



The Importance of What We Do: Committing to our Mandates *Who is CRCC...Revisited, October 13, 2013*

Initial Comments:

- Friends, I greet you this morning in the matchless name of Christ!
- Precious friends, we have emerged from a small break more committed than ever to preach “Christ and Him crucified!” Christ alone MUST get glory at CRCC. Christ ALONE MUST be preached. Christ ALONE must set our agenda and His Word ALONE must be our playbook! Solus Christus must be our battle cry and all we do must lift Him, honor Him, glorify Him, and make Him known!
- He alone is the center of our faith. He alone is the focus of our vision. He alone deserves our worship. For, He alone carried our sickness and diseases, paid the price for our sin, took the wrath of the Father upon Himself, shed His blood for our sins, rose again from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of the Father!
- And HE is COMING AGAIN! Therefore, our desire is that He alone would, “*sanctify [us], having cleansed [us] by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present [this] church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that [CRCC] might be holy and without blemish. (Eph 5:26-27 ESV, additions mine)*”

Friends, every year or two, we like to bring back to your remembrance what this particular church is being asked to do. It really helps us see where we are in our journey of following Christ.

1. Our vision is about **discipleship**. This has to be restated over and over again due to the difficulty of the task. This is **Black Gate stuff, because true, biblical discipleship involves so much! It literally requires a leaving of our nets to follow Jesus!**
2. Sundays like this clarify what God wants to do through us.
3. I believe the Lord is opening new doors for us and the “old paths” style distinctives He’s given us to teach and live. If we keep Christ as our head, His word as our commands, and His Spirit as our helper, I honestly believe that what we are doing and saying in this hour will touch many.

Text: Matthew 9:35-39, 28:18-20. Again, these Scriptures help frame who CRCC is supposed to be:

1. *And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” (Mat 9:35-38 ESV)*
2. *And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Mat 28:18-20 ESV)*

This is our Vision as a result of these Scriptures (See graphic on last page):

1. **“Reaching, Teaching, and Releasing Hurting People through the Power of Jesus Christ”**
 - a. Reaching comes from the Lord’s example of compassionately but truthfully proclaiming the fullness of the **Gospel**. (Mat 9:35)
 - b. Teaching comes from the Lord’s example of teaching everywhere He went. (Mat 9:35)
 - c. Releasing comes from the Lord’s example of healing others and setting them free from sin and bondage. (Mat 9:35)
2. The Church is commanded to make disciples!

- a. We believe discipleship is simply *Meeting Jesus* (Reaching), *Knowing Jesus* (Teaching), and *Serving Jesus* (Releasing)
- b. **We must be intentional about the priorities of Christ!** We must give ourselves fully to His heart, His plan, His commands, and His mission.

Here is the discipleship process; things we ask everyone in membership to do:

1. Worship as a family and invite others (reaching)
2. Be active in Care Group and family devotions (teaching)
3. Serve the Church, the community, and the world (releasing)

We believe these three elements, if done with passion and discipline over time, will produce people so devoted to Christ (and to each other) that their lives will reflect His love and power in every area. These three elements make up our vision process--how we make disciples. And these along with our distinctives (areas of emphasis), give us a roadmap of what Christ wants us to do. We must be willing to focus on these areas with great intensity. Few things change with one sermon, one declaration, or one decision. We must decide daily!

What you see below is the ministry of CRCC. Please pray with me. I really do believe these things can be such a blessing to so many in this hour of great darkness.

Worshipping as a Family and Inviting Others (Reaching)

1. CRCC is a church that wants to show **reverence** for the Lord's Day that men and women might come to know Him!
2. Sunday is a time where we should look forward to gathering together with family, friends, and even those we've **invited** to hear a solid, exegetical, expository word and to worship God together.
 - a. Part of that reverence is putting forth some effort into preparing for worship the night before (*Luk 23:54 ESV It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning.*), a consideration of the biblical principles of modesty during worship (1 Tim 2:8-9), and a seriousness of mind to participate and actively listen in the worship.
 - b. Also part of that worship is intentional effort to worship biblically in our liturgy (order of service), music style (reverent, theologically enriching, and vertical, Col 3:16), and preaching (a biblically qualified minister, 1 Tim 3).
 - c. We also believe the biblical pattern for worship is families staying together. It's a great model of what should be happening at home! 😊
3. The biblical pattern is to give God one day out of seven; a day set aside for worship, prayer, and reflection upon God.
4. At CRCC, we believe this time is critical to discipleship because:
 - a. You ensure that your focus is god-ward through worship.
 - b. You learn how to give.
 - c. You keep your heart tender towards the unsaved.
 - d. You get encouragement and fellowship.
 - e. You receive needful instruction (some of which you may not have wanted hear).
 - f. You learn sacrifice and how to serve.
 - g. You develop a love for your local church.
 - h. You can get your family moving together on one accord.
 - i. You are better able to trade individualism for community.
 - j. You walk in obedience to God's Word.

5. My friend, Pastor Scott Brown, said that in discipling his family, he “centered everything around the life of the church.” I agree!
6. CRCC is also a church committed to expository preaching and the full proclamation of Christ’s Gospel (the message of the Kingdom). We are committed to declaring “law to the proud, grace to the humble” with love and grace.
7. Our desire is that each Sunday morning, regardless of the text, **Christ** is preached.

Be Active in Care Group and Family Devotions (Teaching)

1. CRCC is a church that believes in the apostolic pattern of going to the “temple” AND meeting together in homes (*Act 2:46 ESV And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts . . .*)
2. This kind of loving ministry fosters friendships, care, and a multitude of chances to love one another. Care Groups help us “know Jesus” because among other things, you learn to love others; that’s what disciples do!
 - a. *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (Jn 13:34-35)*
3. Care Groups also add greatly to our process by hammering the preaching home in an **accountable** environment.
4. At CRCC, we also spend considerable time teaching our children/grandchildren. We have learned that the biblical command and pattern is for parents to take charge of their children’s spiritual growth. We call it *the D6 Reformation*. Family integration during worship is just one part of a much larger picture.
5. At CRCC, every member is encouraged to daily teach a historical, protestant catechism to their families, or a good devotional. This **Family Worship** encourages studying Scripture together, discussing spiritual things, praying, and singing to God.
6. This is also the area of discipleship in which we develop what should be a growing passion for **Holiness** (the lifestyle of the Kingdom) and **Stewardship** (to resource the Kingdom), and reformation in the areas of marriage, singleness, and biblical manhood/womanhood begins.

Serve in Ministry and at Home (Releasing)

1. CRCC is a church that believes that discipleship is incomplete without **servicing others**.
2. Being *released* is less about “me” and “my ministry” and more about being a blessing to someone! People get this SO confused! 😊
3. We ask each person within CRCC to choose a ministry to serve in upon completion of Covenant Life class for at least 6 months, and then if necessary, transition into a longer term commitment better aligned with his or her gifts and passions.
4. We also encourage each head of household to:
 - Lead your family in ministering to lost people.
 - a. Engage in the ministry of **hospitality**. Dedicate one evening per month (at least) to open your home to someone with a view towards sharing the Gospel.
 - b. Actively share the Gospel in other places as well. Keep tracks handy 😊!
 - c. Again, I want to recommend *The School of Biblical Evangelism* by Ray Comfort.
 - Lead your family in serving the **community**.
 - a. Dedicate at least one evening or day per month to be a volunteer (e.g. Red Cross, Boys and Girls Club, shelters, hospitals or nursing homes, adopt a single mom (*as a couple*), being a Big Brother right here at CRCC, serve an elderly neighbor) or create a ministry that meets a need!!!!

- b. For dads, get the whole family involved and watch your children change! Be more than someone who knows sports!
- Lead your family to think **globally**.
 - a. What can we do for our orphanage? What other parts of the world does God want my family to bless? How can I get the Gospel to another country?
 - b. And if you are bold, maybe ask, "Should we sponsor a child somewhere? Can my home support another child or orphan?" 😊

Areas were we need to improve, and for which I solicit your prayers and help!

1. Better care of singles.
2. An incorporation of worldview principles in family worship.
3. Better help with alternatives for the "hard rocks:" (i.e., absent dads, education, etc.)
4. More love to each other and the community.
5. More corporate prayer.
6. A better sense of the Holy Spirit's power in our midst!

So, "Who is CRCC?"

CRCC is a church focused on glorifying Christ and discipling others. A Christ-centered view of Scripture and a desire to demonstrate integrity towards the word and those we serve has brought us to the declaration that Jesus is Enough! His commandment to "go and make disciples" is the heartbeat of what we do. Part of being a disciple is the belief that the Lordship of Christ be present in every area of life.

May Christ bless this effort, and may He bless each and every one of you!

