



Week One: Called to Advance

20 September 2026

Our Purpose: We are called to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ in the city by making disciples who make a difference.

1st Part: Called to Advance

Read: Matthew 28:18

Discussion:

1. Jesus closes the Great Commission not with a command but with a promise, declaring that he is with his people always to the end of the age. How does that promise of Christ's constant presence address the fears or hesitations that might keep us from advancing the gospel?
2. Paul writes in Philippians that he presses on and strains forward toward the goal of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. In what areas of our life together as a church might we have settled into passivity rather than actively pressing forward? What would it look like to "press on" (advance) in these areas?

2nd Part: Advance What? The Gospel of Jesus Christ

Read: Romans 1:16-17

The gospel is good news. It's the best news. It's the best news, in fact... for all human hearts. The truth that all human hearts were designed to long for, even if they're not conscious of it. --Mike Werkheiser

Discussion:

1. Pastor Mike described the gospel as "one thing that is many things." How would you explain the gospel to someone who has never heard it? What aspects of it do you find easiest to articulate? What aspects feel harder to put into words?
2. What other "powers" might we be tempted to advance as City Church? How is the gospel better news?

3rd Part: Advance Where? The City

Read: Jeremiah 29:4-7

Whether you like St. Louis is beside the point. I highly doubt those exiles liked Babylon. Preferences aside, we should all be pulling for St. Louis' growth, success, welfare, and prosperity. --Mike Werkheiser

Discussion

1. The sermon draws a parallel between the Israelite exiles in Babylon and Christians living in a city that is not their ultimate home -- in what practical ways does viewing yourself as a spiritual sojourner shape how you invest in the welfare of St. Louis or your own community?
2. When you think of advancing the gospel in St. Louis in 2026, what might that look like, both for us as a church and for you as a Christian?

4th Part: Advance How? Make Disciples who Make a Difference

Read: Matthew 28:18-20

We are not called to be an enclave unto ourselves, holed up in our nice building here on the corner. No, we are meant to move out, to reach out, to strain forward, press on, and fight the good fight of the faith, advancing the gospel in our city by making disciples who make a difference. --Mike Werkheiser

Discussion

1. In the sermon, Mike quoted Dr. Doriani's explanation that the central command of the Great Commission is to make disciples, not converts (which means making converts and then leading them in what he calls "the arduous journey to maturity"). What do you make of the distinction?
2. Who in your life has walked that "arduous journey" with you? What can you learn from them as you seek to follow in their example to make disciples who make a difference?

Next Week

In God's Love (Worship Christ, Welcome Neighbors)