

the *Kerygma*



NEWSLETTER OF REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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“Our ability to witness begins with a big view of God and Jesus that will give... Christians a basis for being confident, expectant and comfortable with their humanity.”

~Will Metzger

KINGDOM DIALOGUE: *Influence and Persuasion* BY VICTOR MARTINEZ

We live in a culture obsessed with strategies and winning formulas, and where high rhetoric and charismatic figures are the trend. Men and women, seeking to be successful, spend a lot of time and money trying to strategize the best way to communicate their ideas in a very competitive market. It is all about influence and being persuasive. However, when it comes to the New Testament, its very approach to influence and persuasion may come across as simplistic and unimpressive. That is so because in the New Testament influence is not about high rhetoric or charismatic figures; persuasion doesn't hinge on major programs nor fancy, clever and polished personalities. In the words of Paul, “For Christ...sent me...to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power” (1Corinthians 1:17).

So, what will it take for Redeemer Presbyterian Church to have influence in the city and its culture? If we follow the approach of Christ and His disciples, it *will* be about influence and persuasion, *but* the kind that comes as we live in light of His saving grace. The challenge for Christians today is that we have become over-dependent on programs and events for influence and persuasion. This is not to say that programs and events are not important. These indeed convey much to our community and to the city we seek to serve, but, when the church actually depends on these things, it minimizes the most significant gift we have received. According to Paul, the actual key of what it means to influence others is “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). In the context of this idea Paul is actually saying that, “Christ in you,” is the ultimate reason why we live in service of others, and unto “the hope of glory.”

This very statement by Paul, “Christ in you,” implies that Kingdom influence and persuasion is covenantal in nature. It is the result and the very essence of the New Covenant. In the words of Jeremiah,

“... I will make a new covenant ... not like the covenant that I made with their fathers ... But this is the covenant that I will make ... I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts ... And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all

know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jer. 31:31-34)

At the heart of this passage is the idea that people will have knowledge of God, but not (as was the case in the Old Covenant) through specially selected people or ceremonies (charismatic figures, programs, or events), rather through the fact that His truth is within His people, written on their very hearts. In his commentary on Jeremiah, Charles Feinberg, puts it this way, “Experience of God will be direct, *not dependent on external instruction*. The knowledge spoken of is *not theoretical knowledge transmitted by religious instruction*. It is rather knowledge of God based on a heart experience of divine grace and imparted by the Holy Spirit with assurance that the believer has been received into the family of God through the forgiveness of sins” (emphasis mine).

Consider for a moment the implications of this amazing truth. We are no longer waiting on a Moses-figure, or on a parting-of-the-sea kind of event. Since Christ has manifested Himself in history and His Holy Spirit has come upon His people, this Gospel, the “mystery of the ages,” has now been “entrusted” to all of His people (Eph. 3:9-10; 1Thes. 2:4-5). Therefore, the calling is upon us, through all our different vocations to “go therefore” (Matt. 28:19) and share this Gospel in word and in deed. An overview of the book of Acts reveals no great, cleverly conceived strategic schemes, no major magnetic personalities, but simply His people preaching the Gospel and living in light of it. These weren't people that had to embrace an ascetic lifestyle in order to achieve a level of competency. These were people transformed by Christ and His Spirit through His Gospel; people who had entered into the New Covenant. This is all about influence and persuasion, but not any of their own doing. It's helpful here to consider the words of Will Metzger, “...Our ability to witness begins with a big view of God and Jesus that will give ... Christians a basis for being confident, expectant and comfortable with their humanity.” Metzger's words are crucial in this dialogue. The implication is that the truth of the Gospel frees people, and it has freed us to live differently and to speak with conviction (Jn. 8:32). As we speak, we have the promise that our witness is not in vain (Is. 55:11). This very idea is what caused the Church to grow and expand all over the Roman Empire in the first

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REDEEMER EXTENDING THE KINGDOM

Missions and Ministries that we support:

MISSION SAN ANTONIO:

Agape Pregnancy Help Center:

Stan Young, Executive Director
Louise Mathews, Northwest Director
Kira Wesley, Downtown Director

Christian Medical/Dental Association:

Roger Matkin, Executive Director
Scott Phillips, Area Director

Young Life:

Annie Mays

Local Ministries:

Guadalupe Community Center, Clara Soto, Director
Tobin Community Center, Ralph Rivera, Director

Redeemer Annual Events:

Christianity & Contemporary Culture Conference
Christmas Food Baskets

MISSION USA:

Leadership & Ministry Preparation (L.A.M.P.)

Southwest Church Planting Network, Brad Bradley, Director

Church Planters:

Aaron and Angie Scott, Church of the Cross in San Marcos, TX
Carlos and Andrea Cano, Iglesia La Vid in Laredo, TX
Mark and Karen Spence, Providence Presbyterian Church in Beeville, TX
Whitney Anderson, Christ Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, TX

Reformed University Fellowship:

Justin and Elizabeth Clement at Trinity University
Bekah Stolhandske, Intern at Trinity University
Benjie and Natalie Slaton at University of Texas
Meg Chapin at University of Texas
Derick and Lisal McDonald at University of Texas, Int'l
Ben and Beth Hailey at Texas A&M University
Keith Berger, Southwest Area Coordinator

MISSION WORLD:

Bill and Jeanine Allen, (MTW) in Cusco, Peru
Greg and Amy Sanderson, (MTW) in Cusco, Peru
Carrie Eckel, (MTW) in Cusco, Peru
Paul and Dawn Fisher, (MTW) in Guadalajara, Mexico
Julian Zugg, (MTW) in Belize City, Belize
Doug and Masha Shepherd, (MTW) in L'Viv, Ukraine
Andrew and Becky Bronson, (MTW) in Thailand/Covenant Seminary
Peter Dishman, (RUF) in Mexico City, Mexico
Gene and LuAnn Bowman, (BEAMM) on the Texas/Mexico Border
Aaron and Leticia Zapata, (BEAMM) in Juarez, Mexico

For more information about the missions

Redeemer supports, please contact:

*James Sedgwick at sedgwickj@yahoo.com—Local Missions or
Elizabeth Bright at elizabethbright@mac.com—World Missions
or call the Redeemer Office at 930-4480.*

MISSIONS MINUTE

Dawn & Paul Fisher (MTW) in Guadalajara, Mexico **By Elizabeth Bright**

The Fisher family has been on the field for over 20 years in Mexico. They began a ministry called NACL, which is the chemical formula better known as salt. Their mission is to advance the Gospel to the farthest and darkest corners of urban civilization – to be the salt of the earth. NACL shares Christ spontaneously should an opportunity present itself, while at the same time, strategically seeking to create opportunities for witness where none presently exist. Some of the groups they are trying to reach include drug dealers, prostitutes and others involved in criminal activities. Dawn and Paul have ten children and have a team that works with them in Mexico. Pray for the NACL team that God would give them boldness to speak at every opportunity.

Whit Anderson

Christ Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, TX

By James Sedgwick

Brothers and Sisters,

I wanted to share with you a letter I recently received from Whit Anderson, the pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, TX; a new church plant that Redeemer has begun supporting this year. They had their first official worship service on April 19, 2009.

Thank you very much for praying for us!! Here are our top three prayer requests, and listed below are prayer requests from our focused prayer time this past Sunday night.

1. Please pray for the Lord's provision of a worship leader and musicians.
2. Please pray for wisdom for our leadership team as we discern God's leading on a number of key ministry areas. Our leadership team will be meeting Friday night.
3. Please pray for evangelistic opportunities in Georgetown- for the lost to come to know Christ.

Pray for us:

- * To corporately and individually fulfill our purpose to glorify God every day!
- * To hunger and thirst for righteousness.
- * To be honest before the Lord about our sin.
- * To be diligent about spending daily time in the word and in prayer.
- * To love one another.
- * To be filled with compassion for those who do not know Christ because He first loved us.
- * To find great joy in using our spiritual gifts to glorify God and serve others.
- * To be characterized by a godly boldness (speaking the truth in love) and a radical humility that flows out of understanding the gospel of grace.
- * For protection and provision for the coming year.

Pray for our church:

- * To be true to our vision--to invite every person in Georgetown, and all places we serve, into a life changing relationship with Jesus Christ.
- * To be good stewards.

Blessings,
Whit

If you would like other information about what's going on with Christ Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, or ways you can be a part of any of the other local missions ministries we support, please let me know!

REDEEMER EXTENDING THE KINGDOM

Kingdom Dialogue continued...

century. It transformed ordinary and unlikely people to share their faith wherever they went, including people from different backgrounds like Phillip, Lydia, the Philippian jailer, Cornelius, and even an undesirable woman from Sychar (Jn. 4:5).

Another crucial point that Paul makes in 1 Cor. 1:17 is that if the key to influence and persuasion was “eloquent wisdom,” then that would render the Cross of Christ empty of power. Any evidence of our weakness actually serves to highlight the very nature of God’s grace in the Gospel. It is the power of the Gospel, as a means of God’s grace, through the work of the Holy Spirit that brings people under Kingdom-influence. However, this doesn’t mean that we can’t improve how we articulate the truths of the Gospel, or work hard to do so. It does mean that the Gospel is true, not if we make it sound true or believable, but because it belongs to God and He is its author. Again Paul says, “But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us” (2 Cor. 4:7).

The final implication is that all of God’s people, “from the least of them to the greatest” (Jer. 31:34), have something to say, something to share indeed. We have been entrusted the Gospel, the very “power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom. 1:16). Not only that, but we have a “place” from which to share it. This “place” is one’s very life and all its circumstances. The New Testament points to God using people in their circles of influence; even in covenantal ways. This is evident in the prevalent concept of “house” in the ministry of Jesus; His sending the seventy-two, His visits to Zaccheus, Simon, Martha and Mary, are just some examples. So much ministry in Acts took place in the context of the household, not to mention the significance of the word “table,” and its implications throughout the Scriptures (Lk. 14:16-17).

So, What then?

It is our very lives, our circles of influence and persuasion that provide the place and context for us to be missional now. This life and its circumstances, in all its beauty and chaos, in all its challenges and blessings, provide the “place” where grace can be shared. God has called us to engage the neighbor, the co-worker, those in our neighborhood-watch group, and those on our children’s soccer team, and to have them at our tables. It’s where people know us, where they see us struggle and where they see us clinging to the grace of God. This is how the Gospel reaches people where they are, an unordinary message for ordinary people. This is where the broken can say, “This good news is for me too.”

PRAYER FOCUS FOR MAY/JUNE

Please pray specifically for the following missions/ministries during May and June:

MAY

Christ Presbyterian Church in Georgetown
Church of the Cross in San Marcos
Doug & Masha Shepherd in L’Viv, Ukraine
Paul & Dawn Fisher in Guadalajara, Mexico

JUNE

Trinity Presbyterian Church in Boerne
Young Life
Greg & Amy Sanderson
Bill & Jeanine Allen

NEW MEMBERS



Lauren & John Browning
Not pictured:
*Caleb & *Lily Margaret



Melissa & Andrew Douglas
Graham & Tait



April & Chris Duvall
*Ella



Sarah (DeVries) & Aaron Gill
♥ Married April 11, 2009 ♥



Kent Harbaugh



Dean & Laura Hobbs
*Lily & *Hannah



Carolyn & Joe Liller



Annie & Walt Mays



♠ Lindy Sauer



Kim & Andy Scott



Julia & Micah Yoder

* Non-communing member ♠ Becoming a communing member

Mark your Calendars for

“Christmas in June”

VBS

Mon. June 22nd—Wed. June 24th

9:00-11:45 a.m.

@ Guadalupe Community Center

Sign up in the foyer at McAllister Auditorium on Sundays in May and June to participate.

Join us
at our worship
location,
The McAllister
Fine Art Center
on Sundays
at 9:30 a.m.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 5 Men's Downtown Breakfast**
- May 6 YP 1st Wednesday**
- May 7 Men's Fellowship Night**
- May 14 Men's Monthly Luncheon**
- May 17 Last day of Christian Education**
- May 21 Baby Shower**
- May 23 Youth Open Mic. Night**
- May 29 Redeemer Fine Arts Series**
- June 3 YP 1st Wednesday**
- June 7 Ice Cream Social**
- June 10 Newcomer's Dessert**
- June 22-24 Vacation Bible School**
- June 22-25 Middle School Youth Mission and Retreat**

MAP



 Sunday Morning Worship Services are held at the McAllister Fine Arts Center