

Passion, Service and Sacrifice

July 15, 2018

I **SLIDE** Cornerstone Garden

A) Community Garden

- 1) 60x60 plot to serve the community
- 2) Mema got it disked
- 3) Benny and Sherry Ward tilled and prepared the ground
- 4) Church bought the seed and provided the water
- 5) If you needed fresh vegetable, pick what you need
- 6) All we had to do was tend the garden, and the Lord would bring the increase
- 7) Unfortunately, we did not do that.
- 8) We did not water and tend the seed
- 9) Weeds took over, but we did not uproot the weeds
- 10) The harvest was plentiful, but the workers were few
- 11) Before long, the vegetables died for lack of care
- 12) We eventually tilled it up and did not plant another

B) Coal county is our garden

- 1) We are called to plant the seed, which is the Word of God
- 2) Some of us are called to plant, some to water, and some to feed
- 3) If we do that, God will bring the increase
- 4) If we do not do that, the seed will not grow
- 5) Without us, the seed will not be sown
- 6) Without us, the seed will not be watered and fed

C) Passion

- 1) A few weeks ago, I asked the Lord, "What has happened to the church's passion for You?"
- 2) I prayed for Him to restore our passion when He stopped me
- 3) Jesus told me that we cannot pray for passion. It is not His to give. **EXPLAIN**
- 4) When I met Carol, I did not ask Jesus to give me a love for her

- 5) I was drawn to her & took steps to keep that love & passion alive
 - 6) I spent time with her
 - 7) I did things for her
 - 8) I told her I loved her; I showed her I loved her
 - 9) Keeping that love and passion alive was, and still is, my responsibility.
 - 10) Even now, when Carol goes to Missouri for a week, I cannot wait for her to get back
 - 11) I miss her
 - 12) I don't go find someone else
 - 13) Did I have to give up things to feed that love and passion?
 - 14) **Absolutely! Did I mind? Absolutely not!**
 - 15) Our passion for Jesus is the same
 - 16) We enter into a relationship with Jesus when we are saved
 - 17) Our love for Him burns inside of us as it transforms us
 - 18) However, it is our responsivity to keep that passion alive
 - 19) It is my responsibility
- D) We all feed our passion
- 1) If our passion is scrapbooking, cooking, hunting, sports, farming, friends, working, etc., we feed that passion with our time, money, and sacrifices.
 - 2) The same holds true of our passion for Jesus.
 - 3) If I am to keep that passion for Jesus burning, I will feed that passion with my time, money, and sacrifices

II How are the garden and passion related?

A) Carol and my conversation

B) **SLIDE** Parable of the soils

- 1) **Matthew 13:3-9 (NIV)** ³ Then [Jesus] told them many things in parables, saying: "**A farmer went out to sow his seed.** ⁴ **As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up.** ⁵ **Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have**

much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow.

⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹ He who has ears, let him hear."

- 2) The seed is the Word of God, the Truth of Jesus Christ, the Good news
- 3) We are the farmers who are to sow that seed
- 4) Coalgate is our inheritance; it is our garden
- 5) Our passion should be to plant that seed everywhere, knowing that some will not take root
- 6) But, that is not our responsibility
- 7) Our responsibility is to plant that seed

C) **SLIDE Matthew 13:24-30 (NIV)** ²⁴ Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. ²⁷ "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?' ²⁸ "'An enemy did this,' he replied. "The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?' ²⁹ "'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'"

- 1) This parable gives us a description of the Kingdom of God
- 2) It is a kingdom of planting and reaping
- 3) The parable tells us that our enemy is passionate about planting weeds in our garden.
- 4) We are to be passionate about planting the good seed, nurturing that seed, and tending our garden

III **SLIDE** Passion is fed by Service which requires Sacrifice

A) Service

- 1) **Matthew 20:25-28 (NIV)** ²⁵ Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
- 2) **SLIDE Galatians 5:13 (NIV)** ¹³ You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.
- 3) **Ephesians 4:11-13 (NIV)** ¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

B) **SLIDE** Sacrifice

- 1) **Romans 3:25 (NIV)** ²⁵ God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice....
- 2) **Romans 12:1 (NIV)** ¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.
 - a) Living sacrifice means we choose whether or not to we want to make that sacrifice

- b) **SLIDE Mark 14:12 (NIV)** ¹² On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"
- c) Those lambs had no choice
- d) We are no longer slaves who are forced to serve and make sacrifices
- e) We are living sacrifices who can choose to make these sacrifices over and over again
- 3) **SLIDE 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)** ⁷ Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
 - a) Our sacrifices to serve Him should be born of our love for Him and, thus, should be done joyfully, not reluctantly or under compulsion
 - b) We are to serve willingly, joyfully, cheerfully, thankfully, and humbly
- C) However, every act of service requires us to make a sacrifice
 - 1) Fellowship Cook-out and movie next week
 - 2) Who is responsible for setting it up? For coming early to make preparations? for the food? For clean-up? to serve those who show up?
 - 3) I am!
 - 4) Not because I'm worried no one else will not it
 - 5) Not because I am your pastor
 - 6) Not because I want to be seen
 - 7) But because I love Jesus and all of you
- D) The church
 - 1) The church cannot function without all of us serving
 - 2) We cannot serve without being willing to make sacrifices
 - 3) No sacrifice goes unnoticed
 - 4) When our service is combined with our willingness to sacrifice for Jesus and the Kingdom, the seed will grow

E) Wait! There is more

- 1) No exaggeration
- 2) **SLIDE** About two minutes after I finished this message, I received the following text from Gina:

I got this message from Jeremy Parham. He is the preacher at FBC Caney.

Gina there is a guy about one block from your church whose name is Bill Williams. I'm sure y'all know him. His mother & brother both died in the last month or so. He needs help moving. He had a stroke. We moved his big stuff today. If anyone from your church could check on him that would be great. He's moving behind the post office.

- 3) **SLIDE** My response: Wow. That is exactly what tomorrow's message is about. Amazing.
 - a) I was amazed.
 - b) Then, I thought, "We can meet for Bible study tonight, or we can be the Bible tonight."
 - c) Our neighbor is knocking on our door.
- 4) Then I got a follow-up message via Gina: From Jeremy:

Wrangler road not sure the house number but it's over grown
with cedar trees
First house on right coming from south to north
Silver car

SLIDE Just be prepared it's pretty bad. The roof is leaking. We took out three air-conditioners to put in the new little house. There were red wasps in the wall

- 5) I thought, "Great. Red Wasps"
- 6) And the Lord replied, "As you do to the least of these, you do unto Me."