16. And then He says...
- 17. **Matthew 6:14–15** (ESV) —
 - a. 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,
 - b. 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
- 18. So being a forgiven people necessarily requires that we be a forgiving people
 - a. Forgiving of one another when we have disagreements
 - b. Forgiving of one another in our families when there is brokenness
 - c. Forgiving of one another when we have been wronged
- 19. Part of what I learned when I realized that everyone has a story

- a. Some of those stories involve heartache and brokenness
- b. Brokenness among family, especially
- 20. So, in both dimensions, there is a need to make sure, as we approach the finish line of life
 - a. That we have been afforded the opportunity to be forgiven by God through faith in Jesus
 - b. And that we have sought reconciliation with our family and friends – or enemies! – through Jesus Christ
- 21. As you read your annual report, you should note how gospel forgiveness weaves its way into our community
- 22. Just consider Alpha, which you will read about in the Christian Education Committee Report
 - a. Alpha is an introduction to Christianity for those who are seeking to understand the faith
 - b. 60 people took Alpha this year – and several have a new relationship with God through faith in Christ as a result
 - c. That is, they now belong to the community of forgiveness
 - d. And that’s just this year
 - e. We’ve been teaching Alpha for something like 20 years
 - f. And every year we’re having 50 or 60 attend – mostly when Christian friends bring their neighbors
- 23. And that’s just one ministry among many in which forgiveness is manifested in our community

C. **Purpose**

- 1. The second element in the core of our mission is purpose
- 2. This is a critically important dimension of our community
 - a. Because this is a senior community in which most are retired, purpose is one of our chief tasks
 - b. What got us up in the morning 10 or 15 years ago is in our rear view mirror
 - c. And most of us are wondering, “Now what?” “What’s my purpose now?”
- 3. So our mission is designed to help our people redefine our purpose in light of what Jesus would have for us
- 4. One of those ministries in which a number of folks have found new purpose is the Crossroads Prison Ministries
 - a. You’ll see references to Crossroads in the Benevolent Board report, as well as in Pastor Don’s report
- 5. Crossroads is a ministry in which more than 25 of our members mentor prison inmates who are involved in correspondence Bible studies
 - a. I think it’s safe to say that, with one exception, none of the folks who are serving as mentors were engaged in this ministry before coming to TVC

- b. But now, mature, godly believers are engaged in guiding young believers in a faith that has led to their life of forgiveness, purpose and hope
- 6. And of course, you all participate when you give to the Benevolent Fund
 - a. Crossroads Prison Ministries is one of six ministries that we support
 - b. Most of which involve our own people who are engaged in purposeful ministry
- 7. So, while forgiveness helps us deal with our past, purpose helps us redefine our present

D. **Hope**

- 1. The final element in the core of our mission is hope
 - a. Hope deals with our future
- 2. As we've observed, we're coming down the home stretch of life
 - a. We're all closer to eternity than we've ever been!
 - b. There are quite a few who are either in this room or watching on TV who, this time next year, will have entered eternity
- 3. What are our expectations?
 - a. Is it fear or faith?
 - b. Is it terror or trust?
- 4. Only in Jesus Christ can we have the glorious expectation of life in the presence of Christ
 - a. A life encompassed by love
 - b. A life embraced by an eternal community of love
- 5. Many of our ministries communicate this hope – the most notable is the Chaplaincy ministry
- 6. Garth Crundwell, the Director of Spiritual Services, directs our chaplaincy ministry
 - a. He'll share a highlight of his ministry in a little while
 - b. But he oversees a group of trained assistants who serve in the Larsen and in the Assisted Living Facilities
 - c. And it's an amazing ministry of hope to folks who are going through some of the most challenging times of life
- 7. I got to see much of their ministry first hand as we went through Hurricane Milton
 - a. I was sheltered in the Larsen where the ALF's were housed with the skilled nursing folks
 - b. Their circumstances are challenging enough; sheltering in a hurricane is even more challenging
 - c. Garth and his chaplains were exceptional in helping people to trust God with the hope of getting through the hurricane
 - d. And even more, helping folks prepare for the eternity will surely come

E. So the core of our mission is forgiveness, purpose and hope

1. Reading through the annual report is a testimony of the many ways in which TVC carries us
 - a. As we deal with our past
 - b. Engage in ministry in our present
 - c. And prepare for our future

III. **The Mission Champion**

- A. Now of course, nothing in that core has any value except in Jesus Christ
 1. He is our mission champion
- B. I use the term Champion purposefully
- C. **Hebrews 12:1–2** (ESV) —
 1. 1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
 2. 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
- D. Jesus is the “founder and perfecter” of our faith
 1. Founder is also translated “author” in some translations
 - a. “Captain” in one
 - b. And “champion” in another
 2. The word in Greek is **archegos (Gk)** which means “the first or foremost”
 3. In the Hebrews text, as founder and perfecter, He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end
- E. Our mission means nothing without our champion
 1. Our founder
 2. Our Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and King
- F. So everything that we are about, our forgiveness, purpose and hope, are all vested in Jesus Christ

IV. **The Mission Body**

- A. But finally, there is the mission body – which is the church
- B. None of this happens in isolation
 1. We are no islands unto ourselves
 2. We belong to one another
- C. We need each other
 1. We foster people connections
 - a. In ministries, working together
 - b. In studies, through our small groups
 - c. In gatherings, as a worshiping community
- D. As you read your annual report, don’t miss that it all revolves around people
 1. Leaders – elected and appointed
 2. Servants working behind the scenes
 3. Prayer warriors who carry us to the throne of grace

4. The entire report is a testimony of a community which embraces one another
- E. Certainly, one of the main ways that happens is through small groups and Bible studies
 1. Of which there are many at TVC
 2. Groups where the Word of God is engaged in community
 - a. Where people are prayed for and encouraged in the word
- F. We do it with Study with the Pastor
 1. In which more than 100 are engaged with me in using the same Bible Study devotional – Encounter with God through Scripture Union
 - a. And we gather once a month to share what God is teaching us
 2. A great way to build community together

V. Conclusion

- A. So, that's our mission
 1. **We are building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ**
- B. Ever since we embraced our mission, one of our dear saints, who is now with the Lord, has been writing hymns
 1. Pat Dys was using her poetic gifts long before that, composing hymn texts which she shared with her children and grandchildren – and many of you – over the years
 - a. A ministry of rich devotional content
 2. But one of the things Pat loved to do was write hymns in response to sermons and prayers
 - a. And she wrote a number of hymns following sermons preached on the mission of The Village Church
- C. One of those hymns was entitled **The Village Church United**
 1. It reflects all the elements of our mission
- D. We commissioned our own Jack Schrader to write an original composition to one of Pat's texts
 1. And he will now premier this work which expresses in song how God has led us in our mission
 2. Let's listen with gratitude to God for how He has blessed us