

XII. The Church in Biblical Perspective
The Ekklesia: God's Church for the Ages
"God's Call To Grow—Our Ministry of Disciple Making"
Acts 2:42-47
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May 15, 2010 – Morning Sermon

This is the Word of God. It's the Truth. Acts 2:42-47 says **42** *And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

The grass withers and the flower fades. God's Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

We had our baccalaureate this morning which included our college graduates and high school graduates from Briarwood Christian School, private schools, and public school. I was wanting to try and claim credit but I couldn't for how when we planned out the series on the church for this last sermon on the church as a learning community fell on the Sunday that these graduates were being recognized and honored. You'll see why in a minute. I tried to make it appropriate to them and also to you by a little story that's a true story.

There was a young man who graduated with honors, accolades and achievements from high school. In fact more than that because this young man was well renowned in his church where he had actually spoken on youth Sundays. He was the president of their youth fellowship and was quite a remarkable young man. He comes out of high school with a great future in front of him as he moves on to college. There were great expectations. He went to an SEC school which will remain nameless and he was majoring in a highly competitive field and graduate school was even more competitive. He arrives at his fourth year and like many of us when we're going through college you kind of put off some of the classes you don't want to take until you have to take them and then unfortunately you have to take the ones you don't want to take but you have to have a good enough grade to get into the graduate school so all the pressure was on.

So in this class he didn't want to take he had put off a completion of a paper that amounted to a very significant part of his grade. He finally turned in the paper in his last semester, needing a good grade to hopefully get into the graduate school he wanted to get into. It was competitive. He went to his mailbox and pulled out the paper and he saw the grade "A". He was relieved and then he saw a little note that said "Excellent paper! Would you please stop by my office?" Then the professor signed it. He went to his office fully expecting the professor to ask for a few pointers on how brilliant he was in light of that paper. He sat down and the professor said "I see that you saw what I said about you having an excellent paper." The young man said "Yes sir and I'm really grateful for that grade, an "A"." The professor said, "That's wonderful, now I've now

had you for a class but can I ask you a couple of questions.” He said, “Certainly.” The professor said, “Have you gone here all four years?” He said, “Yes.” “My undergraduate work went to this school also.” “You did?” “Yes, are you a member of a fraternity?” “Yes.” “Would that fraternity happen to be (he named it)?” “Why, certainly?” “Is the fraternity house still at (he named the address)?” “Yes, that’s our fraternity house.” “I thought so because that was here when I was here and that was the house I lived in. Can I ask you another question?” “Yes.” “Upstairs in the attic, are those file cabinets still up there, there’s three of them?” “Well, yeah.” “In those file cabinets are there tests and papers for the various classes for the curriculum here?”

His eyes went to the floor and I call that the shoe test moment where all of a sudden you’re looking at your shoes. He looked at the professor and said “Yes sir.” The professor said “The paper you turned in came from the file cabinet, didn’t it?” He said, “Yes sir. Sir, how did you know?” The professor said, “I told you I have been here to school. I was a member of that fraternity and you actually just turned in one of my papers.” He said, “Oh! Can I ask you a question?” “Yes.” “Why did you give me an “A”?” The professor said, “When I turned it in he gave me a “C” and I’ve always felt that paper deserved an “A”!” What happened?

Now I want to ask you a question and I’ve thought about this as I looked over all of our graduates and thinking of yours. What happened in four years? This young man was seemingly Christ centered, engaged in his church, known for his witness for Christ, had achievement after achievement and by his fourth year of college he is a thief. He is a cheat. He is a pragmatist where the end justifies the means. What happened? I’m fully aware we’re all capable of falling into sin but what happened for that large of a swing in his life?

I believe one of the most crucial things that ever happens in our life, for those of you who have made a commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, as your commitment did you read the top of the bulletin today? It said “Continuing steadfastly in the Truth.” What’s going to happen when you work and work and at the end of everything you’ve bought it all and a tornado comes through and it’s gone? How will you respond? What’s going to happen in life when loved ones die, when debilitating diseases strike? We’re in a fallen world, you know. We’re in a world that’s broken by sin. We’re not in the new heavens and the new earth. What will happen on those days? What will happen when the job you have always wanted you don’t get and they gave it to someone else? What will happen when death visits your family? What will happen when life visits your family, will God’s gift of a child become the opportunity for idolatry? Will God’s gift of a child become your meaning for life or will you see a life that’s been entrusted to you to bring up for Him? How will you look at it? How will you and I look at our success in life where we do get the job we wanted? Now why did that happen?

I was talking with some of my friends and they asked me about the fact that when the tornado came through and in God’s Providence I had very little damage to deal with, “Now how am I supposed to view that?” Am I somebody special or should I be asking the Lord “Why didn’t it come right through my front door? If it didn’t Lord, then what have You done to position me? Perhaps You’ve positioned me so that I can respond to others in their time of need.” How will I view that moment?

We are talking about how you will view life. You are going to view life through

what you think is truth or what you believe to be truth. You are going to view life through the truth that you were taught by the teachers you have chosen in life. That's why one of the challenges of the church of Jesus Christ is to be a community of learners and disciple making. I want to look back at Acts 2 and last year we were able to celebrate 50 years of God's wonderful blessings on a congregation that's very imperfect. We're sinners saved by grace but God has blessed us and we wanted to praise Him for a year of jubilee and now we're moving into the next 50 years or until Jesus comes again and we decided that maybe the answer isn't to come up with something exotic to re-engineer the church. Maybe the answer is to go back and make sure the foundational issues of what the church was supposed to be designed by the Lord and just make sure we're staying on track with those foundational issues so we have been spending a couple of months on that and we have articulate our vision.

We have our mission statement which is For God's glory, Briarwood is committed to **EQUIPPING CHRISTIANS** to worship God and reach Birmingham to reach the world for Christ. So we went to a vision statement which is, not only for this generation but for Coming Generations, Briarwood desires to be a Christ-centered, Gospel-driven, Spirit-filled **EQUIPPING CENTER** where every member is a minister and a missionary. Now what does it mean that we're all ministers? The Bible says He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists and some as pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints to do the work of the ministry. So you're the saints in Christ. What ministry are you and I supposed to do? My job is to make sure that we in the leadership are equipping you to be ministers.

I believe there are four ministries that the Bible teaches that believers are supposed to do. There is a ministry of up-reach which is worship. There is a ministry of outreach which is evangelism. There is a ministry of in-reach which is loving one another and a ministry of down-reach which is learning with commitment. We used this early church that comes out of the Great Commission. They are Christ centered and the Spirit of God has fallen upon them. They are proclaiming the Gospel and this church that went from 11 to 120 to 3,000 and is going to sweep throughout the whole world in less than 25 years, turning the world upside (Acts 17:6), we see in their profile that they gathered together in the temple to praise God. They were a worshipping church. They lifted up praise to God in Spirit and in truth and then they lived lives of worship. In other words their life was a doxological statement to the glory of God.

Then in Acts 2 it says the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved. They were evangelistic. Their ministry to God was worship. Their ministry to the world was evangelism – the Gospel so that people could come to Christ. You can see from the text they had possessions but in a sense they felt “We don't own anything because it really all belongs to the Lord so whatever is needed to minister to one another at a point in time, Lord, we're ready, here we are.” It says they were selling their possessions and giving to one another as needs arose, not programmed but personally responsive to the needs of one another.

I want to say this one more time. I don't think the aim of a church should ever be size. No, we want a healthy church. God builds the DNA into what size He wants it. A W.E.L.L. church or a healthy church is what we want. So this early church was a W.E.L.L. church. They reached up in worship, out in evangelism, in in love and down in learning. They were a worshipping community. They were an evangelistic community.

They were a loving community and they were a learning community. In Acts 2:42 it says they continually devoted themselves to the apostles teaching. They were a learning community. I can't follow Christ until I know Christ and I can't know Christ if I don't know the Book. I have to know the Book. In other words, they took the Great Commission seriously.

So you remember what Jesus said in the Great Commission? He said to go and make disciples. Go make disciples – Christ followers and learners. Go and make disciples baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. I want you to give your whole life to teaching My whole Word to all of My people and that is to be a teaching community. That's the Great Commission. Not only did the early church take the Great Commission serious but they also took the Great Commandment serious which is "You shall love the Lord with all your heart, with all soul and with all your mind."

I really believe the church is 5 miles wide and 1 inch deep for two reasons. One we have taken the pulpit, the lectern and our small group disciple making in so many of our churches and we so easily think we have to qualify the message. I understand you need to teach primary and secondary and you don't start off with the hardest verse. Paul told us this when he said milk of the word, meat of the word and I know that but sometimes all we are doing is putting out milk and never getting to put out meat. We never get them to meat. It's always give me five points on how to start a business, five points on how to be successful, five techniques on keeping my kids under control, five this and five that, instead of really digging into the Word of God to know it deeply so that when storms of a sin cursed world strike I have something deep I hold to. It's not a cliché or an empty sentimental emotional cliché but I have something deep that I'm anchored to in Christ.

Secondly, I not only think it's the fault of the leadership but the fault of the membership because many of us just play drive-by church, meaning if it's convenient I'll show up for the means of grace preaching instead of giving attention to the effectual hearing and prayer for the preaching of the Word and the preparing of my heart. God I can't know You if I don't know Your Word consistently and I don't know Your Word if I'm not studying it and if I'm not hearing it. The church is to take the call to be a learning community seriously at all the levels – at Christianity 101, 201, 301, 401 and wherever we need to go with it.

I want to look at another passage of Scripture and I want to bring out five observations about the learning community of the church and how the leadership and the fellowship can embrace this with some last words of the Apostle Paul before he died. II Timothy 2:1-2 says *I You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.* I want you to remember that Paul wrote 13 epistles, 9 to churches and 4 to individuals. Two of them he wrote to Timothy. II Timothy is the last epistle he wrote right before he died to his "son" in the faith, his "child" in the faith. This is the child he said "Follow me as I follow Christ. Imitate me as I imitate Christ." This is the child he taught and instructed and before he dies and sends him off into life and ministry, without him being present, this is in a sense his commencement service. "Timothy I'm going so you've graduated and here's what I want you to do."

There are a lot of things he says in II Timothy that are very interesting but notice what these last words are. II Timothy 2:1-2 says ***I** You then (I'm not here so here's what I want you to do), my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, **2** and what you have **heard from me** in the presence of many witnesses **entrust** to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.* This is so glorious. Here is Paul with Timothy and the men who were with Timothy, like Titus, Silas, Aquila, and Priscilla and now he's telling all of you that I've invest in to go get faithful men who will be able to teach others also. That's what I want you to do. So what is he saying in this text?

I want to give you five observations from this. The first thing is that he is reminding us that the Christian life is learned. The Christian life is not known by intuition or by imagination. Here is what I hear many Christians say a lot. It's kind of like a bumper sticker thing but like most bumper stickers, it's wrong. 'Let your conscience be your guide.' Wrong! The fact that you and I have a conscience shows that we're made in the image of God, we know there's right and there's wrong but our conscience can be misinformed or misguided or seared and calloused. It the Word that is our guide. That Bible that you and I own many people died so that you could have that in your own language and we have it so readily available. It doesn't give us the consistent Christian life because we buy and put it on our coffee table and it sends out vibrations as if it's a magic book. That why Paul says in II Timothy 2:15 to Timothy, "*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.*"

The Christian life is learned from conversion to glory. When can I stop learning? You can stop learning when you step into heaven yet I don't think you're going to stop learning even then. I think we're going to learn while in eternity. Won't I run out of stuff to learn? No, you'll learn about God and He is unfathomable. So you'll be able to learn for all eternity and now we're learning as we move into eternity. Why is this so important? We had to learn to be converted. I had to learn I was a sinner. The problem with my life is not that they didn't have enough street lights in my neighborhood when I was growing up. The problem was not that I had an alcoholic father or alcoholic mother or that I was born in poverty. All of those things certainly become opportunities, temptations and influences but I have a problem. I'm a sinner because I was born a sinner. I don't sin and become a sinner. I was born a sinner and I'm going to sin.

Now is there any hope given the fact that I've also learned from the Bible, the wages of sin is death? The Bible gives me the diagnosis. Your problem is not an educational problem directly for you have a heart problem. Now here is what the Word of God says to you about the remedy from the heart. God has loved you. God who is holy, who will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, has sent His Son to remove your sin and guilt to give you a new record and a new heart so you can be right with Him. I had to learn that. I had to be saved, how? I had to be saved by faith. For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourself for it is the gift of God not of works lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8). How did I get faith from God? I received faith from God by the power of the Holy Spirit. I also got faith because of this. Faith comes by hearing and hearing the Word of Christ (Romans 10:17). I had to learn.

From my conversion until I step into glory I have to know the Christian life is learned. It's not what I think or imagine or by intuition or my conscience. It is what does the Word of God tell me when the breath of God blows? I begin to find out that when the

breath of God blows with such frightening ferocity, how is God speaking? Of course we always want simple answers and God pretty much keeps telling us, “No, I’m multi-faceted. I’m sending judgment. I’m sending salvation. I’m sending a message of comfort. I’m opening a door for ministry. I’m shutting some doors of ministry. I’m doing all these multiple things but you can’t know it unless you know Me and you can’t know Me except by My Word.” Therefore we are learners.

If the Christian life learned then that leads me to the second point which means we need to be intentional learners. Back in Acts 2 it said they were continually devoted to the apostles teachings. It’s intentional. I love the moment where Paul is talking with Timothy and says “Continue in what you have learned, knowing from whom you have learned it and that from childhood you have known salvation through the sacred words.” He had been given the wisdom that leads to salvation in Christ Jesus. So if the Christian life is learned therefore if I’m a Christian I want to be an intentional learner, not a haphazard learner or a drive-by learner but an intentional learner.

I have a challenge in this because my daddy told me something about learning. He said, “Son, I don’t know if you’re going to learn or not but there’s a time in everyone’s life when you know you’re not learning something.” I said, “When is that daddy?” He said, “It’s when you’re talking.” Now that’s a one time you know you’re not learning something. So can I intentionally be quiet and listen? Can I secure a teacher, a mentor, get a book, get the Book of life and read it? Continue steadfastly devoted to the apostles teaching. Continue in what you have learned knowing from whom you have learned them.

When I share my testimony with people I always try to find a way to get their attention. I don’t like to talk about my unsaved life as an attention getter because I am just so ashamed of the way I lived and its influence upon other people. So I try to do it this way. I usually start off by saying, “I was saved out of a drug problem.” Then everybody listens because they think “This preacher was a druggie.” Then I’ll say “My mom and daddy drug me to church every Sunday morning, every Sunday night, every Wednesday night and there was no time that my daddy would say ‘Okay children where do you want to go to church?’” He knew where he was taking us and he took me. I’m grateful because in the depth of my sin, emptiness and depravity I remember Willie Alison that faithful, Godly woman who taught me in my 5th grade Sunday school class. She probably thought I wasn’t paying any attention but the Word was being imparted. I remember Donald, Bud Neilson, HP Williams, Mr. Sullivan, and Glenn Short. I still remember because my parents made sure I was being taught.

The Christian life is learning therefore not only should parents be intentional for their children but now that I’m a Christian I need to be intentional as a believer to be a learner. The key to the Christian life is not that you know it all but that by God’s grace you want to know it all. You hunger for it. Here is the way Peter says it. You long for the pure milk of the Word, the way a nursing baby seeks its mother. You long for it with everything within you.

I want to give you one more illustration from the Bible. I love it when Jesus gave one of those hard sayings and everybody turned and walked away. Then Jesus looked at His disciples and said “Do you want to go?” And Peter says “Lord, to whom shall we go? You alone have the Words of Life.” If you and I believe that what would we do

with this Bible? We would not only say that we need to be a learner but we would be intentional in our learning.

Here is third observation. If the Christian life is learned therefore we need faithful teachers. I have chosen the word carefully, 'faithful teachers.' What do I mean by that? It means people that are faithful to God's Word, faithful to Christ, faithful to desire to live that Word for Christ, those who are strong in the grace that is found in Christ Jesus that we need. The Bible says, "When all is said and done the pupil becomes like their teacher." We need faithful teachers. The Bible says He has gifted and called teachers. He has given people the ability to teach. He has called us as parents to teach. He has called us as teachers within the church and then there are those who can give it away. Nobody can teach me what they don't know. Nobody can lead me where they have not been. So Lord, please let me realize the Christian life is learned so I need to be an intentional learner and that means I need faithful teachers. Not only do they need to be faithful to the Word and to Christ but faithful to me also to tell me what I need to hear whether I want to hear it or not. There will come a time I want my ears tickled and I need them to tell me the truth because they love me. I need them to give me the truth in love.

The fourth observation is the Christian life is learned therefore we need to prayerfully choose Godly teachers for their lives. Who are your teachers? I know what the world does. The world has its teachers and they call them celebrities and they want them to lead our children and they want to lead you and me. They teach through music, television, movies, books, newspapers and the internet. I don't need cultural icons. I don't need celebrities, people who are parasites who live off the culture. I need the people who make the culture worth living in to be my teachers. Whatever I need to sacrifice to get to them, I need them in my life. I need those mentors and disciples. I need more than one. I need multiple because with everyone's strengths you get their weakness. I need to choose Godly men and women I can learn from. I need to do that my whole life.

I'm going to say something that will probably make some parents cringe because if my kids did this I'd probably shot them anyway but when I was 21 years old my wife and I married and God was giving us a child. I'd become a Christian and I just got hungry. They couldn't keep the doors of the church open enough. I went back to East Carolina and realized it wasn't going to get me very far down the road after I had taken my comparative religion class. Then I made the third best decision of my life. Decision number one was Jesus. Decision number two was my wife and decision number three was I went to Covenant College. I drove up Lookout Mountain in January of 1972 with \$75 in my pocket and everything we owned in an 8 by 12 U-Haul. I had a dog and we were expecting our first child. I started school the next day with no job and no place to live. I should have been shot but I want to tell you why I went there.

I'm not saying everybody has to go to Covenant College but I want to tell you why it was such a blessing. I'm not saying I did it right but I knew I had to get there because I heard them sing "All For Jesus" when I visited. "All for Jesus, all my being, all my wisdom, all my powers, all my life, all my possessions, all my hours." Then I sat in the class and I heard my teachers and I had to get there. So to this day I have Chuck Anderson, Henry Krabbendam, Jim Boyce, RC Sproul as teachers and I could go on and on. I now have teachers. Some of them are with the Lord now like Jim Boyce but because I was there I was able to get those teachers and there was nobody who needed

them more than me. To this day I need it desperately. Choose Godly teachers and be a verbivore that devours everything you can.

The last observation is the Christian life is learned therefore we need to start teaching others. We need to become teachers. II Timothy 2:1-2 says *1 You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me...now start giving it away.* I didn't give it to you for you to go over and be self satisfied with how much you know. I gave it to you to give away and when you give it away give it away to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. This is an interesting thing. You can't know Christ without learning. You can't follow Christ without learning. You can't do what's right until you know what's right and you can't know what's right without coming to the Word of God and learning it and therefore you need teachers – faithful teachers, Godly teachers, and you need to be intentional. Amazingly you actually begin to grow geometrically when once you start learning you commit yourself to giving it away to somebody else. It's unbelievable what happens when you start teaching. Whatever you have that somebody doesn't have and you start giving it away it's amazing what will happen to you.

I became a Christian a couple of years before I went to Covenant College. Here is how I became a Christian. Some of you have heard but I want to end up with this. I want to emphasize one piece of it that I don't emphasize very often. I met Cindy and thought "I need to spend some time with her." Then she told me she was a Christian and that she doesn't date anyone but Christians so I was in trouble there because I wasn't one. The good news is I wasn't one so I didn't mind lying and I told her I was one. I was raised in a church where they had altar calls so I had been forward doing that. In my church every Sunday night they sang "Just As I Am" and all of us in the youth group would look at each other and think "Alright who is going up?" If we didn't go up we'd never get to Shoney's that night.

The other thing I had to do now with Cindy was go to church. I couldn't go back to my church because that would blow my cover. I couldn't go to her church because I heard they ate people there so I picked a Presbyterian Church because they don't believe much. I'll just slip in and slip out. I got in and didn't realize there were different kinds. This one believed and taught the Bible and then the next thing I know a couple of months later the pastor calls me and says "One of our elders, his wife had a cerebral hemorrhage at the Christmas dinner table and is dying. Their four girls want you and Cindy to come." The wife was only 39 years old. I said, "Sure" and we went over. After it was all over and we had attended the graveside service I went to him and said "I don't know what to do or say. I've washed your car but what can I do, I'm new at this church stuff." He said, "Harry, I think I need to tell you something." He taught me.

He said, "If I could bring her back I wouldn't." I said, "Were you having trouble?" He said, "No, I've known her since I was 14. I wouldn't bring her back and I'm going to give you the three reasons why. One, what she has now is so glorious I wouldn't take it from her. Two, God doesn't make mistakes for He is sovereign. He never tells me all things are good but He just tells me all things work together for good and this is going to be a challenge so I can't wait to see how He's going to pull this one off but I'm going to see. Three it won't be that much longer until I'll be there so where will you be?" I knew where I was headed so I went in his hallway and knelt and committed my life to Christ. I said, "Lord, if you can do that to people who meet

something like this and I see the truth of God's Word anchored that's what I need." I became a believer.

A week later they made me the Youth Director. Now that was more stupid than me driving up Lookout Mountain. Here I had all these Presbyterian kids who were catechized and pasteurized and everything else. I thought Malachi was an Italian prophet pronounced Ma-la-chee. I'm in there trying to teach them and stay a step ahead of them. You wouldn't believe the growth that happened in my life then.

So if God has called you, be a learner, intentional and start giving it away. In fact, I'll sum it up this way with my takeaway. Other than your decision to be a Christ follower, there is no decision in your life more important than a commitment to be a Spirit-filled, lifelong learner of God's Word from those whom God has gifted to teach you resulting in a sacrificial commitment to teach others also. You're probably thinking "Harry, what about marriage?" No, this is the way you'll find out who to marry. This is how you will know who to look for and what you're supposed to be for them. What about my job? This will tell you how to work. This will tell you the parameters of life. This will tell give you the parameters for all the decisions of life. Make a lifelong commitment.

I was looking at the graduates this morning that were 17, 18, and 19 years old headed out and praise the Lord for them. I remembered a 13, 14, and 15 year old. I know that was about their age because of the Hebrew words. They found themselves in a school, a pagan school, hundreds of miles away from home. They impacted three kingdoms, five dynasties, and were even used for a conversion of a pagan king. Their names were Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They would have been in our junior high ministry when they were taken away but they went all the way into a fiery furnace rather than worship a pagan god. A king saw in the furnace their God who came to the furnace for them and says "What kind of God saves like this?" I know somebody taught those kids. I know they learned their lessons well. Then the king and empires were able to see, not a religion but a God who comes into this world even to a fiery furnace to save us from our sins.

Be a learner. Depend upon the Spirit of God. Choose your teachers well. Be devoted and start giving it away. Then watch what happens. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the time we've been able to be together. Thank You for the privilege to serve our Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord of glory. Thank You Father that we might be a learning community for we have much to learn and Father most of all, I confess to You that I feel like child. I don't know how to go out or come in so teach me. Father, give us not only a heart to learn, but give us teachers that we can hear and we can imitate, who will instruct us, who will mentor us and who will set an example as a model for us but Father, keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. I pray this in Jesus' Name, lead us King, Eternal King, Amen.

The Briarwood Mission

“Our Purpose”

For God’s glory, Briarwood is committed to **EQUIPPING CHRISTIANS** to worship God and reach Birmingham to reach the world for Christ.

The Briarwood Vision

“Our Passion”

For Coming Generations, Briarwood desires to be a Christ-centered, Gospel-driven, Spirit-filled **EQUIPPING CENTER** where every member is a minister and a missionary.

The Briarwood Strategy

“Our Ministry”

For Coming Generations, Briarwood will prayerfully seek to Implement the Biblical strategy of:

1. Gospel Evangelism and Disciple-making
2. Gospel Church Planting and Church Revitalization
3. Gospel Deeds of Love, Mercy and Justice
4. Gospel Leaders Developed and Deployed