

The Heartbeat of the Church

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Preacher: Bro. Trevin Eccles

[0:00] Thank you for giving me the opportunity, Pastor. I won't be long today. I was told if I didn't have a full message to give, then I would be covered for the rest of the service.

But I'll try my best to stretch it out as long as I can. But today, I do have a title. My title is The Heartbeat of the Church. So I believe God's laid a burden on me when Pastor asked me to preach this past week.

I'd already been pretty burdened by what I wanted to talk about for a couple weeks. It's going to be about church growth. I want to preach about what's God's heart.

God's heart has always been for lost people. Luke 14, 23, And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

You guys can be seated. Every time we walk in church, well, hopefully, we thank God for His presence. We thank Him for His mercy, and we thank Him for the Holy Ghost.

[1:12] Every one of us here has the Holy Ghost. But we leave this building week after week without sharing what God has done for us. We have missed part of our calling.

The church is not just a refuge from the world. It's God's rescue mission for the world. Jesus never intended for His church to become comfortable. He intended for it to become contagious.

We pray for revival. We sing about revival. We even preach about revival. But revival doesn't begin with larger crowds. It begins when God's people developed God's burden.

God looks at people differently than everyone else. While people see sinners, God sees sons and daughters waiting to come home. While others see failures, Jesus sees future disciples.

While others see impossibilities, Jesus sees harvest. So today I want to preach the heartbeat of the church is outreach. Matthew 9, 35-38.

[2:16] And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd.

Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest is truly plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest.

It's right along the lines of what the pastor was talking about right before I came up here. There's a lot of sheep that have, the one sheep out of the 99 that are lost. It's our jobs to be the laborers of His harvest.

Notice what moved Jesus in Matthew. 35-38. It wasn't the size of the crowd. It wasn't the wealth. It wasn't their education. He was moved with compassion.

Compassion always comes before the revival. Many times we pray, God send revival. Perhaps God is saying, I already have. I sent you. Imagine a farmer who spends all spring praying for a harvest, but never plants a seed.

[3:26] Every morning he walks into his field and says, Lord, give me corn. Months later he's angry because nothing grew. Would we call that faith? I would call it neglect.

We sometimes do the same thing in our walk. We pray for souls. We pray for visitors. We pray for growth. But are we inviting anyone? Do our coworkers even know we attend church? Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3-6, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

And I didn't know who Apollos was reading this. I thought, to my knowledge, Apollos is like a Greek god or something. So I was confused why Paul said that. But after a little bit more research, I found out he was a highly educated person that helped Paul serve in Corinth.

God called us to plant. He gives the increase. And we cannot get, we can't control the results, but we can control our obedience to the call. Jesus always left the 99.

Luke 15 tells three stories. One about the lost sheep that pastor was talking about. One about a lost coin. And one about the prodigal son. Every one of those stories teaches one truth.

[4:36] God searches for what is lost. Jesus never criticized the shepherd for leaving the 99. He celebrated him. Because one lost sheep mattered. One lost teenager matters.

One struggling marriage matters. One addicted neighbor matters. One lonely widow matters. One discouraged coworker matters. Heaven still celebrates one sinner who repents.

You never know what each person God sends into your path is capable of. The one person could bring their entire family, all their friends, and everyone they work with. When Mario started coming to church, it was like one by one, his whole family started coming, and now his whole family has the Holy Ghost.

So you never know what just inviting one person is going to do for someone's life. Never underestimate what God can do through one conversation.

You may never preach to a thousand people, but you may reach someone who does. The early church in Acts grew because they went.

[5:38] Acts 2.38 gives us the message, repent, be baptized in Jesus' name, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. But what happened after that? Acts 5.42 says, And daily in the temples and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

Notice where they preached. The temple, the church, but also in their home, in every home. The gospel didn't stay inside the church. It traveled where the believers went.

Acts 8 tells us persecution scattered believers. Acts 8.1. Saul was consenting unto his death, and at this time there was a great persecution against the church, which was at Jerusalem.

And they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria except the apostles. The enemy thought he was stopping the church at this time, instead he spread revival himself.

Verse 4, Acts 8.4 says, Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. Sometimes we seem to wait for people to come, but the early church went and looked.

[6:44] Our community is our mission field. We have missionaries coming from all over the place recently. All throughout this year we've had a few of them. But we have our own mission field too.

We're not called to, maybe you are, if you are. That's on you, I'm not. If you're called to go in third world countries and all these other different countries, it's good on you, but we're also called to our own community.

That's our mission field. Amen. All it takes is one look around our city and Merced and your city and Ceres and my city. But our church is here in Houston.

All it takes is one look around to see that there are hurt families, there's broken homes, people battling addictions, people who have money but no peace, people who don't have money.

Many people don't need another argument, they just need hope. Romans 10.14-15 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?

[7:42] And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things.

You might say I'm not a preacher, but every spirit-filled believer, which is every one of us here, is a witness. Probably a couple months ago now, I was talking to my dad on the car on the way home from work, and I was telling him I would want to preach, but I don't feel like I'm ready.

I've messed up in my past. I don't feel like I'm capable of doing that yet. And he told me that that's a me thing, not a God thing. God's not the one making me feel like that, and it's quite the opposite.

That's it. I'm a spirit-filled believer, so I'm a witness. So it's my duty to spread the gospel and to preach. And so when he called me to preach this past Thursday or Friday, I probably hesitated a little bit, but back in my mind, I instantly knew I was going to and I wanted to.

Wednesday? Gave me a little bit of a heads up. Your testimony may be an open door that a sermon never could. Oh, sorry. Your testimony may open a door that a sermon never could.

[9:07] All it takes is you having one conversation and telling your story of what you went through, and it could open a door that me sitting here preaching or pastor preaching might not have. If someone discovered the cure for a deadly disease, do you think they would keep it to themselves?

Of course not. They would tell everyone, Church, we have something greater than medicine. We have the saving name of Jesus. We know the power of repentance. We know the power of baptism

in Jesus' name. We know the power of the Holy Ghost.

How can we keep that silent? Why would we want to keep that to ourselves? Don't despise small beginnings. Sometimes we compare ourselves with larger churches. We have ten people here on a good Sunday.

Zechariah 4, 9-10 says, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house. His hand shall also finish it, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you.

For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven. They are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

[10 : 14] These scriptures show that the hands of a man named Zerubbabel, he was a Jewish leader that helped rebuild the second temple. The start of the second temple was accomplished. Notice how this is the foundation.

It says, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house. So notice that it's just the foundation. It wasn't the whole finished product.

It was just the foundation that one man could start. It can start with as little as one person sent by the Lord. Even further, there's stories Jesus fed 5,000 with a little boy's lunch.

It just took that one boy's lunch for Jesus to feed 5,000. David defeated Goliath with one stone.

Gideon defeated an army with 300 men. The upper room only had about 120 people.

These are all examples that God has always specialized in using small beginnings. If there's only 10 of us on a good Sunday, then let there be 10 people completely surrendered to God.

[11 : 18] 10 prayer warriors, 10 soul winners, 10 worshipers, 10 believers who refuse to quit, 10 disciples of Jesus Christ. God doesn't measure churches by attendance. He measures by faithfulness.

See, I told you it wasn't going to be long. I'm already at the end. I don't want us to become satisfied. I don't want us empty chairs to become normal. Every empty chair represents someone Jesus died for.

Someone is praying for hope. Someone is asking God for direction. Someone is wondering if anyone cares. Maybe God wants the answer to their prayer to be you. Imagine someone walking up to you and saying, thank you.

You invited me. You prayed for me. You refused to give up on me. And because of that, I'm here. There's no greater reward than that to me. To be the reason.

And a lot of people say if, I don't know how true it is, but this is what I believe. A lot of people say if you don't reach someone that's in your life, no one else will.

[12 : 19] Like, God sent that person to you. I disagree personally. I feel like if God wants someone to be reached, there's going to be opportunities for that person to be reached. But, I'm not saying that to give you the reason not to reach someone.

It's just, it might as well be you. It's the greatest feeling in the world. When I started talking to my wife, the one thing I wanted for her was for her to come to church and to grow and to get the Holy Ghost one day.

And it's, in my opinion, the greatest thing I've ever done in my life was reaching my wife. Let's decide today that outreach will not be just an event, a Saturday event.

It will become our lifestyle. Let's pray for one person, just one person. Invite one person, teach one Bible study, and share one testimony. And if everyone does that and they come to church, I'll double our church.

That's where it starts. It's not going to start unless we do it. Because if we're faithful with one soul, God will trust us with more. The same God who filled the upper room, the same God who added to the church daily, the same God who opened prison doors, the same God who saved Saul and had him become Paul, is still able to bring revival today.

[13 : 32] Not because of the number of people who come to church on Sunday, but because through our faithful service, he will do mighty things. That's all I have. Thank you. One more time, let's give Trevin a hand clap.

Good job. That was a good word. He did warn me that he wouldn't be very long, so I just, I did prepare a couple little thoughts. first of all, I promise I didn't read your notes, so let that be confirmation when I let the Holy Ghost work through me worrying about the one, the sheep, the stray sheep.

So let that be confirmation too that you did hear from the Lord. for your message. In the Old Testament times, there was a major problem with every nation of people, and that is that every nation worshipped false gods.

And they were worshipping idols. The world was full of idol worship. Nobody worshiped the one true God. That is until Abraham answered the call by God to leave his father's house and to leave his father's land and go to a place that God would show him.

And out of Abraham, God created a new nation, a nation that would only worship the one true God. God led him to the land of Canaan. I'm talking about a small beginning of God being the Lord of the small things.

[15 : 11] Just one man that God would create a nation out of. And God led him to the land of Canaan and that is where modern day Israel is today. Israel was the nation that God built through Abraham that would not worship a false god and not worship idols made by people's hands.

And like every other nation in the world was doing at that time, a single nation that set apart from the world to worship the one true God. God used prophets like the prophet Isaiah to teach us and to teach his people how to live for him.

But what was important to God then and it's still important now is that God wanted his people to be witnesses. Witnesses unto him to the nations around them that there is only one God.

Amen. There is a God and he is to be worshipped. Not idols made by human hands and not a multiplicity of false gods and false beliefs.

Amen. Very, the Old Testament is very actual in a sense and very, when you study the Old Testament it's very literal and it's very, it's about the flesh.

[16 : 26] It's about the real world in a sense. And when you get into the New Testament it's more of a spiritual thing. And so, when we look at the Old Testament it was literal idol worship.

Literal false gods being worshipped. Today, in the New Testament period that we live in it's more about, it could be less about actually worshipping in an idol but more of making ourselves God and chasing our own things and making money a God and things like that and worshipping idols in another way.

But, what was important to God and is still important now is that God wanted his people to be witnesses. In Isaiah 43, verse 10, it says, Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen that ye may know and believe me and understand that I am He.

Before me there is no God for him, neither shall there be after me. Isaiah 43 and 12, this is an Old Testament prophet long before Jesus, God manifested Himself in flesh and came.

This is long before then. He says, Isaiah, God speaking through His prophet in 43 and 12, says, I have declared and I have saved and I have showed that when there was no strange God among you, therefore, ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.

[17 : 45] So, when they got rid of all the strange gods and they had no strange gods among them and they only focused on the one true God, amen, he said, therefore, ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.

And He saved them through that. Isaiah 44 and 8, fear ye not, neither be afraid. Have not I told thee from that time and have declared it. Ye are even my witnesses.

Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God. I know not any. Amen. God was very clear. There is only one God. He was God and there's only one God and you are to be witnesses to that one God and that one God only.

And to be a witness, you have to testify. Testify to other nations. Declare to them what you believe is what He's telling them. There are not two gods. There are not three gods.

There's not a multiplicity of gods like all, like He talked about Apollos, a man named after a Greek god from that time. The Romans with their mythologies and they worship the god of this and the god of that.

[18 : 50] There was a multiplicity of gods, false gods. gods. But we were to test, they were to testify to the nations that there's only one God and that is who deserves to be worshipped.

And in the Old Testament, God told His people to be witnesses of Him. Very clear there's only one God and that they were to be witnesses to Him. And now, we, at the New Testament era that we live in, because that is a testament we are living in today.

We're in the New Testament. Jesus speaking as God now manifested in the flesh. In Acts 1, verse 8, He says, But ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you and ye shall be

witnesses unto Me in both Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria and under the uttermost parts of the earth.

Everywhere. And today is this New Testament era that we live in. God is still calling us to be witnesses of Him. Amen. He's still calling us to be witnesses of Him.

The same God that said, I know no other God. The same God from the Old Testament that spoke through Isaiah. It says, I know no other God. There's no other Lord to be worshipped besides Me. Amen. And you're to be witnesses to Me.

[20 : 05] Now that God is now manifested in flesh. And He's saying that you're going to receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you to be witnesses unto Me. Amen. And when we have the Holy Ghost, we have the power to be witnesses of Him.

Amen. So what do witnesses do? What do witnesses do? Witnesses give testimonies. They testify. In court, they'll raise their right hand and swear on a Bible, right, that they're going to tell the truth. They're going to say what happened. They're going to testify to what they saw, heard, and experienced in those moments that are in question.

Right? That's what a witness does. To be a good witness, we have to testify what we know. If we had a witness to something and we needed that witness to testify and they wouldn't testify, well, that's not a good witness.

That's not even a witness at all then, is it? Witnesses testify. And here is why that is important. That we activate the power of the Holy Ghost that God has given us and blessed us with and gifted us with.

[21 : 16] It's important. This is why it's important. And that is because when we witness for Jesus, it's a witness against the devil.

The devil's having his way 24-7 in people's lives all over this world right now. There are people that don't know much about the Lord, don't think about the Lord, amen, but they need the Lord.

Amen? Whether they realize it or not, they need the Lord. But the devil's having his way in people's lives all over this world. And some of those people are our loved ones. And some of those people are our family members and people that we come in contact on a daily basis.

In Revelation 12-11, it tells us how the saints overcome the devil and how we conquer the devil.

Revelation 12-11 says, And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.

When we testify to others as a witness to what God has done for us in our lives and what He has done and how He's helped us and the things that He's brought us out of and the things that He's healed us from and the addictions that were crushed because we gave our life to God and God showed up just in time to save us.

[22 : 32] Amen. Thank God for a Savior. Amen. And how we used to be but now how we are. And it's all due and thanks to God. And when we declare those things and it was because of the baptism of Jesus' name in my life that washed away my sins and the burdens of my past have been washed away and I can walk with a light step.

Amen. Because I don't feel the heaviness of sin anymore because it's been washed away in the name of Jesus and that blood was applied to my life and I've been filled with the Holy Ghost and I've received power to be witness.

Amen. And to overcome things that I used to have problems with and struggle because I didn't have the power when I was just in the flesh. That which is born of flesh is flesh but that which is born of spirit is spirit.

Now I've been born again of the spirit and I got power against the flesh. I can say no to the things that control my life. Amen. Because I have the Holy Ghost. Amen. And his spirit inside of me.

So yes, I can and I should testify about the things that God has done for me. That testimony is being a witness to others. Amen. And it's not just words.

[23 : 40] It becomes a weapon of overcoming. Amen. The blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony is how we defeat the devil and what the devil wants to do and have his way in people's lives. It's by the blood of the lamb that was applied to our lives.

Amen. Through baptism but also our testimony. Somebody shared a testimony with me one day. My grandma would bring me to church. People would testify to me. I had to hear testimonies. I had to be witness to.

Amen. All of us at some point there's people instrumental in our lives but it's the blood of the lamb covering our lives and it's the word of testimonies that saves us even today. It's a weapon against the enemy that binds our lost family.

It's a weapon against the devil. Amen. It's a weapon against the one that binds our lost friends.

Amen. Our testimony is a weapon anchored in the blood of Jesus.

Amen. Amen. Without the blood of Jesus and without the Holy Spirit we wouldn't have a testimony.

Amen. We would be lost and in the world and in sin and with no power over sin but thank God today we've been washed in the blood.

[24 : 47] Amen. Our sins have been washed away and we have power inside of us to be witnesses unto Him and that is how people are saved through our testimony and the blood of Jesus Christ applied to our lives.

Amen. So Trevin, thank you so much for that word. It was needed. It was timely. I appreciate your time and effort and studying and preparing for us today.

Amen. Let's all stand. Amen. A little bit different today. This is how I feel close to service is that we would just take a moment and pray and ask God to help us activate the Holy Spirit inside of us and be the light and be witnesses to those around us.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.