

Sermon - Deed (Gospel Demonstration)

November 17, 2019

Intro:

Tell Story: Fiorello LaGuardia night court pays fine

In the middle of the Great Depression, New York City mayor, Fiorello LaGuardia, strived to live with the people. It was not unusual for him to ride with the firefighters, raid with the police, or take field trips with orphans. On a bitterly cold night in January of 1935, the mayor turned up at a night court that served the poorest ward of the city. LaGuardia dismissed the judge for the evening and took over the bench himself. Within a few minutes, a tattered old woman was brought before him, charged with stealing a loaf of bread. She told the mayor that her daughter's husband had left, her daughter was sick, and her two grandchildren were starving. However, the shopkeeper, from whom the bread was stolen, refused to drop the charges. "It's a real bad neighborhood, your Honor," the man told the mayor. "She's got to be punished to teach other people around here a lesson."

LaGuardia sighed. He turned to the woman and said, "I've got to punish you. The law makes no exceptions. Ten dollars or ten days in jail."

Put yourself in her shoes, maybe she's already been in jail a couple of days, maybe cold, helpless, hopeless, sad, alone, overwhelmed, afraid, will she see her daughter and grandkids again?, and there she is standing face to face with before the judge who says \$10 dollars or 10 days in jail, either of which leaves spells the end of her daughter and grandchildren.

- Review what Joel talked about last week - word and deed series
 - This is Share Month here at GFC and that means sharing the gospel in word and deed
 - He said gospel proclamation and gospel demonstration are 2 sides of the same coin
 - That the word gospel means good news. The good news of the scriptures is expressed in 5 key words: Creation, Fall, Rescue, Restoration and Respond
 - And that the we are to pray that the Lord sends workers out into the harvest to share this good news.
 - And he began with these verses from Luke:
- Read **Luke 9:1-6, 10-11**

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, ² and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³ He told them: “Take nothing for the journey —no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt. ⁴ Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. ⁵ If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.” ⁶ So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere. When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. v10 Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida, ¹¹ but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.

- In v 2, 6 and 11 you see both sides of the coin - the gospel in words and the gospel in deeds
- My emphasis today is on gospel demonstration, when scripture says we are called to love and good deeds. What does that look like and how does that fit into our lives?
- Is there something the mayor could do to demonstrate the gospel whether in words or good deeds?
- We are going to look at **3 things about gospel demonstration**:
 - What do we need to show it
 - How do we get it
 - Who benefits from it

What do we need to show it:

- **LOVE** - When most people think about love in the bible they think about 1 corinthians 13. Let's look at the most famous ch on love in scripture and see if we can notice anything new here. But for us to understand 1 corinthians 13 (the love chapter) we need to go back to the beginning of the book and see what Paul says in his letter to them to start off and look at the context in which Paul wrote.
- **1 Cor 1:4,5,7**
 - “I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way... with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge... Therefore, you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.”
 - They have these things already, all they need Wouldn't you love someone saying these words about you or our church? But he does! The same are true for you. Joel just taught us through 2nd Peter where he

reminded us that God has given us everything we need to live a godly life.

- But then Paul goes on in the rest of the book to handle 3 main issues in the Corinthian church at that time where their actions didn't match what they've been given: defrauding one another in the courts, sexual misconduct and drunkenness and gluttony at communion meal. Their actions do not match what they've been given and placed in their hearts spiritually.

Flip to 1 Cor 13 now and let's take a fresh look at these verses and knowing this background gives us an idea of why this LOVE chapter was written. And I give Tim Keller the credit for some of the scriptural insights I'm sharing today.

The Problem - 13v1-6

"If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing."

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."

So if what we need to demonstrate the gospel is love, what kind of "love" problems do we see in the Corinthian church?

- ***The problem was internal.*** It wasn't a lack of opportunity. It wasn't a lack of effort. It wasn't that they were lazy. They did some "good" things (read through what they did in v 1-3) but they were admonished for them. **"If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing."**

- ***The problem was motivational.*** The pure motivation of love is missing. They lacked empathy and true concern for each other and the people of their city. That's why Paul gave definition to what true love looks like in 4-6. (Read these verses.) ⁴ **Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.** ⁵ **It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.** ⁶ **Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."**

- Charles Spurgeon a pastor from another century told this story: "Once upon a time there was a king who ruled over everything in a land. One day there was a gardener who grew an enormous carrot. He took it to his king and said, "My lord, this is the greatest carrot I've ever grown or ever will grow; therefore, I want to present it to you as a token of my love and respect for you." The king was touched and discerned the man's heart, so as he turned to go, the king said, "Wait! You are clearly a good steward of the earth. I want to give a plot of land to you freely as a gift, so you can garden it all." The gardener was amazed and delighted and went home rejoicing.

But there was a nobleman at the king's court who overheard all this, and he said, "My! If that is what you get for a carrot, what if you gave the king something better?" The next day the nobleman came before the king, and he was leading a handsome black stallion. He bowed low and said, "My lord, I breed horses, and this is the greatest horse I've ever bred or ever will; therefore, I want to present it to you as a token of my love and respect for you."

But the king discerned his heart and said, "Thank you," and took the horse and simply dismissed him. The nobleman was perplexed, so the king said, "Let me explain. That gardener was giving me the carrot, but you were giving yourself the horse."

- The gardener's heart was right. He was giving out of an internal motivation of love and respect and kindness. How often do you and I approach God presenting our good deeds with the heart of the nobleman, rather than with the heart of the gardener?
 - This same issue is reflected in the story of Adam and Eve's kids in Genesis 4, Cain and Able - Able's offering was accepted but Cain's offering was rejected by God. It wasn't because of Cain's product or what he did that was wrong, it was his heart attitude behind it.
- ***The problem was self-centered.*** The Corinthian church was doing good but to Paul and to the Lord it was worthless. Their hearts were not in the right place.

Verses 2 & 3. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing (who you are). ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing (where you are). *(Nelson, Skye make sure this quote is there as I wrote it here - there are extra words, thx)*

You can see I added a couple of phrases to this quote. Two phrases that speak directly to the heart issue in the western and American church as much as it did to the Corinthian church 2000 years ago: I am nothing v 2 (who I am). I gain nothing v 3 (where I am). You can keep trying to be a better person and find out who you are by what your enneagram number is and what essential oil works best for your mind, read every self help book or theology book or podcast, but you'll never get *who* you are until you understand the gospel and how much Jesus loves you and the extent to which he showed it on the cross. If your main focus is getting ahead at work and providing for your family to have this or that and a certain vacation and retirement plan you will never be settled on *where* you are.

Because ultimately if you've accepted his free gift of salvation, then you are sanctified and justified in Jesus. You are right with God because of who God is, not for who you are and where you are is in the palm of His hand. Some of you are distracted from God's calling on your life because you are so worried about who you are and where you are. And this distraction can only be healed by meditating on God's word that explains how you are loved and accepted the way you are, and Jesus' sacrifice and outpouring of grace and mercy on the cross gives us hope no matter where we are.

So why the different reactions to the king between the gardener and the nobleman? We've just looked at our love problem. Now let's look at the remedy for wrong motivation.

The Remedy - What's the remedy? Paul gets us to look ahead, look into the future. We find it in v8-13 of ch13.

8“Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹² For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we

shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”

What’s the remedy?

Looking ahead to being in the presence of the Lord. And there’s 2 things we learn here about being in the presence of the Lord.

- ***It’s face to face.*** v12 “Now we see but a poor reflection in a mirror then we shall see face to face.”
 - It’s face to face. It’s not that we will sitting on clouds with Jesus on a distant cloud or throne. It’s not just that we are in the same room as him someday. It will be face to face.
 - How do we relate to this verse? I think of those of you who have to travel for work out of state or out of country, and you come home see your spouse for the first time and look in their face. Or your kid comes home from college for the first time in a couple of months. Or we see that grandchild when it’s first born or maybe after a few months of being away. You know the emotion, connection, joy and intimacy that comes with those kind of face to face moments. Maybe those moments give us a glimpse of, or just a taste of what it will be like when we see him face to face.
 - Jesus tells a story of the talents (I share brief overview) ... The servant who hid the talents didn’t know god face to face, wrong motivation saw god as harsh
 - The gardener was transformed by his respect, allegiance and admiration of the who the king was. And the king saw his face. They were face to face.

- ***It’s certain.***
 - we shall v 12, - our motivation “For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we *shall* see face to face. Now I know in part; then I *shall* know fully, even as I am fully known.”
 - You will also be fully known and fully loved v12, know is a deep personal intimate relationship, and this become our motivation to do good in this life
 - We should do good and demonstrate the gospel because it’s satisfying in and of itself and to honor God. If you know about the smile and the joy someday of being face to face with God it transforms our heart experience with Jesus to have transformational experiences with others in need.

So what do we need to Demonstrate the Gospel - love - our problem is the right motivation for love, our remedy being the future face to face presence with Jesus. So we've talked about what do we need to show it, now how do we get it? Here's how get it.

How do we get it:

We need a transformational heart experience with the gospel.

You may know Jesus but you are stuck because you haven't been transformed by Him. Paul says in Romans 12 be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That's why here at GFC we talk about a disciple of Jesus is someone who not just knows him as savior but is being transformed by him over time and committed to the same mission he was - to make disciples of Jesus.

A transformed heart can only come through an experience of the gospel. Before we can demonstrate the gospel we have to have the gospel transform us. That's why Joel talked about Gospel proclamation before I spoke about gospel demonstration. But you have to understand our *need* for the gospel and heart transformation first and that's what Paul does in v. 4-7. Did you know that the gospel is right here in the middle of the famous love ch of 1 corinthians 13?

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

I left out v 7 before.

4-6 makes sense, it's doable. But could be written in any secular self-help book on the shelf today. but v 7 is nuts impossible - that's why we need the gospel because only Jesus can do something always. And that's why we *need* him in our lives. V 7 basically is to remind us of Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God”. But 2 corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: The old has gone, the new is here!”

The only way you can adequately demonstrate the gospel and love always is if you've been transformed by the gospel and you are a new creation. The gospel is an experience of the grace of God that will *transform us* to do good deeds.

Alright so we've talked about what we need to Demonstration the Gospel (love), how

to get it (gospel transformed heart), now Who Benefits From It. I'm going to give you 4 areas that benefit from Gospel Demonstration:

Who benefits from it:

You - End of ch 12. Paul says "I will show YOU a more excellent way." That's personal. That's an individual statement of care and concern for each person in Corinth and here in Kingsport as well. God cares about each one of us individually. You are fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God and he loves you desperately, individually and right where you are. He desires to fill us up with His perfect love in such a way that good deeds overflow to those around us.

Church - 1 Cor 1:2 "To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul was writing to the church in Corinth and to the church across the world. When we demonstrate the gospel with good deeds not only does the name of Jesus get glory but the church, His church, is honored in such a way that He gets more glory. "The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one." - John 17:22
When we are known for our good deeds, the church gets notoriety, but Jesus gets the glory.

Culture - Love should meet the culture and transform it as well. Most of the initial changes in these areas were made by people of the Christian faith:

Christian influence in the culture:

1. Intrinsic value and role of children in society
2. Abolition of child labor
3. Intrinsic value and role of women in society
4. Helping orphans
5. Educating society
6. Eradicating slavery
7. First to build hospitals in the roman world and often now the first in the developing world for medical care
8. Prison reform
9. Caring for the poor
10. Scientific thought: Kepler, Galileo, Sir Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton

Lost - The lost are looking for a reason to not believe and if our actions do not back up our message we give the unbelievers a reason to stay in their unbelief. Because in their eyes - we are hypocrites. But gospel demonstration breaks down those hypocritical walls in an atheistic and agnostic realm. With Jesus, the healings authenticated who He was. For us, Gospel Demonstration authenticates the gospel

message as well. It authenticates who Jesus is and who we are.

Story - Kululu from OCC

What was it in the box that saved his life and gave him hope: the flashlight. Jesus said;

“In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

The light is the “good deeds” performed by Jesus’s followers—performed in such a way that at least some men recognize us as followers of Jesus, and turned to believe in Jesus as their Savior as well.

Close:

That’s his story from Nairobi. How many people here in Kingsport feel unloved, untouchable, like a leper because their skin, their home, their clothes, their smell, is different? Or they’re bullied and feel they are nothing? That xmas reminds them of how forgotten they are. They walk streets and neighborhoods of Kingsport as well. Some may even be here in our church also.

Maybe that’s how the lady felt in the courtroom of Mayor LaGuardia?? Here’s the rest of the story. We left the story where Mayor Laguardia sentence to a \$10 fine of 10 days in jail. But even as he pronounced sentence, the mayor was already reaching into his pocket. He extracted a \$10 bill and tossed it into his famous hat, saying, “Here is the ten dollar fine which I now remit; and furthermore I am going to fine everyone in this courtroom fifty cents for living in a town where a person has to steal bread so that her grandchildren can eat. Mr. Bailiff, collect the fines and give them to the defendant.”

The mayor demonstrated the gospel by paying off a debt she could never pay which is what Jesus did for us on the cross.

Luke 9:12,13 - Here’s what Joel and I left off from those opening verses in Luke. Late in the afternoon the Twelve came to him along with a huge crowd of people and the disciples said, **“Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here.”**

¹³ He replied, “You give them something to eat.”

Emphasize **“You give them something to eat.”**

The Mayor had everyone pay a fine. He basically told those in the courtroom you give her something to eat. The shopkeeper saw the broken law, the mayor saw the women’s face.

~~So we focus on doing good deeds here at GFC as well.~~

~~Sometimes these deeds are done...~~

- ~~1. Church wide~~
- ~~2. In-Life Groups~~
- ~~3. As individuals~~

Whose face do you need to pay more attention to this week?

So who are you going to give something to eat to this week? Who are you are going to demonstrated gospel goodness to where you live, work or play? Let's do it together from a heart that's been transformed by the gospel.

Pray over the shoeboxes here.

End

Questions:

Head

Heart

Hands