

Friday: *Formula for Kingdom Growth...*

Read: John 17:20-23 ²⁰ “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me...²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

Reflect:

Belief in Jesus is essential in order to have access to the Father for eternity (e.g., Jn14:6). Granted, our understanding about the significance of Jesus will always increase (an aspect of sanctification), but we must believe He is the Messiah in order to be saved.

Jesus told His disciples that by their love for one another the world would know they belonged to Him (Jn13:34-35). Here Jesus says that by the unity of those following the disciples (i.e., “us”) the world will come to believe in Him. If the world believes God sent Jesus, then the world will come to believe in God as the loving Father He is.

These verses are important ones for New Life. Because of these verses New Life will continue to reach out to other congregations in order to visibly show that though we worship in different buildings we are united in Jesus. Who knows...perhaps down the road many congregations in Emporia may ‘literally’ become “one body”. Wouldn’t evangelistic efforts be strengthened in that instance?

Respond:

Biblical Authority + Unity = World Evangelism. Do you believe that is true?

What will you do to show love to someone who is a part of New Life this week?

Are you willing to work towards, and pray for, better unity among congregations in Emporia and the surrounding communities?

Pray: Pray for Prairie View Christian Camp; another mission New Life regularly supports. Pray for the Unity and Purity of all God’s people. Pray for Bob Griffin, Larry Hayes, and Roy Andrews – elders of New Life – pray they are truly led by God. Continue to pray for protection from sin and strength during times of testing.

Saturday: *Know What...*

Read: John 3:14-15 ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. **John8:28** ²⁸ So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. **John 12:32** ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

Reflect:

We’ve seen this week that people need to be told about Jesus. We’ve also seen the importance of us telling people about Jesus. I believe that deep down we want to do that; we want others to know the King of kings as we do...

Something that becomes an issue is that quite often we may not be quite sure what to say. After all, I don’t think many people in America are looking for a Messiah to liberate us from Rome. We’re more concerned about...

Jesus said that if He is “lifted up” people will be drawn to Him. He already has been “lifted up” (i.e., the cross); now we need to make sure the word gets out in “relevant” ways.

Respond:

Do you know the background to John 3:14-15? (Cf. Numb21:4-9)

What do you think people are looking for today? Will you share your thoughts?
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How are you preparing yourself for worship tomorrow?

Pray: Pray for the National Missionary Convention; a mission New Life regularly supports. Pray those being prompted by the Holy Spirit to come to our building tomorrow will come. Pray for Ed Asbury, Keith Krause, and Mike Haag – deacons of New Life – pray they are truly led by God. Pray for our worship to be pleasing to God tomorrow (and today).

What to Whom?

May 17 – 23

To “Evangelize”

- To share the “good news” with others...

The “Good News”

- The message of the gospel...

The message of the gospel; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8...

- ¹ Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

Another passage that depicts the gospel is John 3:16-20.

- ¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe **is condemned already, because** he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

Before you jump to those people not believing in Jesus (which isn’t a bad thing given how so often we only focus on Jn3:16), have you let “light” into all the parts of your life? Chances are good none of us have – at least not consistently in all areas. Wow, in ways we’re not all that different than “the world”. Or are we...?

John’s gospel is clear that “the world” is the unbelieving world, those who do not yet believe...

- e.g., Jn1:9-10; 3:16-29; 7:7; 8:26; 9:39; 12:46-47; etc.

Based on that fact, we are very different from “the world”. However, we must not forget that at one point in time we did not “believe” either. In other words, as wonderful as John 3:16 is – it cannot be separated from vs18-19. If people need saved, they need saved from something...

- For whom are you praying?
- With whom will you share the gospel?

The wages of sin is death (Rom3:23; 6:23a); if you’re reading this chances are good you’ve accepted a free gift (Rom5:8; 6:23b) – others deserve that chance as well.

Monday: Purpose...

Read: John 20:30-31 ³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

<p>Reflect: We often think of the word for “signs” as indicating something <i>miraculous</i> – indeed the Bible indicates there is truth in this (e.g., Mt12:38; Jn2:11,18,23; 3:2; 4:54). Yet the word also simply means “sign” – as in an indication, or indentifying mark (e.g., Rom4:11; 2Thess3:17). While I don’t intend to downplay the “miraculous” slant of this word in many contexts...could it also be that God’s normal (usual) way of working seems “miraculous” to us?</p> <p>More than likely, most of us would admit that we are too focused on our day to day physical existence. Granted, our physical needs (many of which are wants) are important, but all of them are merely temporary.</p> <p>Perhaps if we paid more attention to how God works in this world (e.g., the seven “signs” in John), we might join in with the “miraculous” more often. Is not a person submitting their life to Jesus miraculous? I would say so – since they are then a “new creation” (2Cor5:17). Is coming to that belief through reading a book “miraculous”? Again, I would say so – but we should not leave those we know to fend for themselves...</p>	<p>Respond: Have you believed that Jesus is God’s Son – the Savior of the World? What have you done in response to that? What will you do today?</p> <p>Do you desire God to work through you to bring others to Himself?</p>
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Pray: Pray for the CEA; a mission New Life supports. Pray for the Holy Spirit to continue the work started (or continued) in our lives yesterday. Pray that through God’s work at New Life thousands of people “may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and...have life in His name.” Continue to pray for workers in God’s Kingdom (Mt9:36-38).

Tuesday: YHWH is Gracious...

Read: John 1:6-8 ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

<p>Reflect: The name “John” means “YHWH (the LORD) is gracious”. By sending John as one announcing the coming of the Messiah, God was in fact gracious (and remember – grace <u>always</u> demands a response). In light of that, these verses are pretty cool aren’t they? God does not expect the ability for people to believe in Him to drop out of the sky...or for people to form their own conclusions after reading a book...</p> <p>The Bible is clear that God wants everyone to “be saved”. John’s purpose in coming was so that people would believe in God through the person of Jesus.</p> <p>People flocked to hear John’s message (cf. Mk1:4-5), and he made it plain that he was not the Messiah (e.g., Jn1:20). His witness was so compelling that some of his own disciples followed after Jesus (e.g., Jn1:35ff). As important as John was, he knew his place (cf. Jn3:30). He was only a messenger about The Message – Jesus.</p>	<p>Respond: If God doesn’t “zap” people with faith – how do people come to accept Jesus?</p> <p>Who do you know that needs to submit to the Lordship of Jesus?</p> <p>Based on John’s example, should New Life be most concerned about our own “church growth” or “Kingdom growth”?</p>
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Pray: Pray for Lincoln Christian Seminary, Manhattan Christian College, and Ozark Christian College; missions New Life supports. Pray for a growing desire to talk about Jesus with others. Pray for the Unity and Purity of New Life. Continue to pray for God’s people to have boldness to speak for Him (Acts4:29).

Wednesday: YHWH’s Grace – Intended for All...

Read: Genesis 12:1-3 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

<p>Reflect: God created everything perfect (Gen1:31), but due to mankind thinking we know what is best – it got messed up (Gen3). The rest of the Bible tells the story of God reconciling the world back to Himself.</p> <p>God took drastic measures with the flood (Gen9), but it wasn’t long before mankind was again thinking we know best (e.g., Gen11:1-9). We don’t know how much time passed between the flood and the calling of Abram. Chances are extremely good that it was <u>many</u> years... By the time of Abram nations and cities were already established (e.g., Gen12:10; 13-14).</p> <p>Here’s a question; why did God wait so long to call Abram? If He desires the salvation of everyone...why wait hundreds of years to begin working with someone? Truth be known, we don’t know how many people God called to “Go from your country...” (Gen12:1) who said “No”. In other words, what we have in the Bible is what happened – not every specific detail. Through whom is God desiring to work today? What if ‘they’ say “No”?</p>	<p>Respond: Thank God that Abram was obedient and “went”.</p> <p>Does God have people He desires to come and know Him through your deeds?</p> <p>Will you say “yes” to God? What does that look like today?</p>
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Pray: Pray for Shiloh Home of Hope and Emporia Christian Schools; two missions New Life supports. Ask God for an ever increasing desire to be obedient to Him. Pray for God to place you in the path of someone today with whom you can share the love of Jesus. Continue to pray for God’s Word to spread rapidly (2Thess3:1).

Thursday: The Pattern is Set...

Read: John 1:40-51 ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah”...⁴² He brought him to Jesus...⁴³ The next day Jesus decided...He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida...⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him ... Philip said to him, “Come and see.” ...

<p>Reflect: Since John’s Gospel is written for the purpose of belief (Jn20:30-31), it also seems it should shed some light on what people are to do in response to that belief...</p> <p>John the Baptist told what he knew (e.g., Jn1:7,19ff), and here we see Andrew (a former disciple of John) and Philip telling others what they knew as well. This brings us back to the question posed yesterday – “what if people say “No” when God says “Go”?”</p> <p>Granted, Andrew and Philip did not know everything there is to know about Jesus – but they acted on what they did know. We know a whole lot more about Jesus than those two did (in Jn1). We know He is God’s Son, the Savior of the world, the sacrifice for our sins, etc. I think you see where I’m going with this...how much do we really need to know before sharing Him with others? He is what everyone needs.</p>	<p>Respond: Will you take the initiative to learn more about Jesus?</p> <p>Are you praying for the people on your list of those who need to ‘Hear, See, Experience’ the love of God? If you’re not, who will?</p> <p>What needs has Jesus met in your life?</p>
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Pray: Pray for Cookson Hills; a mission New Life supports. Thank God for whoever first shared Jesus with you. Pray for Brent McCrory; preaching minster at New Life – pray He is truly led by God. Continue to pray for open doors to share God’s Word (Col4:2-6) and the boldness to do so.