

THE PREEMINENCE  
AND  
SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST



## Sermon Series Notes



“A Biblical Strategy For Evangelism/Church Growth” (Colossians 4:2-6)

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Intro:

\* Misc. Church Marketing Strategies...

\* This little section I call “A Biblical Strategy For Evangelism/Church Growth”

### I. A DEVOTION TO PRAYER

#### A. The Importance Of Prayer

\* I Thess.5: 17 pray continually;

\* **Luke 5: 15** Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses.

16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

\* Jesus never taught His disciples marketing strategies. And Jesus never taught His disciples how to preach. But He did teach them how to pray...

\* Acts 16:13. 16, 25; What were the disciples doing in Acts 1 prior to the Holy Spirit falling upon them? See Acts 1:14; And Acts 2:42 tells us the four things the now several thousand member congregation devoted themselves to...

\* The Brooklyn Tabernacle (Read from Fresh, Wind Fresh Fire?)...

\* Being watchful (see I Peter 4:7)...& thankful (a persistent prayer life keeps me thankful because he keeps me aware of a world beyond the one I presently live in...

#### B. Prayer For God To Open Doors For Our Message

\* You do not have to shove Jesus down anybody's throat...

#### C. Prayer For Help In Proclaiming The Message Clearly

### II. A CLEAR MESSAGE

\* 5319. phaneroo, fan-er-o'-o; from G5318; to render apparent (lit. or fig.):--appear, manifestly declare, (make) manifest (forth), shew (self).

\* From a graffiti wall at St. John's University in Minnesota: "Jesus said to them, 'Who do you say that I am?' And they replied, 'You are the eschatological manifestation of the ground of our being, the kerygma in which we find the ultimate meaning of our interpersonal relationships.' And Jesus said, 'What?'" (Hughes, p.138).

\* I Cor. 2:1 When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. 2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

\* Don't use BIG WORDS/ I don't for two reasons, one I want to put things on a shelf low enough for anyone to get to them, and two, I don't know many big words!

\* I will never forget Billy Graham years ago at Raymond James Stadium introducing a Christian rock band (I don't remember who they were) and saying "These young people are my voice to the next generation."

\* Note: The message NEVER changes. But the method, and the language through which we communicate the message MUST change with time & culture.

\* See "God's Word In Our Language" (The Story of the NIV)

- The year was 735 A.D., and an elderly monk in a monastery northern England was working hard to finish a translation of the Gospel of John in English. He completed it just before he died, and he was so excited at its completion that he began to chant the words of an ancient hymn – "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory..." And before finishing the hymn, a monk named Bede died. But he left to the people of England a great treasure – a portion of the Word of God in their own language. In the fourteenth century a courageous priest named John Wycliffe decided that the common people of England should hear & read God's Word in their own language. In 1380 he finished his translation of the New Testament in the English language. One hundred & fifty years later another brave scholar picked up where Wycliffe had left off. For his work he was captured & burned at the stake. But his translation opened a floodgate. In the years that followed four new English translations were completed. Then, in 1611, with the endorsement of King James I, the best scholars in all of England produced the "Authorized" or "King James Version." At last the English speaking people had a Bible in their own language. And the KJV remained the standard for over three hundred years. Fast forward a little beyond those few hundred years, and a representative for General Electric was in Portland on business, staying at the old Multnomah Hotel. He had dinner with a business associate in the hotel's restaurant, and, as was his custom, he directed the conversation toward spiritual matters. The associate seemed interested, so he invited him to his hotel room after dinner to let him read the gospel for himself, right out of the pages of the Bible. His friend read a bit, then exploded with laughter. After this experience, Howard Long of General Electric tried several Bible translations, frustrated that he could not find one that communicated in the language of his day (the mid-fifties). He finally unloaded on his pastor, Rev. Peter DeJong of the Seattle Christian Reformed Church. The pastor told him that if he felt so strongly about the need for a new Bible translation, he should do something about it. And businessman Howard Long did just that. His efforts set in motion a series of events that would eventually give birth to the New International Version.

- In 1611, when the KJV was published, William Shakespeare was 47 years old, and at the height of his literary & theatrical career. The language of the KJV is the language of Shakespeare, once the common language of English speaking people. But that was 400 years ago! Not only that, but the meanings of some 830 words in the KJV have changed since 1611, some 200 being radical changes. And get this – the translators of the KJV were not as well-equipped as those of the NIV. Much more has been discovered since 1611. And thank God for other translations that have now come out that communicate God’s Word in the language of today.

### III. A WISE WALK

#### \* Practice What We Preach

- Luke 12:1 Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

#### \* Blameless

- Phil.2: 15 so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe  
16 as you hold out the word of life--

- *Daniel 6: 4* At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent.

5 Finally these men said, "We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God."

- Last week’s message on taking God to work

#### \* Wise verses foolish

- Illus: Man arrested for repeatedly painting Christian graffiti on buildings (recent SPT article)

#### \* Not Legalistic

- I Cor.9: 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law.

21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

- I call this being a chameleon for Christ, adjusting to your audience without compromising holiness; Unless you were a religious hypocrite, you would have felt very comfortable around Jesus. He is love and acceptance in the flesh, but he is also truth; Woman at the well was surprised that Jesus would speak to her, but even though He met her "on her level, He did not compromise truth.

- Legalists strain at gnats & swallow camels (KJV of the Bible, music styles, alcoholic beverages, etc.)

- Story of cowboy visiting church for the first time...

#### IV. SALTY TALK

\* John 7: 45 Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?"

46 "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

\* Not just "what" to answer, but "how" to answer

\* Salt preserves, creates thirst, & is healing

\* Gracious

- Jesus & the woman caught in adultery; the sinful woman; a friend of publicans & sinners; Contrast with the religious leaders who were self-righteous & condemning.

\* Pure

- See Eph.5:4

\* When persecuted, rejoices

- See Luke 6:22-23; Jesus said to Saul of Tarsus, "It's hard for you to kick against the goads." It is my firm conviction that one of the things God used to goad Saul was the "conversation" of Stephen (See Acts 6:15; 7:59-8:1a); Acts 5:41; When we respond to the world's persecution with rejoicing, the world will become thirsty for what we possess.

\* Helps prevents decay

- Jesus' rebuke to Peter; Paul's words that initially hurt the Corinthian Christians (I Cor.7:8-9); Nicodemus' stand for truth among his peers (John 7:50-52).

\* Prophesies Truth /Has Power

- Woman at the well; See Heb.4:12; While I believe in prophesying as Jesus did with the woman at the well, I also know that simply sharing the truth of God's Word is prophesying, and is "salty talk." When I share the Word of God, I am sharing something that has authority.

- Jer.23:29 Is not my word like fire," declares the LORD, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?"

#### CONCLUSION

\* What is God's strategy for evangelism, church growth? We are!! Through prayer, a clear message, a wise walk, and salty talk...