

# missionsmonth

## ADULT CONNECTION



## NOVEMBER 2017



Connected to Christ  
**150**  
Founded on the 150th anniversary of 1863

Donald J. Wills  
Senior Pastor

The purpose of First Baptist Church of Fort Worth is to **introduce** people into a loving relationship with Jesus, **instruct** them in spiritual growth through God's Word, **inspire** them to serve for God's kingdom, and **incorporate** them in authentic worship to glorify God.

## *A Note From Our Pastor*

Dear FBC family and friends,

For more than 150 years, we as First Baptist Church of Fort Worth have been on mission for Christ. It is first overwhelming that God would love us so much, that He gave His only begotten Son so that we could be reconciled to Him. Second, that He would entrust the mission of proclaiming this message to us for all the world. It is important for us to understand and see the grace of God that has been shed upon our hearts. When we do, we will see others as He sees them and will be on mission to share the message of His grace with them.

As a reminder, the layout of this Curriculum begins with a 7-day approach for both the teacher and the members to get the most from each study. We also acknowledge that teachers may have their own methods for preparing the lessons and we encourage them to prepare in the way that makes them most effective in presenting God's Word and the weekly lesson. We also encourage each teacher and member to use the suggested 7-day approach for their own personal study and encouragement.

This month evaluate how you participate in this mission. Who do you know that you can impact with this message of hope, love, forgiveness, and redemption? Make a list and pray for them by name and be intentional about sharing the good news.

-Blessings  
Pastor Don



## *Suggested Plan for Using this Bible Study Guide Effectively*

### *Introduce*

**Day 1:** Read and meditate on the Scripture, asking God to guide you throughout the week as you study His Word and allowing Him to speak to you through the Spirit. Read the **INTRODUCE** portion of the lesson commentary.

### *Instruct*

**Day 2:** Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and read the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary. Concentrate on memorizing the focal verse for that particular week.

**Day 3:** Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and answer the focal questions in the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary.

### *Inspire*

**Day 4:** Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and begin thinking about tangible ways you can incorporate the principles you learned in your daily life. Read the **INSPIRE** portion of the lesson commentary.

### *Incorporate*

**Day 5:** Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and apply the theological principle that you learned from this week in a tangible way. Use the **INCORPORATE** portion of the lesson commentary to guide you.

**Day 6:** Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and in the journal section describe how God allowed you to apply this passage in a real and tangible way this week.

**Day 7:** Review the Scripture and share with others in your Connect Class on Sunday morning at 9:30am. Be ready to share your experience about how God allowed you to apply the lesson for that week.

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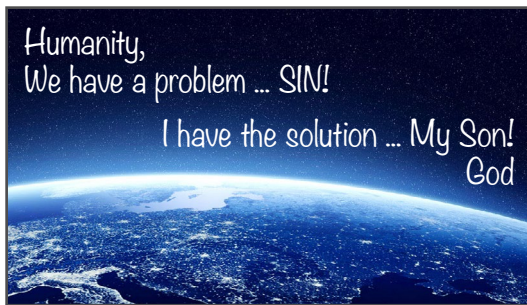


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*November 5, 2017*



# *Mission to Inform*

*Acts 2:1-41*

Focal Verse:

"We hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

Acts 2:11

## Introduce

During impending natural disasters, civil authorities and media outlets embark on a mission to warn people of the approaching danger. Living in Tornado Alley, a warm, humid afternoon in the Spring can induce severe weather of all types, but perhaps the most life-threatening phenomenon comes in the form of a tornado. The moment radar detects a developing

tornado meteorologists at the National Weather Service issue a warning and seek to alert the public. Cities in the path of the storm activate their outdoor sirens. Apps on cell phones receive the ominous message and begin to vibrate or sound an



alarm. All the local media, both television and radio, interrupt their normal broadcast schedule to keep everyone abreast of the situation. In fact, TV stations generally cover it from every angle, employing storm spotters, storm chasers, roving reporters situated throughout the area, and even helicopters with their HD video cameras capturing the cycle of the storm from birth to death. Because of the emergency, governments and media outlets attempt to use every resource available to warn the public and hopefully save lives.

Thus, the media has a mission to inform people about this potentially deadly weather, so they use every forum possible. However, it depends upon what the citizens do and how they respond to the information as to whether they will be safe, injured, or perhaps even killed. Some completely

## Introduce

ignore the warning and they go about their daily business un-phased. Others don't pay attention to the warnings until it's too late because they don't think that it will affect them. Still others, however, take the warning seriously and take measures to prepare by going into the safest place in their homes. Although going into the safest place is no guarantee that one won't be injured, nonetheless this person has heeded the warning and responded appropriately.

As Christians, we are on a mission to inform: sin leads to death and without Christ we have no hope for eternal life. Yet, we have a refuge and rock to Whom we can turn for salvation and security. Like the media, even though we have this message that will save lives, the response depends upon the individual person and what they decide to do with the information. Will they reject it and go about their lives unconcerned or will they repent and confess their sins to receive eternal life? Unlike the media, however, we have a guarantee of salvation and life when we turn to Christ. So, as followers of Christ, we have a mission to inform others using every means necessary to reach the world without changing the content of the gospel. In [Acts 2](#), the disciples embarked on such a mission to inform when the Holy Spirit miraculously empowered them to proclaim the gospel in many different dialects so that people could comprehend and respond to the message in their native language.

### Key Question

In what ways can we inform the world how to have eternal life through a relationship with Jesus Christ?



#### **THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT:**

Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He commanded the disciples to return to Jerusalem and wait for the manifestation or coming of the **Spirit** who would empower them to be witnesses who share the gospel to all the earth (see [Acts 1:4, 8](#)). On **the day of Pentecost**, the disciples were assembled together **in one place** and focused on their mission, being **in one accord** (v. 1). As they waited, a loud **sound suddenly came from heaven** like that of a **mighty, rushing wind** and **filled** the entire **house** (v. 2). Accompanying this **sound**, something described as **divided tongues of fire** appeared over each one of the disciples (v. 3). These two miraculous signs served as a symbolic representation of the Lord working through their lives to accomplish His purpose. First, it serves as a reminder as to the source of life that they now have through their relationship with Christ. The word Luke uses to describe the **wind** here in Acts 2:2 is the same word that the Greek translation of [Genesis 2:7](#) uses to describe the **breath** of life that God breathes into the nostrils of the first man. Thus, the presence of God's **Spirit** in our lives signifies the life that we have in Jesus Christ.

#### ***In-Depth Information***



*Pentecost refers to the Jewish celebration known as the Festival of Weeks. It occurs seven weeks or 50 days after the Passover (i.e. Easter) and celebrated the reaping of a bountiful harvest. In some Jewish traditions, it also became associated with the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai.*

## Instruct

Second, the **divided tongues of fire** represent God's empowerment of the disciples to impart the gospel; thus, it foreshadows their ability to speak the gospel with clarity in many known dialects—the reason why the tongues are described as **divided**. The imagery of **fire** has two primary functions: 1) to depict the presence of God and the continuation of Jesus' ministry through the disciples and 2) to warn of judgment through the gospel message to those who refuse to repent and surrender their lives to Christ.

Throughout the Old Testament, perhaps most notably at Mount Sinai with the giving of the law, God's presence is accompanied by fire (see [Exod 3:2, 13:21; 19:18-19](#)). With God's presence



dwelling in our lives, we can participate and continue the mission begun by Christ; therefore, John the Baptist explains, "He who is coming after me . . . will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and **fire**" ([Matt 3:11](#)). Consequently, the Holy Spirit is the presence of God in our lives and purifies us from our unrighteousness ([1 Peter 1:7](#)); He also empowers us to deliver the gospel to the nations ([Acts 1:8](#)). Although Jesus has instructed us not to condemn or be judgmental of others, those who rejected the gospel have condemned themselves already ([John 3:18](#)); therefore, inherent within the gospel is a message of judgment against those who refuse to repent. Both the Old and New Testaments use the imagery of **fire** to describe God's judgment of an unrepentant humanity

([Isa 4:4](#), [66:16](#); [2 Peter 3:7-12](#)). In this way, when the disciples speak the gospel through these **divided tongues of fire**, those who stand in opposition and refuse to heed the warning condemn themselves before the Lord and are subject to eternal punishment in the lake of **fire** ([Rev 20:14](#)).

In what ways does the Spirit demonstrate God's presence in our lives and help us continue the mission and ministry begun by Jesus?

Question  
# 1

### Acts 2:5-13

#### **THE MIRACLE OF COMPREHENSION:**

Because of **Pentecost**, **devout Jews** from **every nation** had gathered in **Jerusalem** to celebrate (v. 5). Although they were **Jews** according to their physical lineage, many of those in the city were not natives to the area, so they spoke other dialects as their first **languages**. When the commotion **occurred**, they ran to see what had happened, but **were confused** when they arrived to **hear** the disciples **speaking in their own native language** (v. 6). **Amazed**, the people who had gathered began to wonder how it was possible to **hear** them in their **own language**. Their disbelief stemmed from the fact that the disciples were native **Galileans** who were seen as uneducated and uncultured, lacking the intellect to speak in many other foreign languages. Despite this perception, every Jew who had assembled **heard** the disciples **speaking in the language in which they were born** (vv. 7-8). To emphasize the miraculous nature of this message, Luke lists at least fifteen regions present in the crowd that would have had different dialects as their native **language** (vv. 9-11a).

## Instruct

Although **amazed and perplexed**, the message which God spoke to the crowd was discernible because they recognized the content as describing **the wonderful works of God** (v. 11b). Even though the people understood the content of the message, they didn't quite know how to respond. Some of them began to question **whatever this meant** (v. 12) while others began to **mock** them, claiming that the disciples **were full of wine**—that is they were drunk (v. 13). However, this second charge doesn't make any sense because the content of the message was intelligible; therefore, it shows that some in the crowd simply didn't want to come to terms with what was being shared so they tried to find any means to dismiss it. In our world, many attempt to dismiss the message of God by making ludicrous charges by taking statements out of context, repeating flawed logic, or even failing to research or attempt to understand what God is saying through His message.



In what ways does our society attempt to dismiss the Word of the Lord? How should we respond to their charges?

Question  
# 2

The gift of speaking in tongues is often misunderstood today because people fail to read the entire context before forming their opinions about the theology. Our experience should not influence our theology, but our theology should determine and validate our experience. From this

passage, therefore, we can draw three clear conclusions about speaking in tongues. First, God uses tongues as a way to impart His message and inform unbelievers; notice that in this passage those outside of the group of the disciples benefited most from this event because **each one heard** the gospel in his **own** native **language**. In [1 Cor 14:22](#), Paul asserts, “Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers.” In this way, people can hear the gospel message in the **language** with which they are most comfortable, thereby reducing any misunderstanding resulting from translating or interpreting a language that’s not one’s first.

Why is it important that we critique or validate our experiences on Scripture and not use our experiences to form our theology?

Question  
# 3

The second principle logically follows the first; the tongues with which they spoke were known languages that were intelligible to the hearer—not incoherent babble which made no sense and communicates no message. In fact, any incoherent babble that does not make sense and cannot be interpreted is unbiblical and not from the Lord. Paul states, therefore, “If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret” ([1 Cor 14:27](#)). God advocates order and intelligence in the church and community, not chaos and confusion. The tongues spoken during **Pentecost** told a particular message to unbelievers which could be understood; this message pointed them into a relationship with the Lord.

Finally, the miracle that occurs in chapter two centers on the hearing of the message rather than the speaking. In verse 8, the people express

# Instruct

more amazement that they **heard** the message **in their own language** rather than at the fact that the disciples spoke. Too often, people focus primarily on the speaking in other languages and overlook the fact

that the message was heard or received by the audience; if the people in the audience could not understand the message, what good would it have done? Consequently, the miracle involves both



the speaking (i.e. communicating) and the hearing (i.e. understanding) of the gospel message. The primary purpose of speaking in other languages is to communicate the gospel, not as a sign of spirituality or even superiority; therefore, the message that God delivers through His servants must always be intelligible and understandable to the audience regardless of whether they accept it or reject it.

Why is it important to view speaking in tongues in terms of communicating to non-believers? Question # 4

# Acts 2:14-36

## THE MESSAGE DELIVERED TO THE PEOPLE:

**Standing** to address the audience that had gathered to witness the commotion, Peter stressed the importance of both hearing and responding (i.e. **heeding**) the **words** that he will now speak (v. 14). Reassuring them that the disciples were **not drunk as they supposed**

because it was only 9:00 am, he began to communicate God’s word and explain the way of **salvation** through Jesus Christ. Using [Joel 2:28-32](#), Peter outlines how God instituted a new era of salvation through His people by describing the Lord’s *presence* with them, His *proclamation* through them, His *punishment* of wickedness, and His *preservation* offered to all people.

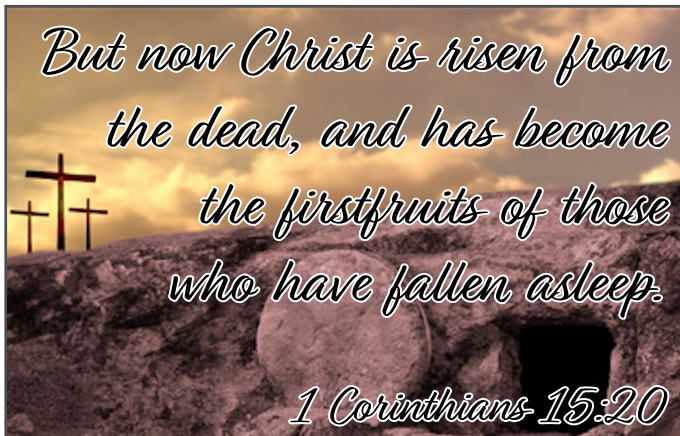
First, Peter notes that **in the last days God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh**—particularly His **menservants** and **maidservants** (vv. 17a, 18a). The manifestation of the **Spirit** in the lives of believers signifies God’s presence and empowerment to continue the work to which He has called them ([John 14:16-18](#)); thus, we have direct access to God through Jesus—not needing intercession from a human mediator such as a priest ([Heb 4:14-16](#)). Second, because the **Spirit** dwells in us, we have all been called to proclaim God’s Word; hence, when God **pours out His Spirit** upon believers, they will **prophecy** (vv. 17b, 18c). Although prophecy can have a future dimension to it, to **prophecy** simply means that we communicate God’s Word found in Scripture in a relevant message to the people at that time. The Old Testament prophets more often spoke about Israel’s sins in the present and urged them to repent immediately or face judgment in the future. When we share the gospel today, we address these same issues: people have a multitude of sins and we need to repent or face impending judgment in the future or risk eternal separation from the One who created us and loves us.

In what ways do we see the presence of God’s Spirit in our lives? How have we as believers been called to “prophecy” today?

Question  
# 5

## Instruct

Third, Peter describes the coming judgment of the Lord that people will face unless they repent of their sins and turn to Christ. Certainly, God spoke through **wonders** and **signs** by His Son to validate that He was indeed the Messiah who became flesh and fulfilled His mission by dying for our sins (v. 22), but this passage in Joel and repeated in Acts refers primarily to Jesus' return after ascending to heaven (v. 19).

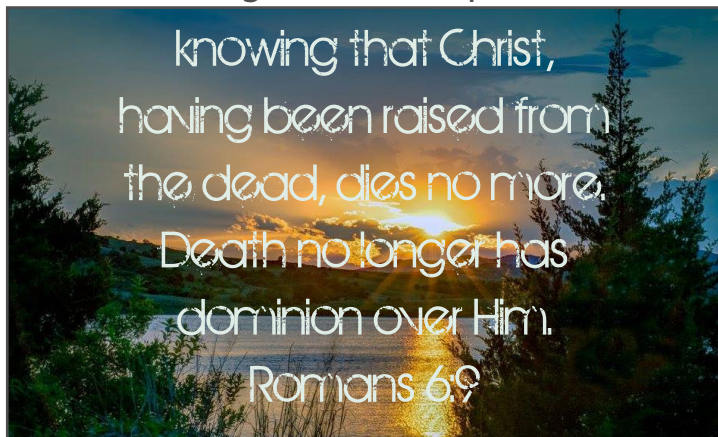


When Jesus returns at the command of the Father, judgment of all the inhabitants of the earth will occur—thus the references to **blood**, **fire**, and **smoke** (vv. 19c-20). On that day, we will be held responsible for the choice that we have made: Have we accepted the gift of eternal life that Jesus offers by confessing our sin and turning to the Lord or have we rejected the gift and continued to live in sin according to our own desires? Despite the theme of judgment, we can have hope in Christ because **whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved** (v. 21). Thus, the proclamation gives us hope of our preservation or salvation through the finished work of Christ. The only way that we can have hope comes through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—a theme to which Peter will now turn in his message.

In the verses following the quotation of [Joel 2:28-32](#), Peter explains the source of salvation by reminding the people of **Israel** the historical



context of the gospel that they themselves had witnessed first-hand. The heart of the gospel, therefore, revolves around Jesus' death and resurrection through which He offers us eternal life. Through **miracles**, **wonders**, and **signs** that **Jesus of Nazareth** performed **in their midst**, they know that God has proved Him to be the long-awaited Messiah (v. 22). Based on the pre-**determined** plan and **foreknowledge of God**, consequently, both the Jewish and Roman leaders (i.e. **the lawless**) conspired to **crucify** and **put Him to death** (v. 23). Before God created the universe, He knew that man would sin and need a Savior, so He developed a plan to send the perfect sacrifice that would take our penalty of death upon Himself and offer us life through His resurrection. Although in the world's eyes Jesus was seemingly defeated by **death**, **God** the Father **raised Him up because** the grave had no power or **hold** over Him (see also [Rom 6:9](#)). With the tomb empty and our Savior risen as an example and promise for us, we can have confidence in Him and look forward to our own resurrection (see [1 Cor 15:20-23](#)). Therefore, Luke



quotes [Psalm 16:8-11](#) written by **David** as proof for the source of our confidence in the Lord (v. 25a). Just as **David** expressed His confidence in the Lord, we can too because Jesus is always near so that we **may not be shaken** by the storms and trials of life, knowing that we have life through His sacrifice (v. 25). For this reason, we can **rejoice** and offer praise on our lips because we have a **hope** in Jesus Christ that endures (v. 26). Our

## Instruct

hope rests solely in the Lord because He has made known the way of life to us; as the resurrection and the life, Jesus is the only way that we can have eternal life ([John 11:25; 14:6](#)). For those of us who have a relationship with Jesus, we can have confidence that God **will not leave** us in the grave (i.e. **Hades**), but in the same way that He raised His Son and did not allow Him to **see corruption** (i.e. rot in the grave) He shall also raise us (vv. 27-28a). This should lead us to **have full joy in His presence** at the magnanimous gift that He has given us (v. 28b).

In what things does our society put their hope? How should we turn these things into a discussion about the gospel?

Question  
# 8

Next, Peter explains how following Christ differs from any mere religion concocted by man because God Himself came to seek and rescue mankind which was validated by Christ's resurrection. Thus, Christianity differs from all other religions in two ways: 1) we serve a risen Savior and not a dead leader and 2) Jesus is the sovereign Lord who created the universe and will reign forever on His throne. First, all other religious leaders and faithful men have remained in their grave when they died—including the forefathers in Israel. **David**, for example, **is both dead and buried** and still **in his tomb** today (v. 30). However, David had a greater hope than in past human leaders because he looked forward to the Messiah whom God **would raise to sit on his throne** forever ([2 Sam 7:16](#)). Second, David's hope and trust wasn't in man because that only leads to failure and disappointment, but he trusted in the promises of the Lord and looked forward to the coming Messiah who would pay His

debt of sin and establish a relationship with him through His crucifixion and resurrection (vv. 31-32, 36).

Religions are created by man, but their founders remain in the grave— Mohammed (Islam), John Smith (Mormons), Charles Taze Russell (Jehovah’s Witnesses), Ellen White (Seventh Day Adventists), Siddhārtha Gautama (Buddha), and a host of others remain in their graves unlike Jesus who was raised from the dead just as He said He would be. These religions, therefore,



are based upon man’s attempt to attain eternal life through works or secular wisdom apart from the work of the Lord who Himself sought mankind in a relationship. In none of these religions did their “god” come in the flesh to redeem mankind. Yet, Jesus, as God in the flesh, offers life through His finished work on the cross; thus, He desires a relationship with us and sought us even when we were sinners and rebelling against Him ([Rom 5:8](#)). We serve a God who is distinctively different because He cares for His creation in such a way that He personally came to redeem it. He didn’t send someone else or devise another way to restore creation into a relationship with Him, but He came Himself and offered a relationship to all who would accept it.

How would you explain to someone today how Christianity differs from any other religion or cult?

Question  
# 9

#### **THE MANNER OF RESPONSE:**

As the people **heard** the message, **they were cut to the heart**; in other words, the message affected them deeply and they felt convicted which compelled them to respond, so they asked **what they must do** (v. 37).

We must note here that the message from God, not the messenger, convicted the people and motivated them to respond. We must realize that as God's messengers we merely present the word that He gives us and we must allow Him to move in the life of the person—no matter how much we may wish to convict and save a person we can't; in fact, it's not our job, so we must allow the Spirit to direct us.

So Peter explains that they must **repent** or turn from their sins and surrender to the Lord (v. 38). When they **repent**, the **Holy Spirit** will come to dwell in their lives as a sign that they belong to the Lord; thus, the **Spirit** will guide them and help them abide by God's boundaries. In addition, the **Holy Spirit** cleanses the person of their sins and transforms them to conform to the will of God. An outward sign of that inward change that the **Holy Spirit** produces comes in the form of baptism **in the name of Jesus Christ**. Water baptism in and of itself cannot save or transform us, but the **Spirit** who indwells our lives at the time of our repentance and salvation does. Peter continues to emphasize that we all need to **be saved from this** wicked and **perverse generation** because we have all sinned and he invites them to respond to the message they heard (v. 40). Because of this truth that Peter presented, **3,000 people** that day **repented** of their sins and were **baptized**, becoming members

of the **church** because they now had a relationship with Jesus (v. 41).

Why must we repent before being baptized?

Question  
# 10

## *Inspire*

For those of us who know and have responded to God's truth in the Bible, we have a mission to inform the rest of the world of the impending danger of rejecting Jesus and the gift of life that He offers in His death. If most of us were driving and found a bridge that had collapsed without any warning signs being posted, we would do our best to inform the other drivers so that they didn't continue and plummet to their death. Undoubtedly, we would phone 911 or the public works department and explain the situation, but many of us would also pull over and try to warn other motorists. We would wave our hands and motion for them to pull over and stop so that we could warn them about the danger ahead. The message would be short and to the point: The bridge is out; don't continue or you will risk death. We would have all kinds of responses: some would stop and turn around, some would want to know more information, and others would ignore the warning and keep going. We aren't responsible for what they choose to do with the information, but our goal is simply to pass it along and inform them.

As Christians, we have a much more ominous warning: If we die without repenting and surrendering our lives to Christ by accepting the gift of salvation He offers, then we will be eternally separated from Him in hell. Because we know the truth, we ought to have a burden to tell others, but many times we aren't intentional about it. We let the busyness of life

## ***Inspire***

overwhelm us; we let fear grip us; we simply become desensitized about death and the un-saved and continue our daily routines un-phased. However, as Christians we have a responsibility that Jesus has given us and through His Spirit we have been empowered to undertake. We must share the gospel daily and inform whoever we meet along our journey about the way to have eternal life in Christ. If we care enough to warn someone of impending danger, whether a bridge being out or a tornado churning his way, then shouldn't we be much more concerned about people facing eternity without Christ? As individuals and a church, let us do our part to share the gospel and inform people how to have a relationship with Christ.

## ***Incorporate***

In what ways can we share the gospel in other languages even though we may not be able to speak them?

## ***Incorporate***

In what ways has the Spirit empowered and equipped us to share the gospel?

When we share the gospel, what are the most important elements that we must stress to someone who has no relationship with Jesus Christ?

*November 12, 2017*

Humanity,  
We have a problem ... SIN!

I have the solution ... My Son!  
God

# *Mission to Impact*

*Acts 3:1-21*

Focal Verse:

"Then Peter said, 'Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.'"

Acts 3:6



## Introduce

After a stressful day at work filled with meetings and appointments, William jumped into his car to head to the Wednesday evening Men’s Bible Study. He thought he had plenty of time to make it by 6:30 pm for fellowship until he merged onto the freeway heading west. For miles in

front of him, he could only see brake lights with cars moving at an imperceptible pace. Turning on the radio, the traffic report had disheartening news. Due to an accident, the freeway had only one lane open and the express lanes weren’t faring any better. With an exasperated sigh, William knew that he would be very late to the Bible study. In his



mind, he wondered, “Why do these things happen to me while I’m on the way to church?” As he grumbled under his breath, the radio announced that the delay would be approximately one hour.

As he inched along using half a tank of gas, the lanes finally opened and William breathed a sigh of relief. Reaching the traffic light on 377 just before descending under the railroad overpass, he once again encountered three lanes jammed with traffic, but this time he could see the culprit—a stalled vehicle with its hazard lights flashing. Although he became disgusted at the delay once again, William Tell felt convicted by his attitude as he saw car after car pass without rendering aid. Turning into the driveway, he

## Introduce

stopped his car and approached the driver. Getting the driver's attention, William said, "I don't have any mechanical experience, but I'll help you push it out of the road and then get some assistance for you." Elated with joy, the driver thanked William and they began pushing the car. After pushing it into a parking space, William asked him to join the Men's Bible Study and then explained that afterwards some of the men with mechanical expertise would assist him. As they walked toward the classroom, William asked,



"Do you know why I helped you?" Puzzled, the man answered, "No, not really, but thank you." William replied, "I stopped and rendered aid because you couldn't move the car on your own. Many years ago, I learned that on my own I couldn't have eternal life, but Jesus paid the penalty so that I could have life in Him—something that I couldn't do by myself." Looking down, tears came to the man's face as William explained the gospel to him in simple terms. The man then stated, "Thanks for helping me move my car, but thank you even more for giving me hope beyond the circumstances I face. Although I don't know what's wrong with my car and I depend upon it to get to work daily, I know that Christ has a higher purpose and is the sole source of life."

It didn't cost William anything to share the gospel with this stranger—

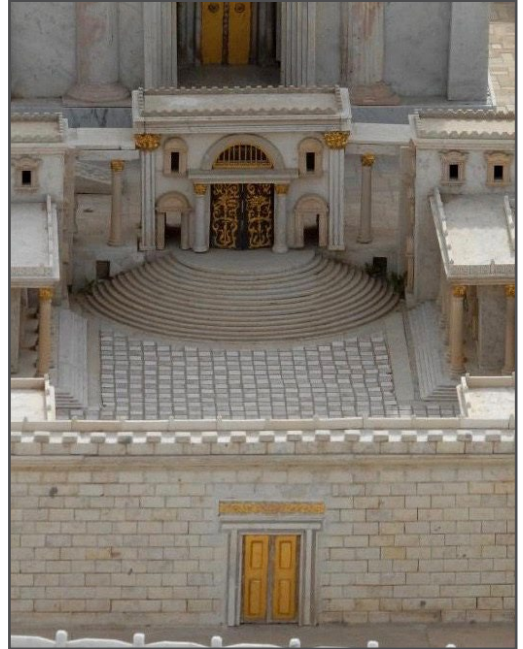
anything more than being tardy and sweating a little, but he was able to lead him into a relationship with Christ that night. In [Acts 3](#), Peter and John encountered a lame man on their way to the temple for prayer and they seized the opportunity to share with him in the name of Christ who would radically transform him. Not only were they able to share Christ with him, but the people who had gathered also heard the message of how Christ died for them and how they needed to repent and believe in Him to have eternal life. This week we will look at how we can impact the community around us—whether locally or globally—through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Key  
Question

What are some ways that we as individual believers can impact the world around us in the name of Jesus Christ?

### RECOGNIZE THE NEED:

As **Peter and John** walked to **the temple** for the afternoon time of **prayer** at 3 o'clock (**the ninth hour**), they encountered **a man** who had been **lame** from birth (v. 1). Each day people **carried** him there and **laid** him at **the temple gate called Beautiful**, so he could beg for money from those who passed by (v. 2). When the man saw Peter and John, he cried out and **asked for alms**—that is money—thinking that they might be moved by their compassion or their civic duty to care for the poor and destitute (v. 3). Like most people, the **man** focused on his daily physical needs because he had no way of earning money through work and he depended wholly upon others to bring him to the **temple** so that he could beg for money. From a human standpoint, he understandably perceived that his physical needs at the time outweighed his spiritual needs; thus, he primarily concentrated on his present circumstances.



### **In-Depth Information**



The **gate called Beautiful** was the informal name for the Nicanor Gate on the east side of the temple complex. It received this nickname because it was the largest, most ornate of the gates—made of gold, silver, and bronze

## In-Depth Information—continued



with decorative designs. For more information, see [Darrell L. Bock, Acts, Baker Exegetical Commentary](#) (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), p. 160.

Although most of us don't have such severe physical limitations as this **man**, we still struggle daily with our physical needs in life and sometimes we let them overshadow our dependence on the Lord. Even in the direst of situations, we must depend wholly upon the Lord rather than man because that often leads to failure and disappointment. Certainly, God uses people, especially those who have a relationship with Him, to meet the physical needs of others; therefore, we must have the proper perspective in that we must recognize we depend upon the Lord rather than our own ingenuity or resourcefulness or even the compassion and generosity of other humans. When we depend upon other people rather than the Lord, we can easily become bitter, ungrateful, and even depressed because our circumstances will often supersede the way that we perceive our needs being met and we will always crave more, feeling entitled. God, however, promises to meet all our needs according to His gracious plan if we would only trust Him and surrender our lives into His care, seeking His will.

In what ways has the perception of physical needs overshadowed spiritual needs even in our own country? Why is it important to point others to God even while meeting their physical needs?

Question  
# 1

## Instruct

Recognizing the need and the opportunity to share the love of Christ through the gospel, the pair stopped when they heard the plea and engaged the **lame man** (v. 4). Even though it interrupted their plans, they were intentional in looking for opportunities to minister; thus, Peter **fixed his eyes on the man** instead of merely going on his way, keeping his schedule, and worrying about his own affairs. How many times have we missed opportunities to minister and share the gospel because we perceived we were too busy?

Opportunities exist all around us every day for ministering and pointing others to Christ; we must simply be intentional about recognizing them and allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our response. Therefore, it's important to be sensitive to the Spirit and allow Him to direct us to divine appointments to share



the gospel. Certainly, other people around the **temple** had tremendous physical needs as well, but Peter and John focused on this one **man**. We can't let the needs of society overwhelm us and cause us to shrink back in fear by thinking that they are too great and we can't do anything at all; instead, we must focus on one person at a time whom God brings in our path so that we might point them to Christ. As individuals or even

as a church, we can't meet all the needs of our society, but through the direction of the Lord we can be intentional about sharing His love and Word to those to whom He leads us.

How should we recognize the divine appointments that God has given us? What appointments has God given you to share the gospel? Which ones have you missed?

Question  
# 2

Giving **them his attention**, the **man** felt entitled to aid and **expected to receive something from them** (v. 5). He only had a short-term perspective; he wanted his physical needs met immediately, but he failed to realize that whatever they would have given him wouldn't have been enough to satisfy him, for tomorrow he would have been carried back to **the gate** to beg for more. Unfortunately, many in our society have this short-term, and sometimes materialistic, perspective and they continue to demand more without thinking of long-term solutions. Although we have been called to assist those with physical needs in the name of Christ and follow His example, we must meet their needs in a way that's beneficial to them and points them into a relationship with the Savior. Throwing money at a situation without fixing the source will merely perpetuate dependence and exacerbate the problem. Therefore, as Christians we should seek to help people in a tangible way that not only meets their physical need, but leads them into a relationship with the Lord and frees them to serve Him.

In what ways can we help people with their physical problems without making them dependent or feeling entitled?

Question  
# 3

#### RESPOND TO THE NEED:

Not only were Peter and John intentional about recognizing the need, but they also took time to respond in a way that truly helped the **man**. After getting the man's attention, Peter declared that he did **not have silver or gold to give** (v. 6). Although God has clearly instructed us to bring our tithes into the storehouse (church) and some things in ministry do require money to undertake, we must make the gospel a priority in any circumstance. In fact, we can share the love of Christ with family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers right here in Fort Worth on our own with minimal resources; therefore, sharing the gospel requires that we respond to the call and go where God has sent us. As a church, we should meet the needs of the community as God directs, but we must always do that in tandem with sharing the gospel so that they might know how to have eternal security in Christ which outweighs any of their temporary needs.

Why should we not limit the ways which we can impact the community based upon our financial resources?

Question  
# 4

Instead of offering money to the man as a temporary fix, Peter responded in the way that Jesus had taught and equipped him. He didn't offer a solution based on his own power or authority, but he pointed him to the Lord Jesus Christ. Ministering on behalf of the Lord, Peter commands the man to **rise and walk in the name of Jesus** (v. 6). As he assisted the man to his feet, he **took his right hand and lifted** him;



**immediately** the man was healed and his **feet and ankle bones** made strong (v. 7). Like Peter, God has equipped us to minister to others on His behalf so that we can direct their attention to Him. The Lord has given us spiritual gifts and innate talents which we can cultivate and use for His glory to impact the world around us. Using the distinctive experiences in life that God has given us, we have a variety of ways as the local body of Christ that we can serve in the community in order to take the gospel into all the world.



In what ways has God distinctively gifted you to serve Him by impacting the community? What experiences has God given you so that you can help others in His name?

Question  
# 5

Because Peter pointed the man to Christ, he sprang to his feet and **walked** into the **temple with them, praising God** (v. 8). The reaction of the man, therefore, was not to acknowledge Peter and what he perceived he had done, but to glorify the Lord. In fact, all the people who had gathered and had seen the **lame man begging** at the **temple** began **praising God** (vv. 9-10). The focus on this miraculous deed centered upon the Lord and not man. Consequently, when we minister and serve others, we must ensure that they see Christ in us and know who we represent. Sometimes pride and arrogance get in the way and we portray ourselves in such a way to receive accolades and acknowledgment; this

## Instruct

is an overarching temptation for everyone because of the nature of our human flesh. Therefore, we must constantly remind ourselves that our job when ministering for Christ is to point others into a relationship with Him. Thus, just as John the Baptist states, “He must increase, but I must decrease” ([John 3:30](#)). Everything we do in ministry should glorify the Lord and emphasize His holy **name** as the one who provides salvation.

In what practical ways can we point people to Christ when helping meet their physical needs?

Question  
# 6

## Acts 3:11-16

### REDIRECT OTHERS TO CHRIST:

Seeing what had happened to the formerly lame man, a crowd began to gather near **Solomon’s porch** in great amazement (v. 11). Once again seizing the opportunity, Peter began to preach the gospel and redirect their attention to the Lord. Addressing the crowd, Peter asks them **why** they **marveled** and looked so **intently** as if they had healed **this man** on their **own power** or **godliness** (v. 12). When we minister **in the name of Jesus**



**Christ**, we should desire that He receives the glory rather than receiving praise or accolades for ourselves. If we aren't careful, pride and the need for recognition can creep in and obscure the gospel; we can begin thinking that we can do things on our **own power** or even based on our own authority. In reality, however, we can't do anything on our own, but we should wholly depend upon the Lord for His strength and guidance (see [John 5:30](#)). In everything we do, we must direct people's attention to the Lord by praising Him, testifying to His goodness, and sharing the gospel which transforms lives.

In what ways can we direct people's attention to God in our everyday lives in ordinary conversation?

Question  
# 7

After getting **the people's** attention and redirecting them to Christ, Peter shares the gospel through an impromptu message. He begins by reminding them of God's faithfulness to His promises; therefore, he identifies the Lord as **the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God of our fathers** (v. 13a). This title draws attention to God's faithfulness over the years in fulfilling His promises to His covenants with their forefathers. Just as God was faithful to **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, He has also been faithful to us by sending His Son to offer redemption and eternal life through His sacrificial death. Although God has been faithful to us in many ways, the death and resurrection of Christ foretold in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New is the pinnacle of His promises because He has given us a second chance to respond even though we rebelled against Him, resulting in our separation from the One who created us ([Isa 59:1-2](#)).

## Instruct

Thus, God desires a renewed relationship with His creation predicated on the death of His Son which necessitates a response from us to accept the gift of salvation He has offered ([1 Tim 2:4-6](#)).

Next, Peter describes the historical events of the gospel to demonstrate why they needed a Savior. First, he recalls their rejection of Christ whom they **delivered** to

**Pilate** and **denied** as their Messiah (v. 13b). In their sinfulness, even though **Pilate** could find no fault in Jesus, the people demanded His crucifixion and **denied the Holy One** in exchange for Barabbas—a convicted **murderer** (v. 14); therefore, they were implicit in killing the **Prince of life** (v. 15a). Although historically both the Jews and Romans were responsible for Jesus' death, each one of us had a part. As sinners, we need a Savior because we are incapable of rescuing ourselves and to have a relationship with God we need a perfect sacrifice in our place. Second, Peter reminds them that **God raised** Jesus **from the dead** so that with victorious power death may be defeated and we can inherit eternal life in Him ([Rom 1:1-4](#); [1 Cor 15:22-23](#)). We can know with certainty the tomb was empty three days after Jesus' death because Peter along with the other ten



disciples is an eyewitness of these events (v. 15a). Now, the disciples proclaim this message to those in Jerusalem so that they too may believe and be transformed.

Why is it important to establish the need for a Savior when we share the gospel with others?

Question  
# 8

In the midst of his message to the people, Peter describes how the healing of the lame man outwardly demonstrates the transformation that **faith** in Jesus' **name** brings (v. 16). The man whom they **saw** and **knew** to be **lame** has now become completely **strong** and **perfectly sound in their presence** as a testimony to the work of the Lord. Too often, we focus on the physical healing of the **lame man** and miss his spiritual healing, but the point of verse 16 is that the man's **faith** made him completely whole—both physically and spiritually. Peter cites the man's **faith** as an example of the response required by the people in general—to repent or turn from their sins and trust in Jesus Christ (see vv. 17-21). Because the man responded to the gospel, something even greater than physical healing occurred in his life—he now had a relationship with Christ which cleansed him of all unrighteousness and guaranteed him eternal life with the Father in heaven. This is not to say that his sins or his parents' sins contributed to his physical impairment, but that every one of us needs a relationship with Jesus Christ to have eternal life (see [John 9:1-5](#)). The physical healing, therefore, was actually eclipsed by his new relationship with the Savior. For what good would it have done the man to go through the rest of his life

## Instruct

with good **feet** and **ankles** only to die and be eternally separated from the Lord?

### In-Depth Information



The word translated **perfect soundness** is rare in the Bible and only used here in the New Testament. Most translations interpret it as “completely healed” ([NIV](#), [NET](#)) or “perfect health” ([ESV](#), [HCSB](#), [NASB](#), [RSV](#)), but it carries with it more of the idea of perfect soundness in the sense that it entails complete well-being of the entire person, not limited merely to the physical, but also mental, emotional, and spiritual. Thus, through this man’s faith in Jesus Christ, he was also healed spiritually—that is he began a relationship with Christ by responding to the gospel and repenting of his sins. For more information, see [Darrell L. Bock, Acts, Baker Exegetical Commentary](#) (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), p. 172-73.

Why should we emphasize one’s spiritual needs even while meeting some of their temporal physical needs?

Question  
# 9

## Acts 3:17-21

### **THE CALL TO REPENT:**

Although we can’t save ourselves through good works or by being a good person, the gift of salvation does require that we respond by repenting—that is confessing our sins and surrendering our lives to Christ so that we no longer habitually live in rebellion and unrighteousness. Even though

both the people and their **rulers** may have once acted in **ignorance** to crucify Jesus, they no longer have any excuse when they look at Scripture because God has clearly **foretold** of these events through the **Prophets** (vv. 17-18). Just as the **prophets** had proclaimed for centuries, God **sent Jesus** as a fulfillment of His promise to redeem the world and restore mankind in a relationship with Him (vv. 20-21). This plan wasn't haphazardly concocted, but has been proclaimed **since the world began**; God wasn't caught off-guard by man's sin, but had formulated a plan before the foundation of the **world** ([Eph 1:1-14](#)) and it came to fruition in the first century when Jesus Christ became flesh, was crucified for our sins, and was raised on the third day as a testament to God's restorative power.

What passages in the Old Testament foretell of the Messiah (Jesus)?

Question

# 9

Therefore, at the climax of his message, Peter urges the people to **repent** and **be converted** (v. 19); the gospel is freely given, but it requires a response on our part to accept it. The phrase **be converted** more succinctly means to turn back. In this case, it means to turn back to God. Often, when we experience heavy rain in Texas, the electronic signs along the freeway read: "Turn around; Don't drown"—which is an ominous warning that motorists need to turn and go the opposite direction because danger lies ahead. Here, Peter is warning the people to turn back to God so that they don't



## Instruct

have to face the consequences of their sin. When they **repent** and turn back to God, He will **blot out** their **sins**, so that **a time of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord Jesus**. In other words, when Jesus returns, those who have **repented** and turned back to the Lord will have eternal life. To have life, we must accept the gift through which Jesus paid the penalty for our sin through His death; this requires that we confess our sins and turn back to the Lord by surrendering our lives wholly unto Him.

Why should the message of repentance be one of the key elements in our presentation of the gospel?

Question  
# 10

## Inspire

Anyone with a teenager, especially a boy, knows that he has a voracious appetite for food. Frequently, three square meals a day with snacks in between aren't enough to satisfy his hunger and leftovers are rare in his presence. He raids the refrigerator immediately after he wakes and once again before he sleeps. Even at the dinner table, he sometimes claims not to have enough food and leaves with a void in his stomach after devouring the portions designated for the rest of the family. We have a plethora of expressions to describe such an insatiable appetite as this; we say we could eat a horse, we have a hollow leg, or even attribute the unquenchable hunger to being a growing boy. In our society today, many people have this type of insatiable appetite for their physical



needs; they can't see past their immediate needs to understand that they have an even greater spiritual problem. Without Christ, they are like a teenage boy at the dinner table—nothing can satisfy their needs.

We as Christians must impart the gospel to the people because only it has the power to satisfy by transforming our lives and shaping our desires in accordance to the will of the Father. Certainly, we should do our best as a church to meet the needs of the community, but we must make sharing the gospel a priority in everything that we do. If we meet physical needs in the community without sharing the life-changing gospel, we will only succeed in creating physical dependence upon the church. Although their physical needs will still remain, we must ask ourselves one question: What good does it do if we feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and clothe the poor if they do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ? If we meet their physical needs on earth, but never share with them how they can have eternal life through Christ, we have done them a disservice. Therefore, in order to meet their needs and satisfying their longings, we must be intentional about sharing the gospel which will lead them to repentance and meet the greatest need in their lives.

## ***Incorporate***

What needs do you see in our community? How can you help meet these needs and share the gospel at the same time?

In what ways can you serve the community through our church and help connect people to our congregation so they may be discipled?

In what ways have you seen God's faithfulness displayed in your life?  
How faithful are you to God in attending corporate worship, being/  
making disciples, serving, and sharing the gospel?

*November 19, 2017*



# *Mission with Involvement*

*Acts 4:1-23*

Focal Verse:

*“For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”*

Acts 4:19

## Introduce

Walking along the banks of the Trinity River in downtown, William Tell began to pray and ask God for opportunities to share the gospel right there in the park. As he prayed, he looked at the placid water of the river as it flowed and saw a flock of ducks waddle across the path, but then he noticed something odd and out of place in this idyllic scene—a man lying in tattered clothes, unkempt, unshaven, and soiled with dirt and



grime from head to toe. The man had a sign indicating his need of food and shelter. In the back of his mind, William wondered if this were the answer to his prayer—an opportunity to share the gospel. Yet, doubt began to creep into his mind as he questioned how he could help this man.

Praying more earnestly, William began to panic as he stuck his hand in his pocket to feel for change to give the man, but he only pulled out a wad of lint; looking in his wallet, he had spent the last of his cash at the convenience store that morning to buy a large soda. He literally had nothing with which he could help this man. Yet, the Lord clearly compelled William to approach the man and begin to talk to him. Sheepishly, he told the man that he had no financial resources with which to help, shelter in which he could stay, or a job which would help him get back on his feet, but he does have a relationship with Christ which he would like to share with him. Responding to the gospel, the man accepted Christ as his Savior; his countenance changed and he was overcome with joy because he now

## Introduce

had hope and life in Christ.

However, the joy expressed by this man caused a scene and other people in the park began to gather in order to see the commotion and watch the spectacle. Because of the large crowd that had gathered, the police came and began to question what had happened. William hadn't notice them, but the officers approached him to inquire of the scene which had now begun to disturb the peace in this park. The man had since departed to share with others his new-found faith in Christ, and William Tell found himself in the back of a squad car for a whole host of charges: loitering, inciting vagrancy by rendering aid, and disturbing the peace. Strangely, William wasn't worried or even angered, but he found himself rejoicing that someone had come to faith in Christ.

As time progressed, William found himself before the City Council after all the charges had been dropped against him. Still, he was called to answer for his actions so that the Council may determine how new ordinances should be put in place to stop these things from happening again. After deliberating, the Council informed William that he could no longer mention the name of Christ in Trinity Park if it would insight the unlawful gathering of crowds and disturb the peace. Instead of leaving the chamber in defeat, William addressed the Council politely and respectfully. "Men and women of the Council and fellow citizens of Fort Worth," he began, "I cannot remain silent about the things which I have seen Jesus Christ do in my life or be censured from telling about the transformation He has imparted to me. Therefore, this day I must declare that Jesus Christ is the only way that we can have eternal life and the sole source of transformation in one's life."

Bewildered, the Fort Worth City Council didn't know how to respond so they let him go without any further interrogation; they had surmised that nothing could dissuade William if the Lord were truly orchestrating these events. As a church, we need to be involved in missions; we certainly need to give and pray, but we also need to go and tell those right here in Fort Worth regardless of the potential cost. In our study this week, we will see how Peter and John are involved in sharing the gospel; even though they faced an obstacle, they didn't let it prevent them from going and telling the gospel. Therefore, we must ask ourselves: Do we feel such a burden to share the gospel that we will go into all the world beginning here in Fort Worth so that we might share the good news of salvation and eternal life to all whom we meet?

Key  
Question

In what ways does our modern culture try to censor (or stop) the name of Jesus from being proclaimed?

## *Instruct*

### Acts 4:1-4

#### **TWO REACTIONS TO CHRIST:**

After the Lord performed a miracle through Peter and John to heal the lame man about whom we studied last week, a large crowd with two widely varied reactions began to gather to see the spectacle—some **believed** in Christ and began to praise the Lord while others expressed dismay and frustration over the act (vv. 1, 4). As Peter and John **spoke** the gospel **to the people**, many of the religious leaders in Jerusalem came to express their annoyance that they taught and preached **Jesus** and the **resurrection** (vv. 1-2). Because they were extremely **disturbed**, the

## Instruct

**priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees** literally **laid hands on** Peter and John, seizing them and jailing them **until the next day** when they could have a legal trial since evening had already fallen and their tradition did not permit trials after dusk (v. 3). These Jewish leaders felt threatened because they were slowly losing power and influence as large numbers of people had turned to worship Jesus:



3,000 ([Acts 2:41](#)) and 5,000 ([Acts 4:4](#)) and people were being added to the church daily ([Acts 2:47](#)). They surmised if the people continued to reject their theology and turn to Christ then not only would they become irrelevant, but they could also lose their economic prosperity and risk coming into conflict with Rome.

In our world today, we see such opposition to Jesus because many people fear an open and genuine discussion about the gospel, so they, in the name of tolerance, progressiveness, and separation of church and state, attempt to stifle and silence any public conversation about Christ and force people to accept their one narrow view—there is no God. The Wisconsin-based Freedom from Religion Foundation perpetuates this narrow view and through lawsuits and public threats geared toward Christians tries to silence the opposition. Labeling many of their programs “Freethought,” including radio, Internet, and newsletter



publications, they oppose the open exchange of ideas because they fear a logical discussion in which the truth of the gospel would prevail and people would reject their view. In fact, this organization is actually opposed to free thought because equipping people to think and evaluate information for themselves would undermine their position; therefore, through their demands, they push their agenda and perspective of a world without God while at the same time criticizing Christians for doing the very same thing.

In what ways does the world try to oppose or silence the presentation of the gospel today? How should we respond to their actions or even threats?

Question # 1

Our church participates in the Good News Club—an after-school program which teaches the Bible and presents the gospel for which parents must enroll their children without coercion from the school district. Yet, this non-mandated, non-school sponsored program has become a frequent target of the Freedom from Religion Foundation who has gone as far as to call it “an invasion”



and boasts that it “is working with local groups . . . to get information to parents and school officials before [the Good News Club] even get[s] in the door.” Instead of presenting both sides of the debate and giving people an actual choice about which view is more truthful and logical, this

foundation desires to suppress access to the information because they know that their position as atheists is neither reasonable or tenable. Therefore, like the Jewish leaders in the first century, they have no logical argument or position on which to stand in accordance with the overwhelming evidence in the Bible. Thus, the belief that Jesus Christ is God and only through Him can we have a relationship with the Father is a threat to their very existence because it would mean that they are wrong and their beliefs must change if people would logically look at the evidence and judge for themselves; therefore, they seek to use all political and social means to stop the advancement of any biblical information which threatens their views.

### In Reference



*“Good News Club may get Bad News,” in Freethought Today (September 2017); accessed on <https://ffrf.org/publications/freethought-today>.*

Despite this attempt by Jewish leaders to stop Peter and John from proclaiming the gospel, Luke points out that **many** who **heard the word believed** (v. 4). In fact, **about 5,000** that day witnessed the Lord’s work through the lame man, **heard** the gospel preached, and responded by surrendering their lives to Christ. We have a long history of people trying to suppress the truth and justify their actions to appease their conscience, but God is always victorious. Cain killed his brother Abel, people mocked Noah and persisted in their unrighteousness, Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery, Saul constantly tried to kill David,

Jeremiah was often threatened and even brutalized and beaten for proclaiming the Word of the Lord—just as many other prophets were—Paul endured many forms of persecution, but the truth in each case went forth. Yet, the greatest display of God’s truth was in Jesus Christ on whom the forces of evil conspired to kill, but God raised Him from the dead as a victorious pronouncement that He alone is sovereign and He alone has power over life and death; thus, despite the best efforts of the Jewish leaders inspired by the demonic forces of this world, they could not stop the truth of the Lord from transforming lives and rescuing people from spiritual death unto life.

Why should we not be discouraged when we see or encounter opposition to the gospel? Why should it give us hope and allow us to overcome any fear we may have?

Question  
# 2

## Acts 4:5-12

### ***A REPLY TO UNBELIEVERS:***

**The next day** all the religious leaders in **Jerusalem** assembled for Peter and John’s trial. Luke notes that all of the secular civic and religious leaders were present from the **rulers** to the **elders** to the **scribes**—which would have included both Sadducees and Pharisees along with the Sanhedrin Court that ultimately



sentenced Jesus to death. In addition, the entire **family of the high priest** was there so that the leadership could speak with one united voice to stop this movement in Christ (v. 6). Today, this would be akin to a trial in Washington, DC where both houses of Congress would be assembled along with all nine Supreme Court justices and even the President and his cabinet. It would have been a high-profile trial and perhaps even designated as the trial of the century so to speak. Everyone with any public influence would have been there.

As the leaders assembled and sat in a semi-circle around Peter and John, they began to ask **by what power or name** they have healed the lame man (v. 7). In [Acts 3:6 and 16](#), Peter has already answered this question: they did it **in the name of** Jesus under the authority of God—not in their own power. Thus, the leaders have essentially asked a loaded question to which they already know the answer and for which they have a political and religious agenda attached. The leaders asked the question—not because they didn't know, but they wanted to make the point that Peter and John weren't granted authority *by them* to perform this act. In this context, the leaders' question shows their true bias and their self-centeredness in rejecting the Lord and presenting themselves as experts in religious matters, but in actuality they have led the people astray.

What are some loaded theological questions that people ask? How should we respond to them?

Question  
# 3

**Filled with the Holy Spirit**, Peter respectfully begins to address the leaders by acknowledging their rank and answering them directly (v. 8). First, he

points to the evidence of the **good deed** of the lame man who **has been made** completely **well**—a fact that no one there can dispute because they can verify that it was the same lame man who daily laid at the gate and begged (v. 9 see also v. 14). When someone makes a claim about Jesus or the Bible, we need to be prepared to give specific evidence that confirms the truth of the biblical view. Second, Peter points directly to the source of the miracle and answers their



question that they have done this **good deed in the name of Jesus Christ** (v. 10). Yet, he levies a charge against them that they have not recognized the source of this **good deed** because they have **rejected** Him and put Him to death (v. 11). In essence, therefore, Peter shifts the blame and puts the leaders on trial—it's not the **good deed** that is the source of the contentious debate, but what they do with **Jesus** whom they have rejected; this **stone** whom the **builders rejected**, however, is the **cornerstone**, or the first piece of the building set in place, and is the only way to have a relationship with God the Father (see [Psalm 118:22](#)). Because the leaders have **rejected** the One whom God sent and **crucified** Him, they have no foundation on which to build their argument for God **raised** Jesus from the dead and the proof is not only the empty tomb, but that He was the One who performed this miracle in their sight.

To what evidence can we point others that demonstrates Jesus is alive and continues His work of redeeming people today?

Question  
# 4

## Instruct

Finally, Peter arrives at the heart of the message: **salvation** comes from no other source because **there is** only one **name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved** (v. 12). Although the world may say that we all serve the same “god” in different ways or that we can have eternal life through whatever way works best for us, the Bible clearly states that we only have one hope, one choice, and one way that we can attain life—and that is through Jesus Christ alone. The world will try to influence us through coercion and persecution, but we cannot compromise and we must stand upon the truth found in God’s Word. Standing in front of the very people who had Jesus **crucified** only months earlier, Peter and John had good reason to compromise their faith and submit to the secular authorities to “save” their lives, but they remained strong in their faith and empowered by the Spirit and did not compromise. Regardless of the risks that we may face, the persecution that we may endure, or the people that we may upset with our biblical views, we must remain faithful to stand upon the Word of God and proclaim its truth. We cannot let political correctness or fear of any kind dissuade us from telling others the truth in love so that they too may know we can have life only through Christ our Savior.

In what ways does the world try to lure us to compromise our faith?

Question  
# 5

## Acts 4:13-17

### **A SECULAR REQUEST TO BE SILENT:**

At the close of the speech, Luke describes the reaction of the leaders as

amazement because they spoke with such **boldness** even though they were **perceived** as **uneducated and untrained** (v. 13). Through the perceptions of the leaders, we can learn two things. First, our **boldness** comes through the empowerment of the Spirit and not our level of education or our perceived level of spiritual maturity. Instead, we must rely on the Holy Spirit at all times and in all circumstances; He will guide us and give us the words to say. No situation is too difficult for Him and nothing is impossible for Him; therefore, He can use even our weakest areas and equip us to serve the Lord and speak boldly at all times so that the gospel can go forth without hindrance. Second, although we need to study God's Word continually and walk with Him daily, we can speak the gospel boldly and minister effectively even if we don't have a college or seminary-level education. Just like Peter and John, God uses those who are ordinary and common, but committed to accomplish His extraordinary work; this is why the leaders **recognized that** Peter and John **had been with Jesus**. No longer should we use as an excuse that we have no formal training, but we should walk with the Lord and study His Word so that He will equip us through His Spirit to share the gospel with **boldness**.

### ***In-Depth Information***



*The words translated **uneducated and untrained** simply mean that neither Peter or John had formal training such as many of the leaders would have had. These words do not imply that they were stupid or ignorant, but that they lacked access to formal education.*

The **council** dismisses Peter and John so that they can deliberate and

## Instruct

identify a solution to their problem (v. 15). However, their problem still stood before them in the form of the lame man who **had been healed** (v. 14). They **can't deny** the **miracle** occurred because it was **evident** or seen by **all who lived in Jerusalem**, but still they desperately wanted Peter and John to be silent and refrain from teaching in the name of Jesus (v. 16). So they resolve to threaten them **severely** and order them **no longer to speak** in Jesus' **name** (v. 17). Coming from these leaders who crucified



Jesus, these are no empty or idle threats, but still they didn't dissuade Peter and John. If we have a relationship with Christ, we cannot let threats stop us from proclaiming the truth, whether the Freedom from

Religion Foundation, the Houston mayor who subpoenaed sermons from pastors under the guise of hate-speech, politicians, or the media who use fear and threats in an attempt to coerce believers and coax us into silence. Though coined by Richard Nixon, the phrase "silent majority" serves as a good description for many Christians today who have either been lulled to sleep by feeling helpless or powerless in secular society or feel threatened or fearful because of increasing persecution or stigmatization. We, however, cannot be silent any longer and we must rely on the Holy Spirit to speak the truth with **boldness** no matter what the cost may be.

What are some threats society makes against Christians today?

Question  
# 6



***A REFUSAL TO COMPLY:***

After **they called** Peter and John, the council issued their verdict and **commanded them** no longer **to speak or teach in the name of Jesus at all** (v. 18). Still with a respectful yet bold tone, Peter responds to their request, but politely refuses to comply (v. 19). He urges them to consider **whether it is right to listen to man more than to God**. He continues to explain that they **cannot** help, but to **speak** about **the things which they have seen and heard** (v. 20). Having run out of options and being unable to deny the miracle that had occurred, the council **further threatened** the pair and sent them away without **punishment**, for the people **were glorifying God** for what had happened (v. 21). Unfortunately, in our society today persecution and intolerance for the truth are on the rise and we face significant challenges to our beliefs, but regardless of the cost we must continue to do that which is **right** in the sight of God and not worry about what man may think or do. Truth doesn't depend on what society may think or how they may react. The fact that a lame man in his **forties** was healed was truth independent of whether the Jewish leaders wanted to believe it or not; though the Jewish leaders attempted to dismiss it, they couldn't because the truth stood apart from their worldview. Many in our society try to dismiss the truth or say that it is relevant only to an individual depending upon his or her perspective. However, truth is truth whether someone believes it or not because it stands independently of mankind and comes from God Himself; therefore, truth is not relative to society's views, but comes from the Lord and is applicable at all times—not when only it is

## Instruct

culturally convenient. Therefore, as Christians, we must stand for the truth contained in God's Word regardless of whether or not society accepts it. When we stand on the truth and are led by the Spirit, we have nothing to fear and we will see God work through us to deliver the life-changing power of the gospel to the world around us. Let us make sure that we can boldly stand on God's Word and proclaim it with a pure heart and conscience, committing ourselves to be messengers of hope in a hopeless world just as Peter and John did.

When the government or society's perspective differs from the Bible, how should we respond?

Question  
# 6

## Inspire

Although the story about William Tell being arrested by the Fort Worth Police in the introduction was fictitious, one day such persecution could happen—though not by some of our fine officers who serve the Lord in this church—as our society continues to turn further away from the Lord. However, as such godlessness and lawlessness continues to dominate our society, we as Christians must be prepared to stand before the world and answer a question: Why do we serve in the name of Jesus Christ? The answer to that question must undoubtedly involve the Holy Spirit, but at a moment's notice it should flow off of our tongues as a testimony to what the Lord has done in our lives. We all should have an answer to that question. If we have a relationship with Christ, every one of us has experienced God's work in our lives and, like Peter and John, we shouldn't

be able to help from testifying to the things that we have seen and heard God do.

When Peter and John experienced this turmoil, they didn't resign themselves to defeat nor did they think that nothing could be done because they were victims of an unfortunate circumstance in a hostile society. Instead, they rose to action, being inspired and led by the Spirit because they had completely surrendered their lives to Jesus. Problems will abound when we don't completely surrender our lives to Christ and attempt to the control of a few crucial areas ourselves. When we don't surrender our lives, we will constantly lose focus and complain about our circumstances instead of looking to the Lord for His strength. Often, this leads to a sense of dread and helplessness where we feel that we can't be involved because we can't impact the world. On our own, we can't make much of an impact the world around us, but through Christ we can if we surrender our lives to Him. Therefore, we must ask ourselves: Have we completely surrendered all areas of our lives to the Lord, so that we can be involved in His mission and impact the world with the gospel?

## ***Incorporate***

In what ways can we as Christians counteract the ideology of organizations like the Freedom from Religion Foundation?

Read [John 20:19](#) and [Acts 4:13](#). How would you describe the disciples in each of these two settings? What changed between John and Acts? How can we become more like the disciples in Acts 4:13 rather than John 20:19?

# ***Journal: Document God's Work***

*November 26, 2017*



# *Mission with Intention*

*Acts 8:26-40*

Focal Verse:

“Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is desert.”

Acts 8:26

## Introduce

After a short night, 4 am came too quickly, but still the alarm on my phone blared and announced the need to rise from bed and get ready to depart for DFW so I could catch my 7 o'clock flight to Nashville. On one of the busiest days for travel in the year, I knew that I had to be very intentional in everything that I did lest I miss my flight. I had already carefully packed my carry-on and personal bag the night prior, taking time to read all of the TSA regulations online to make sure that I didn't have any banned substances or electronics that would delay me at a security checkpoint and possibly cause me to miss my flight. As prescribed by the regulations, all toiletries were under three ounces and packed in a clear Ziploc bag that could easily be removed to go through the X-ray machine.

Before jumping into my car and pulling out of the garage, I checked my phone to ensure I had downloaded the ticket and that I had the identification that I needed to get through security. Then I checked the terminal and gate so that I would arrive in the



right place without incident from the Remote Parking. After loading my luggage, I quickly surveyed the house once again to make sure that everything was secure and ready for my four-day absence and began driving toward the airport. Most of us wouldn't buy an airline ticket to see family over Thanksgiving and not be intentional about catching the right flight. Surely, we would set an alarm rather than just take a chance that we

## Introduce

would wake at the right time. Nor would we arrive at the airport and park somewhere random without knowing how to get to the right terminal and gate. Instead, we would have a plan, making sure everything was in order before we left home.

Although some frequent fliers may not prepare as much or leave as early, they still have a plan to avoid the inconvenience of missing a flight if it can be avoided. Whether we are a new or mature believer in Christ, we must exercise the same intention and preparedness in sharing the gospel. Probably every one of us has missed opportunities to share the gospel with others, but we must be sensitive to the leadership and direction of the Holy Spirit so that He can use us as His messengers to impart the good news to all the world. In [Acts 8:26-40](#), Philip didn't have a ticket to catch a plane, but he had a divine appointment to intercept a chariot on a deserted road so he could explain the gospel to an Ethiopian eunuch. Therefore, we will learn this week how Philip followed the guidance of the Spirit and was intentional about pointing the Ethiopian to Christ. Therefore, we must ask ourselves: Are we prepared to share the gospel and intentional about finding ways daily through the Spirit to tell others about Christ?

Key  
Question

In what ways in your life are you intentional about sharing the gospel?



### Acts 8:26-29

#### OBEY THE LORD:

Speaking to Philip, **an angel of the Lord** instructed him to **go toward the south to the desert road which goes from Jerusalem to Gaza** (v. 26).

Although the **road** from **Jerusalem to Gaza** was the main thoroughfare through the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt and North Africa, the Ethiopian had taken a road less traveled on his journey home. After the destruction

of the old city of **Gaza** in 96 BC, residents had rebuilt the new city closer to the Mediterranean Sea which left the old **road** to the former city on which the Ethiopian traveled desolate and abandoned. Surrounded by a vast desert wilderness with no merchant traffic



on the **road**, the Ethiopian would have been alone with little chance of meeting anyone like Philip; however, Philip *intentionally* took this deserted road upon the command of **the angel of the Lord**.

Just like Philip, we too need to be intentional about seeking opportunities to minister to others so that we can share the gospel with them. Two years ago, the Men's Bible Study on Wednesday met downtown specifically in Sundance Square to engage people in a conversation about the gospel. One of the teams entered the plaza to find a young woman studying—which they could see was the Bible as they approached. To engage her in conversation, one asked what she was reading and whether she

## Instruct

understood it. The conversation, therefore, soon turned into a presentation of the gospel through which she revealed that she had some significant personal struggles in her life, including a looming divorce. Although she didn't accept Christ as her Savior that night, the men encouraged her through prayer and planted the seed of the gospel in her life. If we had not been intentional and gone downtown that night, we would not have had the opportunity to pray with this young woman and see eleven others from all over the Metroplex accept Christ.

How can we as a church be more intentional about sharing the gospel? Now that you have identified the ways, how can you be part of those opportunities?

Question  
# 1

Not only was Philip intentional about where he went, but he was also obedient to the command of the Lord. Luke simply notes that **he arose and went** (v. 26). When we clearly have a directive from the Lord which coincides with commands that He has already given us in Scripture, we should not hesitate, but obey immediately. Often God will direct us to conversations or situations in which we can easily share the gospel with someone. Therefore, we must seize the opportunity; we don't need to pray whether or not we should share; we don't need to sit and ponder for hours whether it's God's will or the right time—we need



to act in accordance with the Spirit because God has already revealed His will that we “go into all the world making disciples” ([Matt 28:19](#)). Although we don’t need to pray about whether it’s God’s will to share the gospel, we should pray that God gives us wisdom to speak with clarity and that the person with whom we are sharing would listen to the Spirit’s convicting power through God’s Word; consequently, we must be sensitive to follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit in how to proceed as we share.

On this lonely, deserted **road**, Philip encountered a **man** from Ethiopia who had **come to Jerusalem to worship** the Lord and **was** now **returning** home (v. 27). Although a Gentile, this prominent **man** who was the treasurer for **Candace the queen of Ethiopia** had converted to Judaism and worshiped Yahweh, but he did not yet have a relationship with Jesus—the Messiah about whom the Old Testament foretold, so God had sent Philip to explain the Scriptures to him. After Philip encountered the **chariot** on this **road**, the **Spirit** prompted him to approach and begin a conversation with the **man** (v. 29). Even though we ought to obey the Lord immediately, we still must be sensitive to the Spirit’s guidance because He will lead us to the people to whom He has prepared for us to share. When we intentionally look for opportunities to share the gospel, the **Spirit** will lead us to people in whose lives He has been working and guide our conversation in such a way that it will spark the interest of the person to listen and hear God’s Word.

Why is it important to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit when we look for opportunities to share the gospel?

Question  
# 2

## Instruct

The **Spirit** prompts and guides us to share the gospel in two primary ways. First, He gives us the ability to speak with clarity, to formulate answers to questions they may have, and to recall Scripture to apply to their situation. Second, He also gives discernment to know how to approach people and whether to proceed or stop during a conversation so that we don't alienate them by pushing them at the wrong time and in the wrong way; however, at other times, the Spirit may prompt us to be bold and direct with the words that He gives so that the person may realize the gravity of their situation. During outreach, we meet various kinds of people. Some people who open the door seem distracted, rushed, or even agitated; if the Spirit leads, we should certainly engage in a conversation, but generally these are indications from the Spirit that we ought to be cordial, yet brief in our presentation—not forcing the gospel upon them. On the other hand, some people who open the door respond enthusiastically and will engage us in a long conversation, so we have the opportunity to share the gospel with them without hindrance.

In what ways has the Spirit prompted and helped you to share the gospel?

Question  
# 3

Recently, one of our members was sitting in a waiting room at a local doctor's office and noticed another woman thumbing through the pages of the Bible, seeking passages of comfort. As she looked out of her peripheral vision, she saw that the woman was obviously upset about something as tears welled up in her eyes. Feeling prompted by the **Spirit**, our member approached the lady to offer her words of reassurance that God was in

control and to pray with her. Like Philip, she was observant and intentional in looking for opportunities to minister, she obeyed the command of the Lord, and she was sensitive to the Spirit in the way that she approached the situation. Therefore, every one of us must fulfill our God-given duty to reach the community by sharing the gospel and inviting people to find a place in our church to grow as a disciple and worship the Lord by serving Him.



### **Acts 8:30-35**

#### **EXPLAIN THE SCRIPTURE:**

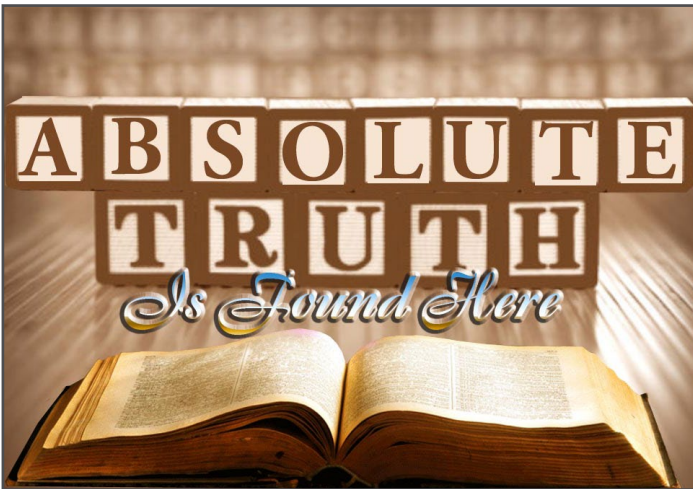
Responding to the Spirit, Philip **ran to him** and overheard him **reading** from [Isaiah 53:7-8](#), so he inquired whether the man understood **what** he was **reading** (v. 30). The man replied that he could not understand **unless someone guided** him, so he invited Philip to **sit with him** in the **chariot** (v. 31). When we share the gospel with others, we need to show them in God's Word and help them grasp what it means—this often takes significant time and investment, but because of the world in which we live we need to show them the truth of God's Word directly. Many people, even in the US, have never taken the time to read and understand Scripture—or even their own “religions” to which they adhere. They base their opinions about Christ and Scripture merely upon what others have said—which is often erroneous and misinformed. Unfortunately, people are not taught to think for themselves, but often to follow traditions and teachings blindly.

Therefore, it becomes of utmost importance to both show them in the Bible and to help them understand what it means within the context.

Why is it important to show people in Scripture how to have a relationship with Christ?

Question  
# 4

Several weeks ago, a middle-aged woman who had attended the Community Fall Festival with her children came by the church to pick up the prize which she had won. Happening to overhear some of her questions to the secretaries, I began to answer. In the course of the conversation, she indicated that she desired to change “religions” and began to ask questions about various denominations and cults. Although I answered her questions, I explained that the Bible teaches we must have a relationship with Jesus based on our acceptance of the gift of His forgiveness offered on



the cross, so we must repent of our sins and walk daily with Him. Quoting several passages, I demonstrated that only through Christ, not by works or being a good person, do we have forgiveness for our sins and can attain eternal life. With her eyebrows arched in

confusion and a blank stare on her face, she assuredly proclaimed that she couldn't read (understand) the Bible.

Herein lies the problem with our society. Instead of seeking to understand

God's Word and what it actually says, she kept constantly interrupting and making the bodacious claim that she couldn't read the Bible. Her perception of "religion," therefore, was based on tradition and skewed by man. To help her understand, I informed her that she must read Scripture for herself, beginning with the [Gospel of John](#), to hear God speak so that she would know what truth is. I continued to explain that the Bible is the standard by which we judge all things and that it contains the pure truth of the Lord by which we should live. Therefore, I suggested that she read John and then come to church to find another woman who could help answer any questions she may have and help her to understand.

In what ways can you help mentor others to understand Scripture

Question  
# 5

Sitting beside the Ethiopian, Philip realized he was reading [Isaiah 53:7-8](#) which clearly refers to the Messiah (Jesus) who would come to take away the sins of the world (vv. 32-33). The two verses which the Ethiopian **read** centered on the fact that Jesus voluntarily gave His life, even though He was a perfect man who was treated unjustly, He died for our sins. First, the **sheep** depicts the unblemished sacrificial **lamb** being **led to slaughter** to die in place of the sinner. No animal, however, dies willingly, but always puts up tremendous resistance—even the ones being used as sacrifices. However, this **lamb**, that is Jesus, goes



## Instruct

willingly and does not resist—this is why Isaiah emphasizes that He **is silent** and did **not** open **His mouth** (see [Heb 10:8-10](#)). In fact, historically, Jesus did not resist the armed band who came to seize Him at the Garden of Gethsemane ([John 18:1-13](#)) nor did He answer Herod’s foolish questions ([Luke 23:9](#)) as well as He refused to answer Pilate who had the power to pardon Him ([John 19:9-10](#)).

Second, [Isaiah 53:8](#) emphasizes the perfect nature of Jesus’ sacrifice. The prophet describes it as **His justice** being **taken away** (v. 33). In other words, Jesus had no fair trial, was unjustly charged, and wrongly punished; though He was innocent He gladly endured this to bear our sins so that we might have eternal life through Him. In **His humiliation**, as Paul has rightly said, “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” As the Ethiopian read these verses, he asked Philip to explain to whom this passage refers; specifically, he asked if it referred to the **prophet himself** or **some other man** (v. 34). This gave Philip the opportunity to explain the Scripture and demonstrate how it referred to **Jesus** (v. 35). In the same way, we must help people understand how the promise of salvation is fulfilled through Christ by showing them how both the Old and New Testaments point to the cross and resurrection as the final means whereby we can be saved.

To what other passages can you point in the Old and New Testaments to demonstrate the promise of salvation through Jesus Christ?

Question  
# 6



**EMPHASIZE CHRIST:**

After explaining the Scriptures, Philip baptized the Ethiopian at his request based on his profession of faith in Jesus Christ. As they traveled **down the road**, the **eunuch** spotted **water** and asked if anything **hindered** him **from being baptized** (v. 36). The prerequisite for baptism is a relationship with **Jesus Christ** whereby we confess and repent of our sins and surrender our lives completely to Him. For this reason, Philip reinforces the eunuch's commitment by stating that he may be baptized **if he believes with all his heart** (v. 37). To which the Ethiopian reaffirms that he **believes Jesus Christ is the Son of God**. Baptism, therefore, is an outward symbolic act that reflects an inward transformation by the Holy Spirit. If you are relying on baptism rather than a relationship with Jesus who will forgive your sins when you confess and repent, then you have no hope of eternal life. Salvation, consequently, comes not as a result of what we can do, but rather as a result of what Jesus has already done for us on the cross. Based on his confession, Philip and the **eunuch go down into the water** where he is **baptized** as a public profession of his faith in **Christ Jesus** (v. 38).

Why is it important to emphasize Christ when we are on mission?

Question  
# 7

When we share the gospel, we must emphasize the person and work of Christ rather than tradition, religion, or ritual. People tend to focus on ritual and tradition—often missing the need for a relationship. Although attending church, tithing, serving, and even going on mission are noble and good tasks, they cannot get us to heaven. Many churches, though

most not explicitly, wrongly teach that salvation comes from good works or by being a good person ([Rom 3:10](#); [Eph 2:8-9](#)) and they focus on participation in rituals—all the while individuals fail to read God’s Word and understand for themselves that these practices cannot earn salvation.



Moreover, people often get occupied by doctrinal differences and personal preferences rather than focusing on Christ (see [John 4:19-26](#)); therefore, we need to point them to Christ, for He is the only way to have eternal life. The types of music we sing, the places in which we worship, the days on

which we worship, and a whole host of other preferences only distract from the real source of salvation. As we have learned all this month, salvation is found in no one else except Jesus Christ; salvation, therefore, constitutes a relationship with Him through His death and resurrection which we begin when we confess our sins and turn to Him to walk daily as His follower.

What are some other distractions which you have observed when sharing the gospel which cause people to lose focus on Christ? How do you redirect them?

Question  
# 8

The last two verses of this section form a summary to tell briefly what occurred after the baptism. From this summary, we can learn two principles. First, we learn that salvation brings joy because of the transformation

induced in Christ; the Ethiopian, therefore, **went on his way rejoicing** (v. 39). Too often, people see the Christian life as bound by rules and regulations which rob one of joy; on the contrary, God desires us to have a more abundant and joy-filled life so He gives us boundaries by which we ought to live. Instead of decreasing our joy, salvation ushers in hope and life and vitality which greatly expounds our joy because we can find contentment and satisfaction in Christ ([Phil 4:12-13](#)). Second, the mission to which God has called us is on-going and should be undertaken wherever we are. After the Ethiopian was baptized, the **Spirit** led Philip to **Azotus** approximately twenty miles north of **Gaza** on the coast; he continued his ministry of preaching **in all the cities** from there to **Caesarea** (v. 40). Philip was on a mission and intentional about sharing the gospel wherever the Spirit led him. We too must be comprehensive in the ministry which God has given us, being intentional to proclaim the gospel wherever we are—from Fort Worth to the ends of the earth.

## *Inspire*

We have many things about which we are intentional in our daily lives because they have consequences if we fail to do them. If we aren't intentional about paying our bills by the due date, at the very least we incur fines or could even face our utilities being cut off or even being evicted from our residence. At our jobs, we have daily tasks that we are required to do. If we aren't intentional, we risk being reprimanded or even fired. Although we may not often think about it, failing to be on mission for the Lord by participating in the Great Commission also has consequences. Since God has clearly commanded us to be on mission, it means that we are disobedient and in opposition to Him when we don't seek venues to

share the gospel. The even greater consequence, however, is that the world around us is dying apart from Christ to spend eternity in hell and we don't even have a burden to warn them and share the good news with them.

I pray that we as individuals and collectively as a church may never have this type of apathy for reaching the lost. Instead, I pray that we have a burden that's so overwhelming that each day we pray for opportunities to share the gospel and we seek innovative ways of reaching the culture around us with the good news of Jesus Christ. As we go about our daily routines, let's look for opportunities to share the gospel—whether it's in the store, in our neighborhoods, at extracurricular activities or hobbies, in the waiting room at a hospital or doctor's office, or wherever we may be. The opportunities are there. We need to be intentional to seek them, obedient to the Lord's command, and sensitive to the Spirit when we share. As we share, we need to point to the Scriptures and explain how Jesus Christ is the only way that we can have salvation. As we conclude this month of focusing on missions, may we evaluate accurately how we have allowed God to use us here in Fort Worth and around the world to share the gospel and reach the lost.

## ***Incorporate***

How often are you intentional about sharing the gospel?

Never	Rarely	When I think about it
Often	Daily	<input type="text"/>

How often do you pray for those who don't have a relationship with Jesus Christ by name?

Never	Rarely	When I think about it
Often	Daily	<input type="text"/>

How often do you pray that God will give you opportunities to share the gospel?

Never	Rarely	When I think about it
Often	Daily	<input type="text"/>

If you haven't marked daily, then what prevents you from being intentional about your mission more? What are steps that you can take to help you become more intentional and aware?

## ***Incorporate***

Make a list of people to whom you know that you can share the gospel by investing time to help them understand God's Word.

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For more information  
or for questions  
please contact  
[mikeneal@fbcfw.org](mailto:mikeneal@fbcfw.org)

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(817) 485-7711 • [info@fbcfw.org](mailto:info@fbcfw.org)