

Engage: Through Service and Sharing | 1 Peter 4:10

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Date: 27 August 2023

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we're dedicated to encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. Located in Ontario, Oregon, Pastor Patrick Daly preaches insightful sermons from the Word of God, offering practical applications for modern living.

We're delighted to share this sermon with you. Good morning, Ontario. Good morning. All right. My name is Patrick Daly, and I am the pastor here at Ontario Community Church.

And it is a privilege and it's an honor to serve here as the pastor. These past few weeks, we've been going through our mission, our vision, and our discipleship framework, known as the 3E pathway.

You know, as a church, we are a church that points to Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. We follow what the Bible says.

We use the Bible for wisdom, for understanding. We study the pages of scripture, and we use it as a framework to go towards Jesus Christ, instead of away from Christ.

[1 : 11] We search for biblical truth. So the 3E pathway, it is to encourage people to love God and to love others.

The second week we went over this, we were talking about equip, to be equipped in God's word, and learning what it means to be a Christian. And that leads us to our third E this Sunday, which is engage.

Engaging the community through service, and through the sharing of our faith with other people. All of these are so important.

They are biblical, and they have that foundation. So I want us to turn to page 1206 in our ESG study Bibles.

It's the blue books that you'll find in your pews, or if you're using different translation, it's gonna be 1 Peter chapter four, verse 10. All right, so let's go ahead, let's find that together, page 1206, verse Peter chapter four, verse 10.

[2 : 27] I want us all to read it together. It's just that one verse. All right, here we go. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's very grace.

You know, this letter, it was written to the early Christians in Asia Minor. This letter to the early church, it's a reminder that our hope is in Jesus Christ.

And we are called as Christians to live for Christ. We're called to be witnesses, and we're also called to be prepared at times to suffer in this life.

The verse is saying to use our gift, not gifts, but our gift to serve each other. I'm sure that you can imagine the persecution that the early church went through, the persecution that happened throughout history of Christianity.

So there's that sense of the idea of suffering was very real. The gift that Peter was referring to is the free gift of salvation that we receive in Christ.

[3 : 40] Peter is talking about the gift that the early church, the early Christians scattered through Asia Minor had received. This gift can, it can mean some people have translated it or interpreted it to mean spiritual gifting, which it can certainly mean that.

But contextually, Peter is talking about the gift of salvation. So although this verse can be used for spiritual gifting, let's remember that it's specifically talking towards salvation.

But it does remind us though, that each and every one of us as Christians, we've made a decision for Christ, or at least I hope that all of us have. When we make a decision for Christ, we are receiving the free gift of salvation and we are given spiritual gifts.

God gives us the gift of life. God gives us our talents, our abilities. He gives us the gift of salvation. And it's the question of whether or not you have received that gift, have you said yes to Jesus Christ?

And with everything that we are given, we should use everything that we have, everything that we are given, the resources, the spiritual gifting, and in this context, even our salvation, to serve the Lord and to serve others.

[5 : 03] We can apply this today to the Christian, to our brothers and sisters in Christ, and also to our neighbor. Peter goes on to say that in doing this, we are showing that we are good stewards of God's varied grace.

To be a steward, it means someone who manages, or someone who has been entrusted with resources of God's kindness, God's love and favor to others.

A steward can also mean managing finances or managing a household, if you will. When we're talking about being stewards of God's varied grace, we're talking specifically about kindness, love, and favor to others.

This verse is, it's a call for Christians. Let us use our salvation. Let us also use our spiritual gifts. Even the abilities, the gifts, the talents, our treasure, our time to serve one another.

We can be encouraged today to serve other people. We are to be stewards of everything that God has given to us. This should encourage us to live for Christ, to love God and to love others, to grow in the faith, and to serve others, and share in our faith.

[6 : 24] May we encourage others, may we engage others in the name of Christ and share in our faith. Let's pray together. And Father, we thank you for this time for us to come together.

We ask that you open our minds to learning and understanding your word, and open our hearts to live and to love like you.

May we come to know you and grow in you. May we learn, may we be curious about what it means to engage the community through service to you and to others, and may we engage the community by sharing in our faith with others.

May we never be afraid of who you are. May you strengthen us. You God, give us clarity. You give us new life in you. We love you so much, and we thank you for sending your son Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life.

Be with us this morning as we go through so many verses about what it means to engage the community through service and in sharing our faith.

[7 : 32] It is in Jesus' name that we pray, and we all say together. So I wanna put a question up on the screen. So what comes to mind when you hear engage through service and sharing?

I want you to think about that as we go through. What does service look like to you? How does sharing your faith with others? What does that look like to you?

For some of us, service can look like serving in the local food pantry. It can be serving in the church. For others, service can look like being present with our neighbors, exhibiting love and kindness and asking, how can I help my neighbor?

How one person can answer can be different from the next person. And the same applies for sharing your faith. Some people share their faith through their everyday living, the actions that they do, the words that they speak.

Others share their faith through street evangelism. I'm sure many of you guys have seen it before, someone holding a sign saying, repent, right? Or many different approaches, door to door ministry.

[8 : 42] Again, how a person answers that question will vary. We began this series with the idea that we are to love God. It's the biblical concept of loving God and loving others.

We love God because he loved us. And we are to share in that same kind of love with others. And part of that first E, to encourage to love God and to love others, it is exhibited through love in action.

We do that by engaging the community for Christ. We are all encouraged first and foremost, first and foremost to make a decision for Jesus Christ, to say yes to Jesus and to have a relationship with him.

We are not saved by the things that we do. We are saved by what Christ has done for us on the cross. There is a difference, a fundamental difference between many of the other religions of the world as opposed to Christianity.

When we think of other religions, it's about what you can do to obtain salvation. But when it comes to Jesus Christ, it's about what he has done.

[9 : 59] It's about him dying on that cross for us. We are saved so that we can do good things in the name of Jesus Christ.

We are to believe in Christ. We are to have that relationship with him. And we can do greater things. This verse is always been, there's a verse I wanna share with you.

It's always been a challenge for me. And it may be a challenge for you. It's in John 14, 12. Christ says here, truly I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do.

Okay, that makes sense. Then he goes on to say, and greater works than these will he do because I am going to the Father.

So Christ is saying, listen, whoever believes in me will do the works that I've done. That makes sense. But even greater things, that's a very difficult wording.

[11 : 02] This can mean more works than Christ's ministry, but it can also mean greater magnitude. It has even been said that greater things will happen because Christ is talking to his disciples, there to go out into the world, Christ is the example.

It's a challenging one. It's like, I don't know if I can do greater things than Christ can. But we're talking about the things that Christ sends us into the world to make disciples, to baptize believers, to go out and do great things.

So we are to engage lives for Christ. And this idea of engaging is broken down into two sections. The first section is engaging people through service.

And the second is engaging people through the sharing of your faith. Both of these concepts are biblical and they are practical for us because we're called to know Christ, we're called to grow in him and to exhibit that same kind of agape love towards others.

It is love in action. So I wanna put that slide in there. Engaging through service, service is love in action. You know, previously as we've gone over the 3D pathway, we've talked about 1 Corinthians 13.

[12 : 28] There have been many bits and pieces from that set of verses. It can be said that to love somebody in the way that God loves is something that is ongoing.

Do you tell your spouse you love them once? I mean, if you do, you probably should do it more than once, right? Do you tell your children that you love them once?

No, you need to tell them more than once. And if you have, be encouraged to tell your family that you love them. Share that love, love is ongoing.

It's an action. The way that we treat others and the things that we do, it is an exhibition. It exhibits love to others.

People will know and learn who we are through action. Now I have to say this, I'm gonna say this many times today. We're not saved by, we are not saved by works.

[13 : 33] We are saved for works. Okay, I need to make that. In your notes, you'll see James chapter two verses 14 through 17.

You don't have to turn there, but if you'd like to, I'm gonna go over a lot of verses here. It says, what good is it my brothers if someone says he has faith but does not have works?

Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food and one of you says to them, go in peace, be warmed and filled without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?

So also faith by itself, if it does not have works is dead. How many of you have heard that before, right? Faith without works is dead. I've heard it many times and what's unfortunate about this verse is that it's often misquoted and it is misunderstood.

Is James actually suggesting that we can attain salvation by the things that we do? What am I gonna do with that? What are we gonna do when we read that verse?

[14 : 33] The answer is no. James is writing to existing Christians that have faith in Christ and he's talking about that same faith to be able to do works.

So imagine if you're writing to existing Christians, you have to have that understand, look, I'm writing to people who are already Christian and I'm saying that same faith is to be exhibited in the things that we do.

James is not talking about how to achieve salvation, but he is talking about how faith needs to have action because Christ is the foundation. He is the solid rock on which we build our lives on.

We need to have action that is from that salvation. Good works do not save us, but God saved us so that we can engage others by doing good.

Do you have faith in Christ? I hope that all of us do. Seek first the kingdom of God. Make that decision for Christ first and foremost.

[15 : 42] When you have, how does that faith manifest? What does it look like through action or works? Having faith in him, like I said, it's having that firm foundation in Christ.

Having continued faith is manifest through action which builds upon the foundation. I want you to consider John chapter 15 verse five.

It's the famous verse that says, I am the vine and you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I am in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me, you can do nothing.

I bring this verse up in John 15, five because it continues with the idea of the foundation. We are the branches that come from the vine.

And it's the question of whether or not we're going to produce fruit. We're still part of the vine, but are we going to produce good fruit or are we gonna produce bad fruit?

[16 : 38] When we make that decision for Christ, we are a new creation. We are part of the vine and we are like a tree that is planted, if you will.

When we receive salvation through faith, it is from that point, what kind of fruit are you going to produce? I'm gonna put up this slide up here, this next slide.

It's also when you know, good works are not required for us to be Christians or for us to be saved. They are a manifestation of our true faith in Christ.

That's second sense. It is faith that leads us to Christ that secures our salvation. That same faith moves us to action to bear good fruit.

We have to remember that. We have to remember that Jesus Christ is the firm foundation. You do that first and foremost, then go to the world and act and oh what great things we can do in Jesus' name.

[17 : 50] Engaging through service, service is love and action. In Galatians chapter five verse 13 through 14, it says you were called to freedom brothers, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh but through love serve one another.

For the whole law is fulfilled in one word that you shall love your neighbor as yourself. And in the Galatians passage, Paul is referring to the idea that he's talking about the freedom that we have in Christ.

When we make a decision for Christ, we are set free. Does that mean we can go out and sin? No. We are free, and you might have heard me say this before in conversation, I might have said it in another sermon.

We are free from sin, we're not free to sin. There's a difference there. I know it's like, oh one word can make a difference but it doesn't give you that take it to ride.

Oh I'm saved by grace through faith, I'm gonna go steal, I'm gonna go murder, and God's got me covered. Absolutely not. Do you even understand the salvation that you've received?

[18 : 58] Do you even understand what Christ has done for you and you're going to take advantage of that? You're going to, some of us may not have to be reminded of that, some of us are.

It's a verse that speaks to that. Paul is letting Christians know that they should not use their freedom as an opportunity to pursue lustful passions. But through love, we are to serve one another.

It's significant because the scripture is very clear. I don't know how much clear it should be that use our freedom to serve one another and not to go out in sin or pursue lustful passions.

In 1st John chapter three, 16 through 18, this we know love, that he laid down his life for us. We ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's good and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?

Little children, let us not love in word or talk but indeed and in truth. And this verse goes on to say that we know that Jesus sacrificed his life for us and in the same manner and in the same type of love that Christ has for us, we should be able to do the same.

[20 : 15] So the apostle John is asking the question, will you help those in need when you have the resources? If you have the ability to help someone, do you actually do it?

Do you practice what you preach? And I know that's a hard one because sometimes we have the resources, how do we want to help? I'm too busy. I got places to go, people to see.

But if you have those resources, we should exhibit that love to others in the same manner that Christ loves us. John goes on with the encouraging words that we are to show that agape love in the actions that we do with genuineness.

Do you have genuine love or authentic faith? In Matthew chapter 25 verse 34 through 40, that's a lot of verses, but it's talking about, some of you may know it, the sheep and the goats, right?

Come you who are blessed by my father and here at the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world. I was hungry, you gave me food. I was thirsty, you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

[21 : 26] I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. Aren't these examples of how we can serve people? Thirsty and you gave me something to drink.

Think of the farmers out there when they're out in the hot sun. They need water. Might be an encouragement to give them water.

Or when someone is hungry, do you feed them? And I love how it goes on. It says, Lord, when did we see you hungry? What thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you or naked and clothed you?

And the king will answer them, truly I say to you as you did to one of the least of these, my brothers, you did it to me. That is a call for action.

That is a call for service. Even Christ's scope of showing, exhibiting that love through action. Let us show that unconditional love through sincere, through genuine action.

[22 : 31] I know that Matthew passage, the sheep and the goats is a powerful one. Christ is calling for believers to act. Do you show compassion to those in need?

Do you care? The ones who are the sheep, they are the ones that know the Lord and they exhibit that love. Just think of the next time that you see someone in need.

If you have the resources, are you going to help or not? It's a challenge. I'm not perfect, Typhoon. It's definitely a challenge for all of us, but it's what the scripture's saying.

These verses are to show that engaging the community for Christ is just showing love in action. Loving God and loving others, serving God and serving others.

You can build a case that we are to serve God by serving others. So then it comes to engage through sharing your faith.

[23 : 31] I love this picture on here. I'm trying to find good artwork for serving here is always a challenge, but there's supposed to be sharing in their faith.

I want to share these verses with you. We have confidence. We should have confidence in our Lord and our God knowing that we are saved by grace through faith.

We believe in the Lord Jesus and we all know that whoever believes shall not perish, but have eternal life. Whoever, anyone, everyone who confesses.

And because of this saving grace, this should encourage us to share in our faith. This should encourage us to have a talk with our neighbor.

This should encourage us to talk with our friend, maybe even our family member. I know family is always a difficult one. Christ is the great transformer of culture and we have been given the great commission from Christ to go out and to engage culture.

[24 : 42] Many of us know the great commission. Go therefore and make what? Disciples of all nations doing what? Baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you and behold, I am with you always till the end of the age.

The great commission is so important. These are some of the final words that Jesus gives his disciples before he ascends into heaven. What does Christ call us to do?

He calls for us to act upon our faith by making disciples, by baptizing them and by teaching them. I find it a great encouragement that Christ will be with us wherever we go.

Do you believe that? Do you know that Christ will be with you? There is nothing to fear when you're sharing in your faith. We don't fear man.

We have fear of the Lord or we should have fear of the Lord. We're called to love God and to love others to have that relationship with Jesus. We're called to be disciples or students of Jesus Christ.

[25 : 54] And as we grow, we're called to go out into the world and to exhibit that love for Christ will be there with us as we go. May we never be ashamed of being a Christian or as Romans chapter one verse 16, ashamed of the gospel.

Many of you know that verse. I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.

Is salvation available only to the elite? Is salvation available only to the rich? Is salvation available by what we do?

Can you imagine what heaven would be like if that was actually the way that it worked by the things that we do? Talk about having arrogance or having ego.

I did more than you. Look at me, I donated \$10 million. That's not how it works.

[26 : 55] I mean, everyone who believes to the Jew first and also to the Greek, the gospel message is something it is completely different than what culture has to offer.

Why do you think Christianity has been persecuted all of these years? Because it is something that is counter-cultural. It has been said and it can be said.

I would agree with it. The gospel is counter-cultural. Love your enemies? What? Helping the poor? What are you talking about?

Showing forgiveness to those who have done wrong to me? I think of that meme, if you've ever seen that meme before. We are secure in Jesus Christ and what the gospel, what the Bible tells us, what Jesus tells us is something that certainly is counter-cultural.

I'm reminded of Acts chapter one, verse eight, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witness in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

[28 : 04] This passage is referring to the fact that the Holy Spirit but stows upon us the power to transform lives through the Holy Spirit. It's not my power, it's power that comes through the Holy Spirit.

God empowers us with spiritual gifts and abilities to do great work in His name. It's like God's giving you the tools necessary to be able to do work in His name.

In the early church, the disciples were commissioned to be witnesses to testify to what they had seen, to what they had heard, to what they had experienced and in the same way, we too can testify to how God has worked in our life with the transformative power of the gospel.

I know times are different. I know that technology is different but the message of God is the same and we believe in Jesus Christ who is the constant in an ever changing world of culture.

We are to still witness to other people. We are to share in our faith. We are to open the word of God and say, this is what I believe in.

[29 : 12] Have you heard the message of Jesus Christ? In first Peter chapter three, verse 15, but in your heart, honor Christ the Lord as holy.

Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. Yet, do it with gentleness and respect.

Oh man, could we just have gotten rid of that other part? Many of us who go out and defend the faith, it fires you up and you wanna give him something but gentleness and respect is something scripture says that.

We are to be able. Look, as we engage lives for Christ, we must realize, look, there are going to be people who do not agree, people who attack our faith, people who question or people who make fun of you.

I mean, probably seen it in high school if you grew up as a Christian, see people make, oh, you're Christian? You one of those? What are you talking about?

[30 : 21] I like my way. Do you though? Do you know where your way will lead without Christ? We must realize there will be people who will do such things.

This verse mentions that we are to make a defense or an apologia. That is where we get the word apologetics, which is where we must answer and defend in our faith but with gentleness and respect.

We are to love the Lord and we're to love others but we are to stand firm. It's a reminder of the balance between two, of standing firm on the truth of the word of God, right?

And dealing in love. That can be a very, it doesn't sound very difficult but it is. There's a lot of people who stand firm but they may not exhibit love very well or there's people who are very loving but they get walked all over.

They don't stand firm and it's a challenge for us to stand firm and to exhibit love. In Philemon chapter one verse six, and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.

[31 : 41] The apostle Paul is praying that we share our faith. We can share the gospel to others. It's just how are we going to do it? How are you going to share in your faith?

When we share in our faith, we should do this because of what God's done for us, because of what Jesus Christ has done for us.

If you got a speeding ticket, someone paid for it, let's just say, it's a \$500 speeding ticket, you went awfully fast. Wouldn't you be thankful? Wouldn't you be like, hey, I shouldn't have been driving so fast and I thank you.

We are set free from sin. Doesn't that encourage you to share in your faith and to tell people the good news of what God has done in your life?

In all that we do, we are to do an excellence for the glory of God, and that includes being engaged in the community through serving others and sharing of our faith.

[32 : 51] And so the final question I have for you is, how can I engage the community through service and in sharing my faith?

This is the 3E pathway. We are encouraged to love God and to love others as the scriptures tell us. We are to encourage people to make a decision for Christ and to get baptized.

We equip people to learn the word of God and to learn what it means to be a Christian. And as we make that decision and as we grow in the faith, we do all of this so that we can engage the community for Christ to go out into the world and do good in the name of Jesus Christ.

And this leads us back to the verse that we started with. Will you turn? Will you turn there with me? This is page 1206, 1 Peter chapter 4, verse 10.

I want us to read it together one final time. All right, here we go.

[34 : 10] As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God. Very grace. Let us keep that in mind as we go from this week.

Let's pray together. Father God, we thank you for giving us these past four weeks to go over, yeah, it's a fancy title, the 3E pathway but to go over what scripture says for discipleship to love you and to love others.

To be curious about the word of God and what it means to be a Christian. May we be a church that loves you and loves other. Not loving man or not hating others or hating you but loving you and loving others, exhibiting that love.

May we be a church that equips people in your word, a culture of biblical literacy, of going to the pages of scripture and looking at what does the word of God have to say and what does it mean and how can we apply it for our lives.

May we be equipped for godly living. May we be a church that engages in the community through service by feeding those who are hungry, by clothing the naked, by giving drink to those who are thirsty.

[35 : 29] May we share in our faith, testifying to how you have worked in our lives and how you sent your son Jesus Christ as the ultimate sacrifice, the sacrificial lamb, the atoning sacrifice.

May we be reminded Father, as we are concluding our series and we're concluding our time. All that matters is us making a decision for you.

May we understand that it's about what you have done for us and that we are to receive the free gift of salvation saying yes to you and having your son at the center of our lives first and foremost.

Because if we don't do that, we are lost with Hallelujah. We are found in you. Be with us as we leave this place.

May we dedicate ourselves to you. May we know you, grow in you and go in your holy name. Be with us this week. We love you. We thank you.

[36 : 36] We glorify you and we praise you. It is in Jesus' holy name that we pray and we all say together, amen. Thank you for tuning in to the Ontario Community Church sermon podcast.

For more about our church and how you can get involved or support our mission, please visit ontariocommunitychurch.org. May God's blessings be with you.