

A Credible Witness Series
Part Three
09/17/22
Newport News

Opening

-3 weeks in this series...

-if you call this church home...MUST watch last two weeks!

-then 6 weeks of Holy Roar...

Introduction

-I believe churches in America are in decline even while the diversity of congregations are on the rise because people who are coming to churches in search of a Gospel message that promises reconciliation are finding churches preaching a cross that reconciles us to God but is simultaneously failing miserably at being reconciled to one another...simply put, we lack a credible witness!

-(show slide with boundary blue lines)

-(show slide with vision, mission, message, and values)

(some comments about a change of direction tonight)

Why It Matters

-Luke 19:10

-(tell story of Derick playing in clothes rack and I couldn't find him)

- That's God's feeling for every person!
- What if Derick had stepped out and I wasn't there?
- Every person is going to discover that feeling at some point!
- Eternal, immortal being, created by God live and rule and reign with Him for all eternity!

- Greatest need is to know God and to be known by Him!!!!

- John 14:6 **(Let's make Jesus easy to find!!!!)**
- Matthew 16:18
- **The Church is Jesus' plan for how The Gospel is supposed to be proclaimed to the world!**
- Mark 16:14-20
 1. What are we being stubborn about?
 2. The signs and wonders that will capture this generation?
 3. Notice there aren't any singular pronouns...

A Credible Witness

-John 1:50, 5:20, 14:12-14 (read one of them)

-What if Jesus wasn't talking just about physical miracles? Is it possible that Jesus was performing miracles on the tangible in part to inspire faith for miracles on the intangible?

(acknowledge miracles were proof of His divinity AND give my Pentecostal clarifier...)

-What if it's my blindness to the Imago Dei in others...

-What if it's my deafness to the pain and suffering and lament of others...

-What if it's my atrophied will that won't move toward my brother and sister in Christ who is in need...

-What if it's my loving, calming presence that's supposed to calm the storms of life that are causing others to despair...

-What if...what if it's the miracle of reconciling relationships that feel irreconcilable!!!!!!!!

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simultaneously failing miserably at being reconciled to one another...simply put, we lack a credible witness!

The Church (Luke 15)

-The shepherd, the woman, and the father are given to us by Jesus in these parables to show us how the character of Christ in us determines whether or not people want to be found by us!

-the sheep will only go back to the shepherd who is kind, merciful, gentle, and faithful...Matthew 11:28-30!

-the coin only wants to belong to the woman who is fervent, hopeful, persevering, and believing...Philippians 1:6!

-the son only wants to return to the father who is patient, forgiving, honorable, and wise...Romans 2:4!

-Remember, the journey of becoming like Christ personally ultimately determines the community we have together! Every church is the sum of its parts. Are we more like Christ because of you...because who we are affects whether people who are lost want to be found here!

-(explain again our 24 month plan)

Our Blueprint (talk about Jennifer's question at CDT meeting)

-3 Values (explain these are sub-values of Diversity)

- 1. Celebration**
- 2. Collaboration**
- 3. Consideration**

-DeyMaz's 7 Commitments of a Multi-Ethnic Church

- 1. Embrace Dependence**
- 2. Take Initial Steps**
- 3. Empower Diverse Leadership**
- 4. Develop Cross-Cultural Relationships**
- 5. Pursue Cross-Cultural Competence**
- 6. Promote a Spirit of Inclusion**
- 7. Mobilize for Impact**

-Paul Maconochie's 9 Behaviors

1. Learn
2. Move
3. Give thanks
4. Listen
5. Partner
6. Befriend
7. Amplify
8. Train
9. Pray

Band

-(show lines slide)

-John 17:20-24

- You know why He is praying right...one mind impossible via human effort!
- It's going to take something supernatural to reconcile the irreconcilable...
- AND, listen to what He says...this IS our witness!!!!

Close

-I am at one with God, rescued from myself, just as if I'm perfect, because Jesus paid it all!