

# The Six Peaks of SBC

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, good morning. It is good to see you all this morning. Nick, thank you for the wave. It's always welcome. This morning we are continuing a series on the subject of the church. This! This morning we're going to be covering what is the vision of SBC. What are the distinctives of SBC? What sets SBC against certain churches that exist today? Some of these DNA or the foundations distinctives, if you are visiting with us, are going to be the exact same as your church, Lord willing. One of the things that we've talked about is a couple of weeks ago we considered what is the church? What is the church? And we learned that it's a people belonging to Christ, purchased with his blood, and called to display the glory of God. If anybody asks you what is the purpose of the church, it's to be called to display the glory of God. And only those who are his, that are believers in Christ, can be the ones that participate in displaying his glory. Last week, we asked the question, why do we exist? If God's got a church that's to display God's glory, what is its purpose? How does it glorify God? And we learned to glorify God means making more and better followers of Jesus Christ. It's making disciples. It's living out the great commandment, which is you might not know. And you guys know what it is, right? It's to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your mind, and all your soul. And it's to follow after Jesus, and it's to love others as yourself. That is the purpose. It's to love one another and disciple one another.

So this brings us to this morning where I want to answer a very basic question. How do we go about becoming that kind of church? How do we become a church that belongs to Jesus, displays his glory, and glorifies God by making disciples? Another way to ask the question is, what gives us our distinctions? What makes us different, say, than other churches? What have we chosen to hold up as those distinctives which allow us to glorify God and to make disciples of men?

Now, I don't know. Some of you, I do know, have attended different churches. We've got people here that have attended churches in all parts of the world, whether it be Africa, Europe, Asia. There's certain distinctives that every church has. I was just noticing, I was writing down all the places where I've been to church across Canada from Quebec, Ontario, Alberta, BC, the Maritimes. I don't know if Saskatchewan or Manitoba count, but I'm sure there's really good God-honoring churches in those provinces as well. I've been in different churches across the states from California to Florida. I've attended church in England, France, Germany, Switzerland, the Philippines, and yes, even China. And what's interesting about all these churches, in churches that only had 40 people, and I've been to churches that had over 20,000 people. I've been in churches in Mexico that only had 40 people, and they were talking Spanish. I did not know what was going on, but I knew God was being glorified because I could kind of pick up some of the words. And I've also been in large churches, like I said, that had 20,000. What was interesting is that they all look different.

I've been in churches that had stained glass windows, churches that met in warehouses, churches that met in gyms, churches that only had organs, churches that despised the drums, right? Churches that appeared small and intimate, and others were big and bustling, and some churches even had multiple languages being translated at the same time. I've actually been to a church, believe me or not, I'm not telling you a lie. Spittoons were built into the pews of the church. Now, if you don't know what a spittoon is, it's for when you're hearing the preacher, and you got your chewing tobacco in your lip, and you need a place to spit. Right there in the pew, they had spittoon spit cans for the people in, and that was in North Carolina, United States, just in case you're wondering. Right? But what was interesting is they all look different, but I'm going to tell you something. A lot of those churches had the same feel. The same feel. Even the different languages, you would have been there, you would have attended, and there would have been something familiar about this church. And I believe, and I know the churches that I did attend lived to display

the glory of God and to live out the great commandment and the great commission. What was interesting is they had similar priorities to what I am going to be speaking to this morning. So I want to tell you what are the distinctives? What are we here at SBC prioritizing? Now I'm going to tell you right now, it's not an all-inclusive list, but I've included six distinctives that I believe that God has called faithful churches to, which allows them both to display the glory of God and allows them to inform the purpose of making disciples.

[ 6 : 05 ] I want to make it clear that we're not about a church being driven by fads or personalities or whatever the current cultural trend is. Those are man-made issues.

And when I'm talking about SBC, I'm not talking about just uniquely what we're starting to do. I believe these are the things that have been going on here for decades. They took different personalities and different between different preachers and different people being here. But I believe that every church that has been biblical chooses to emphasize certain characteristics, certain distinctives that are rooted in scripture. And that's what I want to talk to you about this morning. So I've called this the six peaks of SBC. So when someone asks you, you're visiting, hey, what's that church like? You're going to be able to tell them exactly what SBC is about by what they value. So the first peak that I'm going to speak to today is that we value bold biblical teaching or bold biblical preaching. The apostle Paul writes in 2 Timothy 2.4, he says, preach the word. Be ready in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, rebuke, and exhort with complete patience and teaching. Now I want you to know from this verse that these words are not optional. These weren't Paul's suggestions. They're actually a command.

Preach the word. Preach what God has to say. Do not preach what man has to say.

We're not interested in opinions or politics or self-help manual or to entertain you. We hold to preaching the word of God. Now why the word of God? You might be asking this.

Because we believe that the Bible is indeed the word of God. These are the exact words that the creator of the universe wants us to know, wants us to understand. These 66 books of the Bible are written, God's written revelation inspired by the Holy Spirit. And we believe that every single word was fully breathed out by him. And here's some truths we understand about God's word.

[ 8 : 42 ] It does not fail. God's word is without errors. It's God's word. It is absolutely true in everything that it speaks to. And because of that, it stands out as our only sure and sufficient authority for faith and life. And here's the reality. The truth of God's word judges us. We don't judge it. To put it in another way, God's word stands in authority over us. We do not stand in authority over God's word.

Sadly, we live in a time today where people like to judge God's word. These are the things I like. These are the things I dislike. There's a presupposition that they know better than God and they know more than God and therefore can speak with greater authority than God. When you put it in those terms, most people are taken aback by that. But that is the truth. Now, one of the things because of this, we use a certain way to interpret God's word. We seek to know the literal understanding of God's word. We use grammar. We look into the context and use history to find out. And we rely on the Holy Spirit to illuminate what is the one true meaning. Because it's God's word, there's not going to be any contradictions. There's going to be many applications, but there can only be one interpretation. So we work at it. A lot of people say, wow, there's a lot of things that are confused in the Bible. Actually, it's very untrue, that statement. A lot of God's word has already been settled. There's some ways we might look at things that people might debate and argue, but they're very few in comparison to what we know. So that way we can declare with boldness and proclaim it in such a way that we know that this is what God is saying. Amen? Because if we did not know what God was saying, why are we here? So I want to answer three questions about bold biblical teaching. So the question you might say is, BK, where do we see this modeled in the Bible? Where do we see this modeled in the New

Testament? In fact, the passage that Dave Nannery read for us was one of those times when the preaching was modeled for us. In fact, from the very beginning, as we see in Acts 2, preaching has been central to the life of the church. In Acts 20, 27, Paul declares that he did not shrink from proclaiming the whole counsel of God. Later, he would say in 1 Corinthians 2, he says, Paul reminds the church that his message and his preaching were not with lofty speech or wisdom. What he's saying is, it didn't come from me.

My words aren't my words. My words are God's words. And with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, power so that their faith may not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

Preaching from the very beginning was God's appointed mean to declare his truth. The call to respond to him and to build up God's people. Romans 10, 17 says, clearly faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ.

[12:36] That's why in Acts 2, the response of the crowd that was to the preaching of Peter, David, we heard from David, it cut to their hearts. It forced them to make a decision because they understood the God of all creation was speaking to them. And they ask a simple question in Acts 3, 37. We've heard it. And they simply say, brothers, what shall we do?

And the response is, repent and be baptized. You see, bold biblical preaching demands a response. Without the preaching of the word, there is no faith, there is no growth, and there is no mission. Second question is, what is bold biblical preaching? What is it and what isn't it? Does bold mean it's just loud? Does bold preaching mean it's obnoxious? No, it doesn't. First of all, bold biblical preaching means to expose the word of God. It means to expose what God has said. What is the original meaning of this text? We understand what does it mean to the original people and what would God have us mean for us today? Why does this matter matter to us today? See, when we open the text of scripture, we explain what it means and we apply it to our life. And the authority is not in me or any other preacher. The authority is in, thus God says. I want you to know that this is what God's word says. At SBC, you're going to hear three types of preaching. One is called expository. And this is generally our preferred way of preaching.

We take a book of the Bible and we go through what God has said to that certain group of people at that certain time. We understand the context, the history behind it. The other way of preaching, it's called textual preaching. We'll take a specific passage and look at it as it speaks to us today. What does it mean to us? Usually that is something that the Holy Spirit's kind of led on one of the pastors here to preach on. And the third type of preaching is topical. And this is the one we don't preach on as much, but this would be an example of a topical sermon. We're looking at what a healthy church is built around and we're going through and we're seeing what God's word says on this theme and we're exposing ourselves to these truths. Now there's two necessary elements of bold biblical preaching. Bold biblical preaching has to be Christ-centered. It has to be Christ-centered.

Jesus said in John 5 39 that the scriptures testify about him. Every sermon should ultimately point people to Jesus Christ. His person, his work, and his gospel. We've already learned the church is the creation of Jesus Christ. Amen? He died for this church. He bought us with his blood. So because of that, he's given us certain commands and that's what we're looking at. It doesn't mean that Jesus is going to be found in every verse of the Bible. Some people think that's where you have to go to. Sometimes God wants to talk about his kingdom. God wants to talk about his covenants. There's different things, but overall, they will all relate to Jesus Christ. Number two, the necessary element of bold biblical preaching is it is spirit-empowered. It is spirit-empowered. Preaching is not merely a transfer of information, but it is a supernatural event. It's where the spirit of God takes the word and pierces our hearts with this truth. You will all be making a decision today on what to do with this truth. You either are going to accept it or reject it. If you accept it, you're going to have to make changes in your life. Or not.

You can reject it and then you're going to have to argue for a while on what did God really mean when he said this. Because it's spiritual-empowered, it's soaked in prayer.

[17:13] And the prayer just doesn't happen in the delivery. I would say the majority of my prayer happens in the preparation. As I go through the text, and some texts wrestle with me. It exposes my sin, my inclinations, the areas that I need to take to the Lord and depend on his strength.

That's what it is. Let me be clear about what it is not. Preaching is not a motivational talk. Not here to motivate you or to trick you into something. I got Chris back there. He's going to lower the lights. We're going to push for a decision. We're going to get some slow music, right? It's not that. I want the truth to motivate you, not the emotionalism of the event.

Preaching, going along with that, is not entertainment. And it's not bending the Bible to support our agenda. When Paul said, preach the word, he was calling his disciple Timothy to proclaim God's truth with courage and conviction, whether people wanted to hear it or not.

Later on in 2 Timothy 4, Paul says that a time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but will gather teachers to suit their passions, to tickle their ears. And they will turn away from truth to myths. My friends, we live in such a time. There are certain quote-unquote churches that say that they're part of God, but they fight God's word and they want to make people more comfortable. However, that comfort will turn into great discomfort when they have to appear before

the judgment seat of Christ. The third question that I want to answer on the effects of bold biblical teaching is, when the word is preached faithfully, what happens?

I can speak to this authority because God's word says so. Hebrews 4.12 tells us that when God's word is preached faithfully, we will experience conviction. We will experience conviction. Hebrews 4.12 says that the word is living and acting, active sharper than any two-edged sword, discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. It reveals who we are. We believe this is God's truth and we're reading it and it's confronting us.

[ 19 : 56 ] You got to accept it. You got to deal with it. Number two, God's word transforms us. Jesus prayed in John 17.17. He said, sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. Like I said, preaching isn't just too meant to inform you. It's meant to transform you. The third aspect, it's meant to equip you. Equip you.

2 Timothy 3.16.17. This is one of the theme verses that is driving our small group ministry. It says, all scripture is breathed up by God and profitable so that the man of God may be complete, equipped with every good work. We want you to be fully equipped with the word of God. We want you to understand it, how to apply it to your life. Why? Because we want you equipped for every good work because that's what God's word does. And ultimately, the effects of bold biblical teaching brings glory to Jesus Christ.

It brings glory to God. When Christ is exalted through his word, his people worship him, obey him, and make him known. The greatest illustration of the Bible, I would say, I'm not going to say greatest, that's a big term. A great illustration is the Bible is a lighthouse in a storm.

It is the one that drives you clear because we all know there is a storm outside. And we expect, we experience this, whether it be in our workplace, whether it be in our families, even just in the extended community, you're hearing people talk and you know it's complete gibberish and insanity. And you start to wonder what is going on. And then that word of God, that ray from that lighthouse just cuts through all that stuff. And even with all the waves that are crashing back and forth, you know where the safety lies. You follow that lighthouse safely to the shore.

Without the light, you crash and you sink. So bold, if I can conclude, bold biblical preaching is the lighthouse that God guides people through the darkness of this world.

[ 22 : 15 ] That is the expectation here at SBC. And I appreciate God's people who yearn for that. The second peak that I'm going to speak about. So the first peak that makes us distinctive as we believe in bold biblical teaching number, the number two is wholehearted worship. The second distinctive, second peak of a healthy church is wholehearted worship. In John 4, 23, Jesus was sitting with this woman at the well and he's talking to her and she's a Samaritan, we believe, but he says the hour is coming. And now here when the true worshipers will worship the father in spirit and truth for the father is seeking such people to work for him. Pay attention to that verse. It's awesome. God for the father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit and those who worship him. And those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

Have you thought, have you stepped back and thought about that God is seeking worshipers? It doesn't say that God is seeking consumers, that God is seeking spectators. He's not seeking half-hearted participants. It says in the text that the father is seeking worshipers, people who will exalt his name with awe and reverence and joy that will speak of God's mighty deeds. Let me give you three thoughts about worship. Worship is music, but it's not all about music. Worship is not just music. It includes music, but it's so much more.

That's why Paul reminds us in Romans 12, he says, I appeal to you brothers by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, as a holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Worship is ultimately your life surrendered to God. It is your obedience, your devotion. Sometimes we have to go through the mindset of offering ourselves daily to him. Yes, we gather to sing.

Psalms 95:6 says, oh come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord, our maker. Singing is a powerful expression of worship.

[ 24 : 57 ] But the problem is if Sunday is the only time you worship, then you've missed the point of what worship is. Worship is not an event, it is a lifestyle. Let me give you a second thought about worship.

Worship must be in spirit and truth. Worship must be in spirit and truth. Spirit means worship is not mechanical or external.

What it means is it's a part of the inner being, the inner person. It's easy to put out the outside, outside figures of worship.

But Isaiah 29 13 says, God is not impressed with lips that sing if the heart is far from him.

God is not impressed with the lips that sing if the heart is far from him. The first step of worship is drawing near to God. Amen?

[ 26 : 02 ] It's drawing into his presence. It's why we don't believe in chanting or just mindless repetition. That's just, it's nothing.

It doesn't give you, we want to use words that are rich in God's truth. See, the truth part means worship must be rooted in God's word. We don't worship according to our imagination or our feelings, but according to the truth of God and who he is and what he's revealed.

And guess what? That does bring an emotive response. I know, I'm in a Baptist church. Emotions, bad. Raise your hands up, bad, right?

Sway with the music unless you're Sabian, bad. It's actually good. It's actually good to lift holy hands unto the Lord. Do you know it's actually good to clap along with music?

You don't want me to clap because there's going to be problems there. But for some of you who are a musical, you can respond in such a way. It's okay.

[ 27 : 06 ] It's an expression of your heart, of an inward reality. You're moved by God. It's okay to cry. To be moved by the truth, which affects our souls.

See, when worship is in spirit but not truth, it's just emotionalism gone awry. If worship is all about truth but no spirit, you end up being overly baptistic.

No, just kidding. It just becomes a sense of ritualism. Worship is an inward reality that is expressed through the understanding of God's word, his truth, which should move our emotions and, Lord willing, direct our wills.

Right? It makes that decision, okay, God, not only I worship you, I'm obeying you. I have to make some decisions in my life that I need to clean up. I got to make a decision.

I got to join growth group. I got to get in there because I need other people bringing wisdom into my life. It's knowing that I'm young, but I need to hear wisdom from older people too who live this Christian life far longer than I have.

[ 28 : 27 ] I want to hear from them. I want them to expose what they've learned through God's word that connects with me. And here's a third thought on worship.

Worship is both gathered and scattered. There's two dimensions to worship. The gathered worship is when we come together here on Sundays. We are joining our voices and hearts together to declare the greatness of God.

Amen? That's why we're coming here. Hebrews 10.25 says, Do not neglect meeting together because something unique happens when the body of Christ lifts his name up as one.

Gathered worship is the fuel that strengthens us. One of my former pastors used to say, It is the hot burning furnace that keeps that train moving during the rest of the week.

You need that fire to move you, those coals to be red hot. Then we have the scattered worship. So when we leave here, but we continue our worship.

[ 29 : 31 ] Colossians 3.17, Paul says, Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. I had a friend.

He's coming to an understanding of God. And he's asking me, What are the spiritual things that I have to do? What do I have to do to connect with God? I said, One of the things you do, You got to start coming to church.

You got to connect with other believers. You can't do it on your own. And he's like, Well, what more do I have to do? And I said, You're actually doing it. You're a great father. You're a great husband.

He's got a great high responsibility in the government. You're doing a responsible job. You're doing it with integrity. Those are all means of worship. Every part of our life is an altar.

So that is the third. First peak, we've got bold biblical preaching. We believe in declaring the word of God. Second of all, we want to worship God wholeheartedly. Amen?

[ 30 : 36 ] Every part of who he is, we want to permeate in our life. And the third one is, the third peak of SBC is fervent prayer. Fervent prayer.

A third distinctive of a healthy church is fervent prayer. I'm going to be honest with you. Everybody always says, Well, we're not doing enough. Guess what? Everybody says that. When you say, How can I grow spiritually?

Oh, I need to grow. I need to pray more. It's always there. It's like a universal thing. Can we pray enough? Paul writes in Ephesians 6.18. He says, Praying at all times. Well, I'm not doing it enough. But what he's talking about is praying at all times in the spirit with all prayer and supplication to that end. Keep alert with all perseverance. Making supplication for all the saints. If you're responding to God's word and you're in this worship phase of your life, you're always praying, right?

When you see someone in need, you're praying, whether you can meet it or not. You hear a story. You know someone. You're in a situation in your life. It's hard. We pray. That's why Paul later on in Colossians 4.2 says, Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

[ 31 : 47 ] We pray not because it's a filler, not because it's a ritual, not because it's an optional extra. It's because it's the lifeblood. It's what powers our existence.

Three things about prayer. One, prayer is our dependence on God. In fact, it's our declaration of dependence on God.

Prayer is ultimately saying, I can't do it. I need you, God. I need your wisdom. I need your power. And sometimes it's just like, God, I need you to help me lift my hands because I am tired in this life. I'm feeling dragged down, run over. I need you. I don't even know how to pray. In fact, I'm just going to cry. Tell me who hasn't been there.

You didn't need words to pray, right? Came out with the expression of your emotions. See, without prayer, we drift into self-reliance. Without prayer, we operate in human strength.

[ 32 : 53 ] Without prayer, we may have activity, but we will not have power. The greatest model of a praying person, Jesus Christ, Son of God.

Throughout the text, he's always praying and communing with his Father. Mark 1.35 says, Rising very early in the morning while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.

I'm going to be honest with you. I get caught up in my duties. You know, I get excited about something, but sometimes I've got to catch myself, even put my study away, close my Bible, close what I'm studying for the sermon, and just spend that time in prayer.

Even sometimes, even with my wife and I and the family, sometimes we're talking about stuff, and we've got to go, Hey, honey, do you think she'll say to me, Hey, honey, do you think we should pray about this? Yes, we should. It's so easy to get into the actions without the dependence on God.

And what happens is, we who've been more mature and walked in the faith, sometimes we tend to pray less because we think we've got it with our experience. So prayer is our declaration of dependence.

[ 34 : 06 ] It's saying, Apart from you, I can do nothing. Second of all, prayer fuels everything we do. Look at the early church in Acts.

In Acts 1, before Pentecost, it says they devoted themselves to prayer. In Acts 2.42, after Pentecost, they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, oh yeah, prayer.

Acts 4, when the church faced persecution, they prayed with boldness, and the place where they gathered was shaken. In Acts 13, before sending out missionaries, they fasted and prayed.

So prayer fuels our preaching, it fuels our worship, it fuels our discipleship, it fuels our mission. Without prayer, these things are powerless. Without prayer, with prayer, the fact is, we are unstoppable.

That's why prayer is going to be an essential part of our growth group ministry. It's to be known and known. And I'm not talking about the kind of prayer. And I know some churches, hey, do you guys have a prayer meeting?

[ 35 : 12 ] We haven't been that faithful with that because prayer meetings has its place at certain times and other times it doesn't. One of the biggest problems, you have to focus yourself on prayer meeting to quit praying for Aunt Edna's toe.

Right? Sometimes we're going to pray about those things. In a big group, people don't want to let it out. Hey, listen, I need prayer. I'm feeling distant from my child.

They're making decisions that I disagree with. And it's hard for me. That's why you're in there. You're almost taking an oath together.

We're not going to talk about it. We're not going to gossip. That goes on there. But I'm going to open up and we're going to share and we're going to pray. That's what we do as elders. We have to be open. We dedicate a time of both praying for you and for us.

Every elders meeting has to be about that element of prayer. We can't be open and honest with one another. We're just going to pray for Aunt Edna's broken toe.

[ 36 : 12 ] Right? Uncle Ernie's stressed out because he's losing his hair. Whatever. We want it to be essential because it is essential.

And we want it personal. And sometimes it's going to feel real and it's going to feel raw. And we're letting someone into the dark places of our life.

I don't mean dark, sinful, dark areas where nobody really comes in that much. But it's good to know that there's brothers and sisters praying for us with that.

And here's the last point about prayer. Prayer must be fervent. What I mean by that, it's not formal. It's not formal. Paul says in Colossians 4, to continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

So we know that prayer needs to be steadfast, watchful, and thankful. By steadfast, it means to be consistent, persistent, not just on the occasion. Number two, needs to be watchful.

[ 37 : 22 ] We need to be alert for the things to pray for, discerning, aware of spiritual battles. That's a big one. We live in a world, we want to make people our enemy, right?

That's where the political spectrum is. Hate people who have a different opinion than you. They're not the enemy. They're not the enemy. There's an evil one who prowls.

He tells lies and he scares people. And he gets them to believe the wrong things. And we start to hate them, but it's hate the enemy, the source of those spiritual lies.

Confront that spiritual battle. And number three, to be thankful, filled with gratitude for who God is and what he has done for us. All too often, our prayers are routine, rushed, or self-centered.

But fervent prayer is different. That's why James 5, 16 reminds us, the prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. Another way to think about prayer is prayer is aligning yourself with God's will.

[ 38 : 29 ] Not making God bend to your will. You with me on that? A lot of people don't know that. But actually, the whole art of prayer, when you're giving yourself over to God, you're meditating on his scripture, you're going to find your whole prayer life changes because you're going to want what he wants, not what you want.

And then you're going to start praying for the things of God, not for the things of BK. Fourth peak, and this was actually the subject of last week's sermon, but it's intentional discipleship making. Intentional discipleship making. Matthew 28, 19. I'm not going to go over this very long. If you weren't here last week, I'd encourage you, go listen to that sermon. And by the way, the week after Thanksgiving, we're going to be having a membership meeting.

We're going to have a membership class. And that's going to be attuned as we bring in Church 99, as we've kind of completed all these merger things. It's important we go through this class. These three sermons that I'm preaching is going to be foundational to what our membership class is.

These are the beliefs. This is what we're all about as a church, and it's important that you listen to these, understand these. And that class is going to be a great opportunity to ask questions.

[ 39 : 44 ] But that discipleship thing that God gives us, he says, go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded, and behold, I am with you always to the end.

It's not a suggestion. It's a command. It's the ultimate marching order of our church. Our task is not to simply gather crowds, run programs, or maintain traditions.

Our task is to make disciples. Let me just give you three words about discipleship. You guys would have heard it. One, discipleship is relational.

Discipleship is relational. It's not handing someone a textbook, signing them up for a class. It's actually connecting with them. That's why Jesus Christ said, follow me.

You're actually inviting someone in, hey, follow me as I have learned from Jesus. Let me teach you. What I thought, doesn't mean you're going to be teaching them comprehensively when you disciple someone. It might be just for that season of life.

[ 40 : 50 ] It could be for a week, a month, maybe even a conversation after church. Someone opens up about something. Hey, let me tell you what God's word has done, what the truth has done in my life.

See, discipleship happens in the context of relationships. It means walking with others, sharing life, modeling Christ's likeness. That's why Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11, be imitators of me as I am of

Christ.

It's life on life, helping others follow Jesus as we follow him. Second part about discipleship is it's transformational.

Paul writes in Colossians 1, 28, he says, him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

For this I toil, struggling with all his energy, not my energy, with God's energy that he powerfully works within me. See, the goal of discipleship is not simply knowledge, it's maturity.

[ 42 : 01 ] Guess what? It takes time. You don't talk to your six-year-old like they're a 24-year-old, right? How come you didn't go pick up at the grocery? You knew I needed groceries.

Why didn't you drive down to the store and pick them up for me? Well, dad, I don't even drive.

Right? Of course not. You give them, you teach them, you grow them. And three, the other measure of faithful discipleship is it's reproducible.

It's reproducible. It's disciples making disciples making disciples. And that is our heart, that is our desire. Paul disciplined, Timothy disciplined, Paul, Timothy disciplined, faithful men.

That's why he says simply in 2 Timothy 2.2, what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses in trust to faithful men.

He's talking about faithful men and women who will be able to teach others also. You see, discipleship is not complete until the disciple becomes a disciple maker.

[ 43 : 07 ] You get that? It's not complete until that person you disciple is discipling others as well.

Fifth peak, I want to switch over too quickly, is the global and local missions that we believe in, both global and local missions.

This is kind of the church gathered, church scattered. That's why in Acts 1.8, Jesus tells his disciples, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

Notice, the power of that, the decision maker of that is when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

The Holy Spirit will drive that. This verse is like concentric circles.

It started with Jerusalem, local, Judea, and Samaria was regional and obviously the ends of the earth are global. As you become strengthened, you're making disciples plant churches.

The mission starts right here. I've always struggled in different churches. hey, I want to go on a mission. Who are you discipling now? No one. What makes you think you're going to be able to go accomplish discipleship with a group of people you don't even speak the same language of?

[ 44 : 26 ] Right? Until we see that faithfulness here, those characteristics of a godly person lived out in your own sphere, we can't support you with that.

So here's three items about missions. One, the gospel compels us outward. Now, it says the church has never meant to be a quote-unquote holy huddle locked away from the world.

That's why Jesus says in Matthew 5.14, you are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. And we talked about this a little bit last week, guys. Love has to be the motivation.

Get that? It's not duty that's the motivation. It's love. Do you know it's okay to love non-Christians? It's okay. Embrace them.

Love them. That doesn't mean you're taking all their instructions and doing what they say. But love them through their hardships, their brokenness.

[ 45 : 29 ] Demonstrate, hey, I was broken too. I did not mend myself. You know who mended me? This guy named Jesus Christ. I heard that he died for my sins because I carried a heavy burden.

Let me tell you about him. That's missions. Missions means proclaiming the gospel, not just preserving it.

That doesn't mean we hold it to ourselves. We push it out. And missions means opening our mouth with the good news, not keeping it to ourselves. Romans 10, verses 13 to 15 makes it plain.

It says, For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed?

If you love someone and you're not telling the gospel, how could they know Jesus? How can they know the free gift of God's love that God offers them without you saying something?

[ 46 : 34 ] And how are they to believe in him whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? You ask why preaching begins?

Number one, the bold declaration of God's word as our first peak because the preaching of God's word sets the tone for everything else. Amen? It informs our worship.

It informs our prayers. It informs our missions. See, the gospel compels us outward because people cannot believe in a Christ that they have never heard of.

Second point of missions, like I said, it's both local and global. Local missions is sharing Christ where we live, work, and play. It means being a witness to our coworkers, your neighbors, your classmates.

It means loving this city, this area in practical ways while pointing people to Jesus Christ. I grew up in a background where people felt if I can be as moral and holy as possible, that would lead people to Christ.

[ 47 : 44 ] That church is dying every day because they do not declare the truth of the gospel. And I remember this man confronting me and telling me he had been in the same school, he had retired, he was a teacher.

And I said at any time did you ever proclaim Jesus Christ to anybody? You mean someone didn't come into the teacher's lounge crying or hurting because their marriage was breaking down or maybe their children were involved in gangs or involved with drugs.

You didn't mean none of that stuff was going on? Because everywhere I've been people have always been in trouble. The answer was no.

I was hoping to live a moral life so they would be drawn to me. Often that morality without understanding is translated as judgmental and it repels people from you.

But the mission just isn't locally. It means sending, supporting and sometimes going ourselves. It means raising up, sending missionaries to the nations. In your bulletin I put in that support letter and I didn't plan this.

[ 49 : 00 ] But one of the areas that I'm speaking is actually a church in the Philippines who's sending out missionaries to other countries. They've kind of reached this point. They've been building after God's word.

They started small and they're at this point where they've got this school and a seminary and they've been training in there now. Sending Filipino missionaries and I've been called to ask what are the pragmatic ways how do missionaries get lost basically.

The temptation of pragmatism of wanting to be liked often is the case. How to bring a crowd without actually preaching the good news of the gospel.

I'm blessed that Danielle is going to have a chance to come and just see what's going on over there. So I invite you to pray and if God would lead you to give towards that we'd appreciate that.

But I'm excited to go. It's kind of funny my relationship with Philippines one ministry invited me over and when I was over there I connected with other ministries and now it's one of those other ministries that's asked me to teach and at another area another ministry and I'm going back with the original ministry to spend time with them as well as we've just become we're just getting to know them we're friends and the one family said hey we can't wait we have a it's called the joyful villa and we can't wait to have you and your wife come and get to know us.

[ 50 : 28 ] Special people in special times. And my third point is like I said mission is both word and deed. A lot of missionaries have given to the idea of and there's studies now that has been going on.

When I was in seminary there was called the worldwide school of missions and it was based in Pasadena California and this has been existing and now they've done studies because a lot of people said in order to preach God's word we have to be able to do good things so they would build and do good things.

They're going to build wells and they start off wanting to do really good things in these countries but they found that they never got to that point of actually preaching God's word.

And the missionaries now that have been quote unquote more successful. are those who actually went and trained people in the churches to be disciples and now those are the missions that are exploding.

You with me on that? Because some people say we don't want to offend people. Hey let me give you some news. The gospel is offensive. It divides truth and error.

[ 51 : 34 ] It's not intentional. Don't be offensive because you're a jerk. Right? You are going to say some things that they don't like. It's okay. But you still love them.

You still care for them. You still respect them. Just so you do not know, we've got missions that we support locally. We support Rebecca Penner who grew up here.

She is involved with Youth Unlimited and she works with young families who are often very dysfunctional. And sometimes as they're growing up and young and having babies, what's the first resort, right?

abortion. Get rid of the baby seen as a problem where she helps young ladies that are scared to be good moms. Because often, let's be honest, not a lot of us grew up in Christian households. Think about the world. What good is coming in there? What is informing their worldview on family? The streets. Do you want wisdom from there? No, of course not.

[ 52 : 41 ] This is an opportunity. Internationally, we support Daniel Henderson. Daniel Henderson's heart is to bring the resources to train pastors all around the world. He used to do it just for French speaking countries.

Well, the world wasn't big enough. That world wasn't big enough for Daniel. And he's deciding to go the whole world. He's like in Madagascar. He's in Kuala Lumpur. And he's a part of this great, awesome model where they go into a country that speaks many languages and they'll set up like sound booths and they'll get these young interns to read resources that help train pastors and they'll read it in their own native languages.

So it's going out as podcasts and in radios over different people because there's not always the money to reproduce every book and every language. But they're kind of doing this ad hoc.

So he's worked hard to get the rights from all these owners and pastors. They're all excited for the work Daniel has done. The other one is Kyle and Hannah Davies.

They're currently living in South Africa. They work with Bible Translation Fellowship and Kyle himself is kind of the head of Bible Translation meaning he's the one who when people have their Bibles translated he's the one who goes over and makes sure it's truly biblically accurate.

[ 54 : 02 ] But what differs him from everybody else is that he builds in the local church to build that translation. Because often they can speak it so he works with this church in a different area and he's helping them training elders and doing exactly what I'm talking about today.

Build passionate preachers and prayer and all these type of things. He's instructing at the same time he's creating this Bible which is true from a pastoral perspective and from the original language.

So he's an expert in Aramaic, Greek, and Hebrew. And he's all over the place doing that. And at other times you guys don't know we've asked for a few resources giving.

We've actually supplied resources to pastors in not only Philippines but it's gone far as India and different areas as well. Because right now as you know on computers can hold so many more resources.

If you've been in my office you see I've got a lot of books. I've got about 10 times as many books on my computer. And it's quick resource to help them study. There's another man that I know and I support him personally.

[ 55 : 12 ] He grew up in Africa. His parents were missionaries and he creates most people where he helps they only can read cell phones.

They don't have computers. So he creates these monthly newsletters and there's a bit of church history but there's always some teaching mixed in because a lot of them they don't have education and he's giving them sermons outlines to help them in their villages all over the place preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Some exciting things. The final peak that I want to land on that is a distinctive of our church and I believe every biblical church it's a healthy church has elder leadership.

leadership. A healthy biblical church always has elder leadership. Acts 20 28 says pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.

That's elders, pastors to care for the church of God which he obtained with his own blood. This verse tells us three things. One, the church belongs to God.

[ 56 : 22 ] Amen? It didn't say the church belonged to BK. things would be a little bit different. No, just kidding. Right? It belongs to BK. It was purchased with Christ's blood and here's the thing the Spirit appoints overseers, elders to shepherd it.

See the leadership in the church is not man's idea it is God's design. God is the over shepherd we are the under shepherd. Three facts about this.

One, Christ is the head of the church ultimately and we serve him. We know he's the head of the church because Ephesians 1 tells us and he put all things this is God under his feet and gave him

as head over all things which is his church.

God gives the church to Jesus Christ. Colossians 1.18 says and he is the head of the body of the church. What does that tell us? One, church is not a democracy. Majority does not rule.

Two, the church is not a business where we hire the best when the one with the most common business sense or a CEO to call the shots. The church is not a dictatorship where one man leads on lords over all.

[ 57 : 36 ] It is what's called a Christocracy. Jesus Christ rules his head and he exercises that authority through godly elders who shepherd his flock.

What's a godly elder? Well, Paul actually tells us there's qualifications. In Titus 1.5 he says this is why I left you in Crete so that you might put what remained into order and appoint elders in every town as I directed you.

And he gave them qualifications. One, above reproach. That means they can't be scandalized people. They have to be faithful in their marriages. They have to be a good faithful parent.

They have to be sober minded, self-controlled, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard or given to wine, not violent or pugnacious, not greedy for gain, not a, but they have to be a lover of good, upright, holy, disciplined.

And 1 Timothy would add, not a recent convert or he may become puffed up with conceit. I want you to notice something here.

[ 58 : 50 ] These qualifications are almost entirely about character. The primary requirement of an elder is not charisma. It's not business skill.

It's not popularity. It's a heart after God. It's a man who understands his place and is willing to be holy, meaning he's willing to be set apart to do the work that God has given him, that the chief shepherd, Jesus Christ, has given him.

What is that work? The Bible lays that out too. One, shepherd the flock. 1 Peter 5, 2, shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly.

What that means is we're not beating, we're not threatening you. We want you to trust us that we love you, we care for you, we want what's best for you. We want to present you fully mature in Jesus Christ.

We want you to hear, well done, good and faithful servant at the end of your life. I want that more than anything else for every single one of you. It says, as God would have you not for shameful gain, but eagerly.

[ 60 : 13 ] What it means is an elder wants to be an elder. He doesn't go kicking and streaming, but here's the trick. You know how you spot an elder? He's already an elder before even anybody appoints him an elder. He's already doing that work.

You don't smack him, hey, you know what, you could be an elder, we're going to give you a, we're going to beat you up a little bit so you do all these things. No, it's naturally happening. One, he's got to have a love for people. It says, not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

Oftentimes in tough situations, we just simply model it for you. We're not going to smack you. We over, we don't shame you.

We just want to model it. Welcome you into my home. Let's talk about this. Let's hang out. Second role of elders is they teach and guard sound doctrine.

They teach and guard. In case you did not know, 1 Timothy talks that the church itself is the guardian. It's the buttress and pillar of truth. How do we know it's God's truth that comes from God and the elders defend it?

[ 61 : 23 ] It says, 1 Titus 1.9 says, he must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Because there's going to be wolves that come in here that want to teach a false gospel. That's happened a couple of times. There's a couple of times I've had to tell people, you're not welcome here.

Leave. You see, our role is to feed you with God's word, with truth, and protect the flock from error. We do this from the pulpit.

We do this with biblical counseling. We deal this with our relationships, our discipleship. And as we get this growth group coming, it's going to be that. And number three, our role is to lead with humility.

Hebrews 13.17 calls the church to obey and submit to their leaders, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will have to give an account.

[ 62 : 22 ] Listen, there's the hardest part of being an elder. Sometimes we're in that meeting and we're perplexed what to do. Because we see someone just kind of running off the rails and we've tried.

We've tried counseling. We've tried bringing in other people to talk. And it breaks our heart that they're continuing to drive a certain path that is going to lead to destruction and is going to lead to ruin and misery.

Thus we pray. Thus we care. So, let me conclude this sermon.

What does it mean to live out our distinctives? So, let's step back and ask the question, what makes a church healthy? More directly, what makes Squamish Baptist Church healthy?

It's not our building. It's not our programs. It's not our personalities. What makes us healthy is our commitment to live out the priorities God has given us in his word.

[ 63 : 29 ] We've seen them today. Six distinctives that define a faithful church. Bold biblical preaching. Wholehearted worship. Fervent prayer.

Intentional discipleship making. Global and local mission. And elder leadership. That's the vision. And this is the path forward.

But here's the challenge. These distinctives won't shape our church unless they shape you. You are part of this church.

We could put banners up stating this all over the place, but if you do not own them in your hearts, they make no difference. The fact of the matter is, preaching won't transform you if you don't come here hungry for God's word.

My hope in prayer is you want to know what God has to say for you. You want this truth and you're hunger for it. Like I said last week, Piper gave that at John MacArthur's funeral, he just simply said that John MacArthur was greedy for God's word.

[ 64 : 34 ] Listen, I'm not John Piper. I'm not John MacArthur. I'm not Alistair Begg. I'm not some of the greatest preachers of all time. I'm BK. I live here.

We've got Dave and David who are great preachers as well. We're blessed. We're blessed. And our desire is that you come here hungry for that word.

Number two, worship won't rise if you only separate instead of participating. Or what you only spectate instead of participating. Sorry. I need new glasses.

I need glasses. We're not here to spectate. You're here to engage. We want you to sing those songs. I want you to cry with those songs. Some of those songs, the reason I sit at the front for two reasons.

One, you can't hear me sing. Two, sometimes I'm tearful. Because sometimes those songs uniquely grab me where I need to be grabbed.

[ 65 : 35 ] Prayer won't fill our church if you do not pray. Discipleship won't happen if you don't invest in others. Missions will not advance here if you do not witness.

And elders can't shepherd effectively if you won't follow with humility. This church needs you. A healthy church is not just about leaders doing their jobs.

It's about the whole body working together, each member doing their part. It's an orchestra. And that symphony feels wonderful and sounds incredible when all the different instruments are playing that same tune in each, their individual way.

So my question is, will you commit yourself to this vision? Will you be more than an attender? Will you be a participant?

I'm okay with you spectating and wanting to learn, but sooner or later I'm going to want you to engage. Will you be more than a consumer, but will you be a contributor?

[ 66 : 58 ] We need people to continue helping out with youth, helping out with children's church, helping out with hospitality, welcoming people. There's no shortage of work. You know where we need some people? I hope they don't mind I'm bringing up.

We need people to help us with our online presence. We need people that are social media savvy. I'm over 50, right? Isn't Facebook the epitome of social media?

We need people that want to go over, take some of the burden off Steph on doing those things to help get the message out.

And my hope and prayer is that you want to be in the place where God works. Because guess what? God says he works in the church.

He does not make that promise to any other organization. You want to see lives change? Lives transformed? It happens in the church.

[ 67 : 56 ] Whether you like it or not, it happens here. And I pray to God that everyone comes here with the expectation that not only they don't want to see their lives change, but their loved ones' lives change to the greatness and glory of God.

Amen? Let me pray. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we just thank you for this time that we've been able to spend these last three weeks just looking at what your book says about your body, your church.

Father, I pray that we're moved by a desire to see you work. We're moved by a desire to see your glory, to see your kingdom come, to see lives changed.

I know we were encouraged last week just hearing this testimony about how God pursued our young sister Vanessa with the gospel.

No matter where she went, even in the disappointments of life, God still chased her down. And the reality is when God wants us, he's going to do the same.

[ 69 : 08 ] Maybe that's some of the people here today. God's been chasing you to step up, to not spectate, but to participate. That you've got this longing, this desire to be a part of what God is doing.

We all know that some sermons hit home more than others. And sometimes we don't always realize that the sermons that we're hearing may not seem relevant to us in the moment.

But sometimes it's years later, those truths of your word, the spirit brings back. And he uses it to encourage us, to build us.

So God, I'm thankful for the people here at this church who have longed and desired these things for many years. That they have made God's word central.

They wanted God-honoring worship. They were praying people. They were mission-sending people. They were elder-led people.

[ 70 : 14 ] And I pray just kind of as we continue to grow in your goodness, oh Father, I pray that many people would want to be a part of the work of your ministry that you are doing for us.

May we be humble enough to accept this equipping. We ask these things in your great and merciful name.

Amen.