

Everyone likes **New Things – New House, New Boat, New Car**

- **Many people stand in line for the new iPhone/Xbox for hours or that Black Friday deal**
- I know a lady, who will remain nameless, who loves the smell of a new book
- We like New...

Paul writing to the Church at Corinth says, those who repent of sin, believe in Jesus, and call on his name for salvation are **Made New...**

- ***Not just improved – all together new – Not reformed, but transformed.***
- ***Because they've been made new, those who are in Christ have a new purpose, a new calling, a whole new identity.***

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 – ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ¹⁸ Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:20-21 - ²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Miracle of Reconciliation

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God's Design

- To be in Christ starts at Salvation – We repent of sin and believe in Jesus, call upon his name for salvation.
- To be in Christ is recognize that we have run away from God's design, God's Ways, God's Laws...in other words, we have disobeyed His commands and gone our own way
- In different ways, we all sin and depart from his design, preferring to do things our own way.
- **Romans 3:23** - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
- **Romans 3:10** - As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;

Brokenness – We inevitably land in brokenness.

- Brokenness hurts! Our relationship aren't right, life is out of wack, and it can be painful.
- So to manage it, we pursue our own solutions, pouring ourselves into substitutes that cannot satisfy. No matter what we do, we remain stuck in brokenness.
- **Isaiah 53:6** - All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all
- ***The Bad News is we live in brokenness, the worse news is we cannot escape on our own***

The good news is the Gospel.

- God knew we couldn't escape on our own; he knew we were powerless, so he sent his Son Jesus to rescue us. Jesus lived the perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and on the third day, God raised him from the dead.

- **Mark 1:14-15** - Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

My life is broken — I recognize it's because of my sin. I need You.

- I believe Christ came to live, die and was raised from the dead — to rescue me from my sin.
- Forgive me. I turn from my selfish ways and put my trust in You. I know that Jesus is Lord of all, and I will follow Him.

The Bible teaches that at the moment of Salvation,

- We are made New, We passed from Death to life, We become a child of God,
- We are transferred from the Kingdom of Darkness into the Kingdom of God's Own Son!
- **Charles Spurgeon** - "You stand before God as if you were Christ, because Christ stood before God as if He were you."

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- When we have been made new, we don't act like we use to act.
- As Paul said in **Romans 6:4** – "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, ***even so we also should walk in newness of life.***"
- It should not surprise us when unbelievers, those who do not know Christ, act like they don't, but it's a-whole-nother ballgame when people who ... claim to be saved by Grace through faith act like the devil.

Someone once said,

- "The greatest source of atheism in the world today is Christians, who acknowledge Jesus with their lips but deny him by their lifestyles. That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable."
- **Henry Blackaby, author of *Experiencing God*** "Our gospel is cancelled by the way we live."
- **Lee Strobel, *Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary*** When I walked into church as a skeptical unbeliever, my 'hypocrisy antenna' was scanning the place for signs that people were just playing church. In fact, I was aggressively on the lookout for phoniness, opportunism, or deception, because I felt that if I could find an excuse for rejecting the church on grounds of hypocrisy, I could feel free to reject Christianity as well.

The World looks at too many professing Christians, there like, Saved, From what. Convert to what.

- If we have learned anything from our study on the book of Deuteronomy it is that God's people should be different from the world – They way we work; The way we play; the way we interact with others...

There is the Miracle of Reconciliation

Ministry of Reconciliation

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 – ¹⁸ Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, **and** ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling

the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:20 - ²⁰ Now then, we are **ambassadors** for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

When we are Made New, are given a new Identity and a New Assignment

We are Ministers of Reconciliation

- **Collectively**, It is the Primary Ministry of the Church – So we organize ourselves to reach Thorsby and Beyond with the Gospel – We will say more about this in a moment...
- **Personally**, It is the Primary ministry of every Believer, so I leverage everything in my life to share the hope that we have.
 - Who is in your life that needs to be reconciled with a Holy & Righteous God?
 - **FRANs** – Friends, Relatives, Associates, & Neighbors. **Insert FRAN Cards**
 - God has sovereignly placed you where you live work and play to reach people with the hope of the gospel
 - We must be ready – **1 Peter 3:15** - But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;
 - On the Ball Field: Be Ready – In the Gym: Be Ready – At Work, At Home, At the Grocery Store, Restaurant
 - Here is a Helpful tip: We ask Waiter / Waitress, "How Can I pray for you?"

We are Ambassadors for Christ

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- An Ambassador, by definition is, "an accredited diplomat sent by a country as its official representative to a foreign country."
 - We have Ambassadors to countries all over the world,
 - Imagine of our president called up the Ambassador...(fill in the blank country)
 - "Mr. Amb, How did the leadership respond to my latest message."
 - "Well, Mr. President, I did not tell them. I was busy. I was afraid they would not like the message. I was afraid they would ask me a question I did not know.
 - "To be Honest, It's just not a very high priority, Mr. President."
 - **How long do you think that guys is going to be an US Ambassador**
- God is pleading **through** us...

There is the Miracle of Reconciliation

Ministry of Reconciliation

Message of Reconciliation

2 Corinthians 5:20-21 - ²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us... ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Theologians Call this the Great Exchange – Our Sin in Exchange for Christ's Righteousness

- Have you ever had a Deal that is too good to be true

- Negotiating a deal, you have no leverage, and yet, you are getting the deal of a lifetime.
- Deal of a lifetime...beyond a lifetime, Deal of Eternity – My Sin for Christ's Righteousness.
- **Philippians 3:9** - and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;
 - Righteousness is through faith in Christ...from God by faith.
- **Romans 5:8** - But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- **1 Peter 3:18** - For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,
- **Isaiah 53:4-6** - Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

We said a moment ago, there is Personal Aspect to this Mission, but there is also a Collective aspect

- The Mission of the Church is to reach people with the gospel of Christ and equip them to serve him.
- **Matthew 28:18-20** - And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.

Mission – To equip people to discover and pursue God's design for their lives to the glory of Jesus' name.

- **Equip – Ephesians 4:12 (Christ gave the church leaders ...)** for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,
- **Discover – That's Salvation**
- **Pursue – That's Sanctification**
- **God's Design – That's Mission**

We believe that when a large percentage of people in our community are relentlessly pursuing God's Design, that is living like Jesus & loving like Jesus, the city will come alive with the presence of Christ and be filled with the Aroma of Christ!

- We long to hear more stories of transformation, as men and women shaped by the Spirit carry the love of Jesus into their homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods.
- Spiritual formation is no longer an optional ministry track but the lifeblood of our church.
- Children grow up learning to pray as naturally as they breathe; adults deeply rooted in Scripture; families embody the rhythms of grace and generosity that mark the way of Jesus.

As disciples are formed and leaders multiply, the gospel spreads with unstoppable force.

- Entire neighborhoods once untouched by the good news now host vibrant communities of faith. Living rooms, coffee shops, and storefronts become worship gatherings; city blocks are renewed as justice and mercy accompany the proclamation of the kingdom.

- Our vision of **geographic saturation** is realized — no neighborhood without a witness, no family without access to the hope of Christ.
- This is not just a church — it is a movement of Christlike disciples shaping the world for His kingdom.
- Fuel a Movement of Disciple-Makers that will bring hope and renewal to every person and every place.

Where do we Start? Live Sent

If we are going to see Movement...**Focused Prayer, Radical Generosity, Abundant Seed Sowing**

Focused Prayer - Pray Fervently – Col 4:2, 12, Luke 10:2

- Colossians 4:2 - Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;
- Colossians 4:12 - Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, **always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God**
- Bring Back Monthly 24 Hours of Prayer and Fasting
- Today we will begin 21 Days of Prayer
- Pray Luke 10:2 at 10:02 Luke 10:2 - Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers *are* few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

Radical Generosity - Give Cheerfully – 2 Cor. 9:6-7

Funds Ministries & Fuels Missions – Give of Your Time, Talent, & Treasure

- Time – It is the only resource of which we have the same amount.
- Talents, We are Building a Database of Gifts, Abilities, and Passions – On App
- Treasure – Are you Consistently, Proportionately, Cheerfully, Sacrificially

By God's Grace and Your Generosity, we have exceeded our Above & Beyond Campaign.

- Phase 1 of the Building Master Plan is complete, We dream of completing Phases 2 & 3
- Which would be an enlarged Welcome Center, New Restrooms, Classrooms, and Elevator (No steps) & a Family Life Center, gymnasium – Where Kids / Stu Min could expand.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 - But this *I say*: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ So let each one *give* as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may have an abundance for every good work.

Art Rainer, "God has rigged the system so that our generosity contributes to changing lives for all eternity.

- When we give, we help to restore broken marriages, we help feed the hungry
- When we give, we help prodigals return home, we help community members put their faith in Jesus.
- When we give, we help start new churches, and send missionaries around the world
- When we give, we help get the gospel to unreached people groups.
- When we give, we help fulfill the Great Commission.
- When we give, we shape eternity for ourselves and others.

Live for something more. Give generously. Shape eternity.

Abundant Seed Sowing - Go Faithfully – Matthew 28:19

- **Matthew 28:19** – As you are going – Carry Hope to your FRANS
- **Identify Who** – Intercede Daily – Invite them to the Next Right Thing
- **1 Peter 3:15** - But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;
- **A couple of weeks ago, we challenged you to have Gospel Conversations** –
 - Pastor Justin issued a challenge to the Students – 100 GC's by end of year
 - We are tracking GC through D-Groups – If not in D-Group, share with SS teacher

Conclusion: "The Unopened Letter of Reconciliation"

Imagine with me for a moment:

- A nation is at war. Far from home, an ambassador stands in a foreign land.
- In his hand is a letter, sealed with the king's own signet.
- The letter offers peace—a full pardon, a restored relationship, the promise of a new beginning. The war could be over.
- Families could reunite. Life could be different

But what if the ambassador never delivers the letter?

- What if, out of fear, distraction, or comfort with his surroundings, he simply keeps the letter in his pocket or leaves it on his desk—unopened, unread by those who desperately need its message?
- The war goes on. Hearts remain broken. Peace, though offered, is never received.

We are Called **Ambassadors for Christ** -

- God has entrusted to us His letter of reconciliation—the gospel.
- We carry the royal message declaring that the war between God and man can end, that peace is available, that forgiveness has already been won at the cross.
- The tragedy would be if God's ambassadors—His church—leave the message undelivered.

But imagine, instead, the joy when the ambassador steps forward, presents the king's letter, and proclaims,

- "You can have peace with God. Here is the proof—signed in the blood of Christ Himself."
- "Church, let's not leave the letter unopened. Let's deliver the King's message faithfully, boldly, and lovingly, trusting that God will use His message to reconcile many to Himself."

Let's Pray Fervently, Give Cheerfully, Go Faithfully...for the glory of King Jesus!

Announce at the end of Second Service

- End of Second Service – Because the Safty and Security of our children is of utmost imporance, we ask that you exit out the back of the Sancturay and then around... I know the natural flow to get to the fellowship hall would be to out these doors and down, but there is limited space and lots of children being checked out.
- We want to make sure the right kids go to lunch with the right paretns.