



The Prophetic Voice Project 2014: Five Areas of Focus for Our Church

Feb 2, 2014

Text: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; A CRCC Focus

Last week, we said a few things about these verses that are extremely relevant to where we are as a church:

1. First, verse 24, in context, is about Paul's willingness to give up any and everything for the sake of the Gospel. In other words, it is a statement of his attitude; his mindset about what God called him to do. Verse 24 is truly a statement of passion, drive, and motivation. Shouldn't we all be as passionate about obeying our Lord?
2. Self-control (temperance) is absolutely required to "win the race." Again, in Paul's case, it meant giving up rights. But that too requires "mastery" over oneself.
3. From verse 26, Paul knows what his mission is! **He's not running without God's direction.** He's taking real swings at a real opponent for a real Christ-given assignment. He knows exactly what he is doing and why. He's focused, gazelle-intense, and willing to give his life.
4. Self-Discipline is a non-negotiable of being a disciple. We aren't attempting to walk in a higher level of self-discipline so God will love us or to impress people or because we've fallen for some kind of legalism or unbiblical asceticism. **We do so for the sake of the Gospel! We want to be effective and fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord!** (2 Pet 1:8)
5. Biblical self-discipline is really about conquering YOU for the glory of God.

NOW...Paul knew his assignment. Do we know ours?

- Yes, every Bible believing church has basically the same assignment: to glorify Christ, make disciples, and serve others. Our Vision statement reflects as much.
- However, in the will of God, sometimes distinctives emerge for a season or even for life. A biblical distinctive can be defined as "clear, critical, commands and principles the Holy Spirit deeply impresses upon a church, group of churches, or even an individual."

Something is Terribly Wrong

1. First, let me start out by repenting for any flesh I've allowed in the pulpit. It's actually quite easy to allow human zeal to push one beyond godly zeal.
2. I'm also convinced that the Holy Spirit has, by God's grace, guided this church (and many others) into a set of integrated biblical distinctives (commands and principles) that if followed, transforms individuals, whole families, and churches.
3. We are under no illusion of ease. Each area of focus is difficult and requires tremendous discipline, even for those of us who embrace them. Therefore, communicating them to other believers is twice as hard.
4. **What are our choices?** By way of reminder, **The Church is in a Pickle**
 - a. Less than 10% of professing Christians in the United States have a biblical worldview. This means the lenses through which they view the world, make decisions, and process life is based on some other world view—most likely the evolutionist, secular humanist, Marxist, atheistic or pluralistic worldview of American culture.
 - b. One half of one percent of all people age 18-23 has a biblical worldview.
 - c. 70-88% of youth raised in church abandon Christ and His church by the end of their freshman year in college.
 - d. 80-90% of people making professions of faith in Christ in our churches fall away in a one year period, with no church involvement or discernible fruit of a changed life.
5. Recently at the Grammy's, millions were treated to a gross display of the celebration of paganism, the demonic, and the perverse...all in the name of love. This is reflective of our society.

6. **But what if we, just one faithful local church, did our part?** What if we decided to become **intentional** (seeing it like a project; something we pray about, plan, and do) and worked to bring one person, one family, one child, into something healthy?
7. What if instead of being overwhelmed at the massive levels of evil, we marched on the black gate by discipling one couple, one single, one pregnant mom, one young man pulled by the streets, one neighbor?
8. Beyond simply handing out a tract (which is great by the way), what if we truly decided to get our hands dirty in people's lives? I mean truly **taking them by the hand, raising them up until they are made strong by the name and power of Jesus, until they are leaping as they enter the temple with us? (Acts 3:7)**
9. Friends, God's sovereignty doesn't mean we don't pray, plan, do, set goals, organize ourselves, or lay out a schedule. Within His sovereign grace, we accept that He alone is responsible for the results. But we still have an obedience obligation! 😊

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Given these truths and this heart, what if we set our minds (like Paul) to "run to obtain it," to "exercise self-control in all things," to refuse to "run aimlessly," and to "discipline our bodies and keep them under control?" It is the outworking of Sola Scriptura we are seeking!

Psalms 19:7-11 (ESV) The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; (8) the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; (9) the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. (10) More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. (11) Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 4:2 (ESV) Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

Acts 20:26-28 (ESV) Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you, (27) for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. (28) Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

Here is a review of the *Five Distinctives* that have increasingly emerged at CRCC. Maybe God is doing this for a reason!

1. **A Focus on the Gospel: The Message of the Kingdom**
 - a. What if we got serious about allowing the Gospel to invade our living? What if we trusted God enough to truly preach it to others and employ biblical hospitality?
 - b. Christ's Gospel is not about **fulfillment**. It's about **forgiveness**! It's not about felt needs. It's about man's desperate need for one who can cleanse us from sin! The Gospel isn't about our dreams and visions. It's about Christ restoring our fellowship with Him through His blood!
 - c. It was never about how we dress, what we drive, or where we dwell. It was about **Jesus** and the wonder of His work. This led to the declaration at CRCC that *Jesus is Enough*!
 - d. Somewhere along the line, we've told people to come to Christ for what they can get from Him. We must return to making sure the true, biblical salvation process is truly preached; a brokenness over sin (the Law) that produces repentance, and then a turn to Christ by faith for the forgiveness of sin (Grace)!

- e. *1Ti 1:8-11 ESV Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, (9) understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, (10) the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, (11) in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.*
- f. Gal 3:24 declares that the Moral Law is our schoolmaster or guardian that drives us to Christ!
- g. It is, according to Paul, the Moral Law that brings the knowledge of sin! (Ro 3:20) It must be used because the “work of the law is written on the hearts of man, his conscience bearing witness” (Ro 2:15).
- h. So, the understanding of our transgressions of the Moral Law (the definition of sin, 1 Jn 3:4) prepares the heart for grace! We must be more passionate about sharing the Gospel, but it must be the TRUE, WHOLE, Gospel! Nothing else saves.
- i. *“Jesus Christ, the Son of God and God the Son, came to this earth through the virgin Mary, revealed the truths of God, lived the perfect life in our place, died on the cross to pay the penalty of sin that we might have God’s forgiveness, rose again on the third day, and gives eternal life to those He has called who believe in Him by His grace and through faith. Those who reject Him will spend eternity apart from Him in Hell. At a future date, He will return to complete the restoration of God’s creation.”*

2. A Focus on **Holiness**: The Lifestyle of the Kingdom

- a. What if we worked harder to model and lovingly promote holiness? What if we refused to allow so much compromise and instead were motivated to be a true light in the world and a city upon a hill? (Matt 5:14)
- b. God values **righteousness**. Christ came to deal with the **sin** problem! The underlying issue of the day is immorality (1 Thes 4:1-8). But many times it is here where contemporary ministry decides that the sin issue is too hard, too off-putting, too confrontational to mess with.
- c. Peter wrote: *“1Pe 1:14-16 ESV As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, (15) but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, (16) since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”*
- d. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth: *“2Co 6:14-18 ESV Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (15) What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? (16) What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (17) Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, (18) and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”*

3. A Focus on **Stewardship**: To Resource the Kingdom

- a. What if we truly worked to help others see the connection between resources and **revival**...between money and the Dominion Mandate?
- b. *“The Dominion Mandate is the command to establish the rule of Jesus Christ in all areas and jurisdictions of life (the Family, the Church, and the State); the intentional expansion of His Kingdom by His subjects, the preaching of the Gospel, the discipling of hearts, and the raising up of godly generations that declare, “Your Kingdom come, and your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”*
- c. *“The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.” (Pr 22:7) “You shall lend to many nations but you shall not borrow.” (Deut 28:12)*
- d. Debt in Scripture was associated with cursing not blessing. (Deut 28:44; 1 Sam 22:2) We’ve handled our money like the world, and it shows! But God is calling His people to a higher standard.
- e. What if we all worked more towards contentment, got out of debt, had a real savings, and were free to use income for God’s glory? Could we disciple and educate differently? What about leaving an inheritance for the same purposes? How many children could we adopt or feed? How many widows could we serve?

4. A Focus on **Family**: The Generational Foundation of the Kingdom

- a. We've quoted the stats. We've launched the D6Reformation. So what if we as a church **taught** people to live out God's Word in family, manhood, womanhood, children, work, or worldview?
- b. *Col 3:18-21 ESV Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. (19) Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. (20) Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. (21) Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.*
- c. *Deut 6:5-7 ESV You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (6) And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. (7) You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*
- d. *1Ti 5:8 ESV But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*
- e. *Col 2:8 ESV See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.*

5. A Focus on **Leadership**: The Integrity of the Kingdom

- a. What if we as a church worked to pray for, model, and uphold good leadership in the home and church?
- b. *1Ti 3:1-7 ESV - The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. (2) Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, (3) not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. (4) He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, (5) for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? (6) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. (7) Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.*
- c. What if we worked hard to hold onto apostolic teaching, walk with integrity, and become people of godly honor? What if we forgave and repented quickly and always worked towards reconciliation?

2Co 5:17-21 ESV Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (18) All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. (20) Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (21) For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Prayer:

Lord, even with all you've given us, we acknowledge our own sinfulness and inability to perfectly obey you. Please keep us from overemphasizing a point in the flesh or becoming pharisaical or unloving. But also please help us to communicate and live out your wonderful truths, even when they are rejected. Help us to become FOCUSED and INTENTIONAL on the Great Commission. Make us fruitful this year (2 Pet 1:8)...give us good success (Jos 1:8)...help us to glorify you in our efforts (Rom 15:6)...and save to the uttermost, oh, Lord (Heb 7:25)!

"Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."—Rev 15:4

Amen.

REACHING OUTREACH

CPC's LifeChange Campaign

Don't forget to pick up/drop off your bottles!

Step 1: Pick up a baby bottle in the lobby

Step 2: Fill it with change/cash/checks

Step 3: Return the bottle once filled

TEACHING EDUCATION

Care Group Fellowship

Care Group Fellowship will resume February 6th!

Please contact Pastor Meeks if you need to connect to a local Care Group.

RELEASING MINISTRY

New Member Deadline is Today!

Don't miss out! Visit our website and click "[Become a member](#)" to get started. Classes begin February 16th at 1 pm.



Mark your calendars for our upcoming D6Reformation Family Sunday on February 23rd! Bring your family, invite your friends, wear your D6 Reformation T-Shirts and let's worship our King and celebrate the biblical family!

Our Theme: "For the Love of Family"

CATECHISM

Q. 106. For what do we pray in the sixth request?

A. In the sixth request, "and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil," we pray that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

Q. 107. What does the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A. The conclusion of the Lord's prayer, "for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever," teaches us to be encouraged only by God in our prayers and to praise Him by acknowledging that kingdom, power, and glory are His. To show that we want to be heard and have confidence that we are heard, we say, "Amen."