

## 2020 Vision (8): Living as God's Family: Proclaiming

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### I. Introduction

- A. Hijacked jetliner crashed near Comoro Islands in Indian Ocean in 1996
1. One of the men who died in that crash was named Andrew Meekens
    - a. He was a Christian and elder in *International Evangelical Church*
    - b. Survivors say Meekens used his last moments to tell about Christ
      - 1) He spoke of the cross, meaning of salvation, and of life eternal
      - 2) His last moments of life were spent trying to point to Jesus
    - c. He was speaking about Jesus one minute... and to Jesus the next
    - d. When you get right down to it, that's really not a bad way to go
  2. Tim McGraw sings "live like we're dying." Get important things done
    - a. There is nothing more important than sharing our faith in Jesus
    - b. We've been talking about changes going on at our church, right?
      - 1) Here's one for you– some of you are getting any younger
      - 2) We're on a plane that is going down and we need to get busy
  3. James is a bit snarky when he chides is on our 5-yr plan (**Jam 4:13**)
    - a. Whatever important stuff you're going do, it better be today
    - b. And sharing your faith with people who need Jesus– important!
- B. Except for a summary lesson next week, this is last 2020 Vision lessons
1. We have been using our long-standing vision statement as outline *Living as God's family under the cross: Loving, Serving, Praising, Proclaiming*
    - a. It is our task as a church of Christ to preach the gospel of Christ
    - b. The last of our vision statements is that of PROCLAIMING
  2. What do we proclaim? We proclaim that the kingdom of God is here
    - a. That's exactly what it is that Jesus did in His ministry (**Matt 4:23**)
      - 1) We don't do everything that Jesus did because we're not Jesus
      - 2) We don't miraculously heal the sick or cast out demon
      - 3) We don't pray and sometimes God does all those things
    - b. But like Jesus, we proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God
    - c. If you use a different translation; you preach the gospel (*same thing*)

## II. What Is the Gospel?

- A. At some point, “*gospel*” stopped being a verb and became an adjective
1. We talk of “*gospel preacher*” or “*gospel music*,” or “*gospel meeting*”
    - a. Several years ago, some friends a gospel meeting at nearby church
    - b. It was on Sunday night, so I couldn’t go but they filled me in later
      - 1) Preacher (*toenail clipper guy*) spent hour bashing other churches
      - 2) **Friend 1**: “*Why call it Gospel Meeting; I didn’t hear good news*”
      - 3) **Friend 2**: “*I heard good news; when he said, “Let’s stand/sing”*”
  2. What does “*gospel*” mean? *Let’s one of those thrilling word studies*
    - a. OT word was a herald bringing good news to king (**1 Sam 18:31**)  
(*David won’t see this as totally good news because this is Absalom’s rebellion*)
    - b. Herald announces Solomon follows David as king (**1 King 1:42**)  
(*This isn’t seen as good news to Adonijah who had just crowned himself king!*)
    - c. Psalms uses this word much like NT does gospel (**Psa 96:2-3**)
- B. **Problem**: There were very few kings that would seek God like David
1. Heralds didn’t bring much good news, but gloom, despair and agony
    - a. Isaiah starts looking beyond the time of the kings for good news
    - b. He points to a time when God Himself would be king (**40:9-10**)
      - 1) As we’ll see in class, even good kings are kind of worthless
      - 2) God was bringing about a King for the ages, a king of kings
  2. That king would be good news would be for everyone (**Isa 61:1-2**)
    - a. Did that text sound familiar at all? Hang on; we’ll sing it in a bit!
    - b. It must have been one of Jesus’ favorite texts in Hebrew Bible
      - 1) He preached from it back home in Nazareth (**Luke 4:18-20**)
      - 2) After he read it, roll up scroll, paused a beat– this is about me
    - c. When John wanted to know, are you really him; quotes same text
  3. When Jesus read **Isa 61**, he’d have it from the Hebrew (*basar*)
    - a. But when Like record it for us, he wrote the Greek– euaggelizō
    - b. The word means the same thing either way, “*proclaim good news*”
      - 1) What Jesus came to do– proclaim good news of the kingdom
      - 2) Will we proclaim it? The plane is going down; no time to lose!

### III. Three Points on Proclaiming the Good News

#### A. **Point #1:** Evangelism isn't about a SYSTEM; it's all about a SAVIOR

1. Much of our “*personal evangelism*” has really been “*proselytizing.*”
  - a. You convince them that their church is wrong and our church
  - b. That's not preaching the gospel; that sheep stealing (**John 10:16**)
  - c. Gospel is never about the church; the gospel is always about Jesus
2. I came to see that years ago when had to “*give up*” one of my sheep
  - a. We invited our neighbors Tetreau's to group (started it for them)
    - 1) After coming to our small group for a year, they were baptized
    - 2) After a couple of year years Uncle Sam moved them away
  - b. Guy called me about six months after they left here very frustrated
    - 1) Church there didn't study Bible, no classes, no groups,
    - 2) They found a Baptist church that reminded them of Denbigh  
(*Stress on Bible, classes, groups, pastor preached like me, but not as good-looking*)
  - c. I told him the same thing as when he was here— follow Jesus
3. When we share the gospel, it must be start and end with Jesus Christ

#### B. **Point #2:** The local church is God's Plan A and there is no Plan B

1. Gospels end and Acts begins with the Great Commission (**Acts 1:8**)
  - a. Apostles were given the task and power to take gospel to world
  - b. By the time the apostles were done, the gospel had filled the earth
2. The ongoing vehicle for the spread of the gospel was local churches
  - a. Apostles went into all world, but they were funded by churches
  - b. Churches themselves rang out the message of truth (**1 Thess 1:8**)
  - c. Even when church suffered persecution, they spread the gospel  
(The church father Tertullian, “*The Blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.*”)
3. We still have to realize that we're plan A— Denbigh is plan A, right?
  - a. We can't just preach to the choir; can't just rehearse story here
  - b. “*If people want to hear, they'll come*” (Our own folks don't)
  - c. **Change Alert:** *Outreach Committee* to look at our local outreach
    - 1) What exactly is this and how will this work out. Stay tuned
    - 2) We can minor in a lot of things; must MAJOR in the gospel

- C. **Third:** No matter what your spiritual gift is, we are ALL in this game!
1. No one likes evangelism; weird, uncomfortable stuff comes to mind
    - a. Knocking on doors and talking to strangers (dangerous today)
    - b. Walking up to strangers in the mall, “*If you were to die today...*”
  2. We won’t ask you to do that. *How about inviting friends to church?*
    - a. If you like what we’re doing here, then ask someone to come too
    - b. Don’t have to do theological haggles; best you not (**2 Tim 2:23-24**)
      - 1) Evangelism means good news; arguing is never good news
      - 2) Dad, “*Don’t wrestle with pigs; both get dirty and pigs like it*”
      - 3) Does that sound ugly? “*Don’t cast your pearls before swine...*”
  3. Here’s where we all want to say, “*I don’t have gift of evangelism*”
    - a. And here where I say, “And I don’t really care, OK?”
      - 1) You don’t have the gift of music, but you were singing
      - 2) Roger and I do not have the gift of golf, but still play
      - 3) I don’t have gift of cooking— so Lynn leaves and I starve
    - b. Somethings you just make-due even if you’re not the best at it!
    - c. Inviting friends because you want them in heaven. Make due!
  4. Max Lucado in his book *Applause of Heaven* tells of Robert Reed
    - a. Robert was a graduate of ACU who went to Lisbon as mission
    - b. He had a degree in Latin from ACU; he also had cerebral palsy (“*his shirts are held together with Velcro but his life is held together by joy*”)
    - c. He found a hotel and restaurant owner to feed him and a tutor
      - 1) He would station himself in a park and distribute brochures
      - 2) In 6 years, he led 70 people to Christ, one was his wife Rosa
    - d. Now explain to me again why you can’t invite people to church
      - 1) Do we think that we need Jesus? What about your friends?
      - 2) The fact is you do have a gift... his name is Jesus.

## IV. Conclusion

- A. Let’s give Him the last word this morning, OK? (**Luke 17:20-21**)
- B. Are we living like the kingdom of God is in our midst today