

THE GOSPEL – VALUES 10

Good morning: As we jump into this morning, there are several things on my heart and mind that I want to say as we begin.

- 1) I want you to know what a privilege and honor it has been to be your pastor. And to be part of a team of pastors – not alone and with such a great team. I love you and this place more than my words can say and you will have my affections till I take my last breath. I don't say that enough so I want you to hear that upfront. I love you and I love this place.**
- 2) If you are a guest – you might be thinking, what did I walk in to. I'm not a big deal, as you will quickly see, but this is my last day after 20 years and that is a big deal. So celebrate a big God with us today and join us as he works his life in us – today!**
- 3) This is not the end ... No way – this - is not the end. I truly believe this is a beginning for Fran and I as you send us - and a beginning - a fresh new beginning of the Lord for you and His body here at the Summit! God's work is just beginning here. In church years we are just coming out of our teen years and into adult age. 20 years is young. God has so much ahead for the Summit. I believe this, and I think you do to, and I can't wait to see what God does in the coming months and years!**
- 4) 7 years ago, the first time I was asked to do a chapel at CHS down the road – my oldest son was in his first year there as a 9th grader. These were his words of advice to me when he heard I was going to do his chapel: "Dad - don't suck." I have thought about this last sermon A LOT – and if you were to ask me what I hope for – one thing would be - not to suck. But more as I have prayed, I really don't care about preaching a great sermon this morning. I don't feel the pressure of hitting a home run so to speak. Truthfully – what I want is for God to change lives in this room today: mine & yours. As we have been praying all summer, I want to see God work in us & through us. I believe Jesus wants our whole lives – nothing less - and today He has a work to do in you and I to keep transforming us into his great and glorious image. So to that end - for one last time together- let's do this and let's begin by asking God to move in us and through us. Will you join me on your knees – if you can!**

COLOSSIANS 1:27-29 (ESV) 27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. Here is the 1 simple yet beautiful & powerful truth from God today:

Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope of glory.

We have been walking thru our Summit Values over the summer – the essential things we believe are needed to accomplish the mission God has for us. Today, I want to give you the heart of the truth behind our values. If there is one thing I could leave you with – one thing I believe God has used, is using and will continue to use to change our lives and others lives - it is this truth: **Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope of glory.**

Our mission, our ongoing, never changing, driving purpose as Christ's body called the Summit is this: **Together, in the gospel, for the gospel – to the glory of God. Together today – let's hear God's beautiful and powerful call to live out this mission: Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope of glory.**

"glory" (lit.) means weighty. In the scripture, it is: **the perfect overwhelming greatness of God's nature.**

And for this **perfect overwhelming greatness of God**, you and I were created. We were created to know and enjoy the greatest one, the greatest thing ever – our perfect, holy God. We were created to enjoy and know this glory – but we were also created to be containers of this glory - holding the perfect overwhelming presence of God himself – in us. Our desire to be a part of something great – is how God created us and it drives and motivates our heart in much of what we do and who we are. AND ... God in his word today is telling us:

Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope of glory. What does this mean for us – 3 things? They are:

01. Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope to know God's glory.
02. Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope to be fully restored into God's glory
03. Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope for the world to be fully restored into God's glory.

COLOSSIANS 1:27 (ESV) Christ in you, the hope of glory.

01. Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope to know god's glory.

You were made to know the glory of God. The perfect overwhelming greatness of his presence that is better than anything in this world. **BADNEWS:** We are separated from the glory we were created for by our brokenness.

ROMANS 3:23 (ESV) For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We have lost his glory.

Which means two things: 1) We are under judgment by God for our rebellion against holy God, 2) We will spend the rest of our lives looking to find the glory we were made for in everything and anything but God. **Meaning ...**

We will often try & buy it (greater house, greatest gadget). **We will try & earn it.** (being a great employee, best mom ever) **We will try to find it in a purpose** (great family). **We will try and get it from another** (great relationship). **We will seek the ultimate feeling, ultimate purpose, ultimate beauty, ultimate power, ultimate thing – in everything.** **We will even seek it in the things of God – instead of God himself.** I have often talked about this in my 20 years here. BC we are a highly church area, we often think doing the things of church can restore our lost glory. We think ...

- Doing for Christ is a way to this lost glory. **servicing:** *Doing for Christ is not the gospel.*
- Being around the things of Christ ... lost glory **church:** *Being around the things of Christ is not the gospel.*
- Christ being for you is a way to this glory. **loved (John 3:16a):** *Christ being for you is not the gospel.*

I moved into O'Fallon 20 years ago and the first neighbor I met was Jim. We met and quickly hit off an honest and blunt relationship. He found out we were planting a church for people who had given up on church and he said – that's me. I have been to church, served at church, and heard God loves me and it has changed nothing. So I partied. Jim's way of saying that if we don't find the glory we are looking for – we will try to ignore the glory we were made for. His of ignoring this longing was partying. What's yours? Years later after Jim's party scene – I met him. An addict on the road to recovery who was still looking for glory. His quote I will never forget. "I thought getting sober would fix things – be what I was looking for – but when I got sober I remembered why I started partying. I didn't like me or my life. Jim sought out glory: the desire for something great in his soul. He did things of church; and he tried to ignore the desire for glory. Neither worked. His soul still hurt & longed for more. Is this you? Does your soul long for more.

GOOD NEWS: By faith in Christ's work (which is the gospel) – Christ lives in you & you can know God's glory. Jesus Christ came and took our sin, bore our guilt and shame – all so we could once again know the glory of God – the greatest feeling, purpose, beauty, power – thing IS God. And listen to this truth please – hear it today.

27 Christ in you, the hope of glory / Christ in you (the gospel) - is the only hope to know God's glory.

After months of talking and practicing my sermons on Jim. We starting reading thru John together and one day we were in Ch 3 and he said I did what vs 16 says. Remember the first part – says God loves the world – you, but it also says – that whoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. Jim said – I did that. I believed him. We talked. Jim was one of the first of hundreds of people that have been baptized here as adults as a sign that Jesus and his work has rescued them and returned us to God's glory that was separated from us by our sin our brokenness.

Christ in us – is the only hope of glory. One of the practical things this truth has meant for us over the years is this: It has caused us to live, teach, speak, and preach every week that - Christ alone rescues us and returns us to God and His glory. **What does it mean for now and the future?**

We can sing awesome songs, have phenomenal ministries that care for the hurting, go to places like Guatemala with teams, and have a killer student ministry. But if we do not live and proclaim, and explain the gospel – Christ in us - what we do as a church going forward – matters nothing. / Christ in you – is greater than the brokenness in you. Have you trusted your soul to the work of Christ like Jim – like the homeless man? This is what we prayed for at the beginning – that lives would be changed here and now. Some of you have heard me preach a ton of sermons but for some reason you still trust that your work, your right doing or church going will be enough.

There is no other way to know the glory your soul longs for, but thru Christ in you – the hope of glory.

Do you know his glory? Have you trusted Christ's work alone – to return you to God and his glory? Have you? Or are you trying to earn it or ignore it. You can't earn and you can't ignore – oh please today – come to his glory by Jesus' work. But know this – this is not the end of God's work in you thru Christ – this is just the beginning.

02. Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope to be fully restored into God's glory.

27 Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. Some of you are Christ followers – Christ is in you by the work of Christ – *but you are not sure he will or can restore you to what you were meant to be.*

Scotty Patton is a friend who uprooted his life to move here with Fran and I to help start the Summit 20 years ago. *That still stuns me that he did that with us. He was a founding pastor and leader and a year in – we were walking through our first church discipline situation as sin erupted in his life. His words to me as we started into this process – I'm not sure God can fix what is broke in me JR.*

What do you think believer? Not asking can God rescue you to Him and his glory. I am asking:

Can God fully restore the lost glory of your soul?

I mean you were meant to love, forgive, serve, care, hope, and give to others in a way that is glorious – overwhelming and great like our God does - but you know and I know we can't. And at some point in our relationships it gets obvious that we are more broke than we imagined and we start to think – God I know you rescued me – but can you fix me? *I have wondered this about me as I grow and change – but then often struggle with the same sins that don't seem to be getting restored in God's glory – his perfect overwhelming glory.* When this happens we start to doubt that the gospel – Christ in us – is bigger than our brokenness? **Are you here today?**

Listen to God's word to you and I this morning who wonder about God's ability to fix the brokenness in us.

28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

*I have spent the whole of 20 years preaching, teaching, living, walking, talking, praying, and hoping that you and I in Christ would understand Christ is greater than our brokenness & that He is about fully restoring our lost glory. But even more we have toiled & struggled together to not just understand this – to not just have it be a part of our minds – but we have toiled to make it a reality in our heart - to see God make it happen in us – **thru Christ in us.***

This is another practical thing this truth has meant for us over the years – we have pursued allowing the gospel to transform our lives and restore lost glory. How?

- We are committed to being around others who are pursuing the restoration of lost glory through the gospel.

This means you have to be in a body – that preaches and lives the gospel together in honest relationships. (programs can overshadow our ability to live together in the gospel. This is special place – there are others that focus on Christ alone – but many don't.)

This means you have to be around people who are pursuing looking like Jesus (glory) through the gospel.

Bc of Christ's work – I am broken but God has made me right with Him, HE is now for me and changing me.

Bc of this we are humble with others and hungry for Jesus who alone is our glory.

- We are committed to following the ways of Jesus and realize this only happens through utter dependence on the power of the gospel – not our will.

(This daily struggle transforms us as we must depend on the Spirit to be obedient. And when we fail – it drives us deeper into the gospel – I am broken but bc of Christ's work I'm completely acceptable to God and he is changing me.)

Bc we believe Christ in us transforms us – is fully restoring the lost glory of God in us – lives are being changed.

**** Linda Huffman – leads Recovery here- the amount of changed lives we have seen in our body is overwhelming (Paige, Sue, Doc, – but Linda, yours has been transformed just as much.***

**** Steve Watson – who reminded me of the earlier story about Jim Cymbala and the homeless guy who wanted Jesus not money. Said I told that story the first Sunday they came to the Summit. They had done some church but were not Christ followers – had not been rescued by the work of Christ. He heard that story and said – I want that too. Weeks later Steve was rescued and baptized here. That was in July of 2000 - 18 years ago. And man has God and is God transforming my brother. God has grown Steve into a leader in this body and this week as a part of our Guate team he led and guided our team and spoke truth to the lost and our team. Christ in us – is restoring God's glory in you Steve.***

**** Scotty – is a new man. We went thru a long painful process as a church and as friends. But healing came and is still at work. My kids baby sat his kids. We are friends – God has done so much. He – like me and most of us here who are in Christ - is still a restoration work in God's hands, but such a different man. God transforms.***

Christ in us – the only hope of Glory is bigger than the brokenness in us.

Christ follower – Do you believe this? Hear it again – Christ in us – is the only hope for you to be fully restored in God's glory. There is no other way, there is no other work, there is nothing. BUT in Christ – you and I will be transformed into His glory. Will you join us and be a part of allowing Jesus to continue the work he began in you and by walking with others in this body who are toiling to walk in the gospel – Christ in us?

This is our hope and is the mission of our body, God's mission for the Summit. Christ in us is your hope, and your hope, and your hope – and my hope for God's glory to be in me. But it is also the only hope for our family, our neighbors, our city, and the nations. This leads us to our last truth or point about – Christ in us our only hope of glory ...

03. Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope for the world to be fully restored into God's glory.

What do you think – is this truth? I am not asking if you think this is true. I am asking is this truth that you shapes the way you live and pray and hope – for your family, your neighbors, our city, - the nations.

We took a team to Guatemala this week – with this message. At times, we saw God save right in front of us – it was amazing. And at times, we saw incredible hurt and suffering that was so big and so huge – it makes you wonder: Is Christ in us greater than the brokenness in this world?

I have a sister I have prayed for to know Christ for many years who has rejected him – is Christ greater than brokenness even though she rejects him. I have seen a neighbors say no to Jesus for 20 years and I have seen 2 marriages crumble recently that I have cared for, loved, and fought for. And in our own city racial division, poverty, hatred crushes my heart as I pray and work with my friends Michael, Billy, and Kempton who are brothers who happen to be black. I hurt for how they are treated by the world but also by how they are treated by Christians. I hurt because I want one body to be united and our city to be healed, but there is so much hate and hurt – and it makes me wonder – is Christ greater than the brokenness of this world? What about you do doubt it.

27 Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone & teaching everyone with all wisdom,

27 - God says – **Christ in you, Christ living in you through the work of the cross – is the only hope for all that is broken in this world, in our city, in your neighbors, in your family – in you!**

27 – God says – **Proclaim, warn, and teach – everyone. Not some, not just those in these four walls, but all. The gospel, Christ in us is greater than all that is broken in this world. We can never stop living and speaking this hope, this truth – for it is the only hope!**

I had a hope when we planted this church that we would send missionaries with this message all of our world, our nation, and our city. We have directly planted 8 churches and helped another 10. We have sent people across the world on short term and long term missions, but I think what is most telling is how many missionaries we have sent right into our own neighborhoods. The change lives in here is evidence of this. **IF you are one of these – don't let the doubts stop you. Join hands with others, get on our knees together and let's anchor in this – Christ in you – in the only hope of restoring the glory in our world.**

If you not on mission in your neighborhood – will you join us? Please – you are needed. I need you. I doubt, he needs you, she needs you. If you are looking for that place to go on mission – join us!

Story

I have three charges for you as my last words that correspond to these hopes in Christ.

Christ in you (the gospel) - is the only hope for the world to be fully restored in God's glory.

3) Commit to keep going to this city and to the nations with the gospel of Jesus – planting churches and sending missionaries.

Do not stop planting churches and stay involved in Acts 29. Stay involved in the inner city initiative, increase the reach of sharing shed, grow our mission reach and keep asking God to send all of us into His fields that white unto harvest. He says Christ in us is the hope of glory.

Christ in you (the gospel) - is the only hope to be fully restored in God's glory.

2) Commit to being together in the gospel – bearing down in the word and prayer.

Commit to being here. Seriously – commit to being here and being a part of God's mission here in this place. My leaving will not stop this mission. Stop playing on the sidelines. Call people to join you. And God will change lives.

Christ in you (the gospel) - is the only hope to know God's glory.

1) Keep proclaiming this message – bearing down in prayer and God will bring a season of salvations.

Elders us – lead the body in prayer begging God to change lives bring his glory to many. Body – join in these prayers for God to save and then let's proclaim Christ in us and it will happen – salvation will come.

Steve Watson who was with our team in Guatemala reminded me of a story this week I told almost 17 years ago. Jim Cymbala, the pastor at Brooklyn Tabernacle Church in New York City tells this story in his book Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire. One Sunday a lady who helped lead worship shared her story of how Christ had rescued her broken life and restored her to His glory through Christ. It was a powerful and miraculous story but Jim had not been deeply moved by it bc he was tired from a long weekend of counseling and peacemaking between members that had not gone well. At the last service of the day, the lady had just finished her story, the worship team was singing, and Jim was praying with a few people when he looked up just in time to see a man approach him, who was obviously homeless by his appearance and smell. The homeless were common visitors in their worship services bc of their location in NYC. In his tired and somewhat jaded mind-set bc of the disunity in the body – his shoulders sagged as did his heart as the man came toward him with his hand out. As the man reached him, he almost vomited as the smell of urine, sweat, dirt, and alcohol all descended on his nostrils. In an attempt to hurry the man off – Jim reached into his pocket to give the man a few dollars. As he pulled the money out the man stopped him and said – “I don't want your money – I want that. I want what she has.”

There is only ONE THING that can restore the lost glory in a homeless man or a business lady who have fallen short of the glory of God. There is only thing that will make a difference in your soul and the souls of others who have been separated from the glory of God. – **Christ in you (the gospel) – is the only hope of glory.**

Will you believe? Today? Pray with me.

Jim said, God restored something in my soul that day as I repented and turned to my loving Jesus and said I want you. I didn't learn anything or become smarter – something was changed by the very power and presence of God in me. His glory – became more full.

Even in our brokenness as Christ followers God longs to restore His glory and he often does it as we repent and turn to the gospel – Christ in us.

Will you repent today and allow God to restore lost glory in you – turn to the gospel and tell Jesus all I need, all I want is you.

Blessing:

Christ in you is the hope of glory.

Because Christ is in you – you know God's glory and he will fully restore his glory in you and in He will fully restore His glory in this world. Go in this the blessing of our Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ!