

If I Only Had One More Sermon To Preach

Introduction. Today marks the end of my preaching work at Northfield Boulevard. I have always said that you have been a wonderful group with which to work. We have always felt welcome and we have always felt like a part of the family. This family will be hard to leave.

I refuse to say goodbye because I know that we will be back from time to time to see how everything is going with everyone's lives. But before we go, I feel that there are some things which I need to tell everyone.

Throughout our years here, the gospel has been proclaimed in many ways. Now, as I leave, I must consider how to proclaim that message again one more time. Although it will not long before you hear from or see us again, it could be a while before I get the opportunity to preach another sermon to you. So today I want to briefly discuss some things that I have been thinking about for the last few months.

I. *What I Would Tell The Child Of God*

A. I want to tell you to be strong.

1. We need strong people. We need people who are courageous and can put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-17). We must be ready to stand and fight (1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 4:7).
2. We need people of strength who can stand against all the immorality and ungodliness of our day. One of our most effective weapons against the devil is strength. This strength comes by knowing the word of God (Matthew 4:1-11). He withstood the devil by strength and His strength came by that word.
3. Sometimes we feel weak, but we must remember that in weakness, we are made strong by the power of God (2 Corinthians 12:9-10; Hebrews 11:34-35; Isaiah 41:10).
4. I know that a lot of you have difficult situations: health, unbelieving spouses, loss of loved ones, raising children; but I want you to know that we will be praying for you and that we hope to hear of your strength.

B. I want to tell you to be dedicated.

1. This church does not need lukewarm people to bring it down. God spewed the lukewarm church of Laodicea out of His mouth (Revelation 3:16). David asked the people a good question in 1 Chronicles 29:5.

2. There are far too many brethren today who have no zeal to do what is right. We are dedicated to God as long as something else does not come along. We cannot be that way. When Jesus told His disciples to have their priority in the right place (Matthew 6:33), He meant for those people to be dedicated. This principle was so eloquently stated by Abraham Lincoln: "You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong ... You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves."
 3. Please do not let other things enter into your life that drag your attention and direction away from God. I warn people of this only because I have seen it happen so many times. Do you have the feeling of dedication like Paul (Philippians 3:7-8)? I want you to give your heart and soul to God (Proverbs 23:26).
- C. I want to tell you to be faithful and grow.
1. Paul stated one of the necessary qualifications of a steward is that they be found faithful (1 Corinthians 4:1-2). You need to cultivate faithfulness (Psalm 37:3).
 2. Unfortunately, things will not always be easy, but God promises to help us if we are faithful (Romans 8:37). Ephesians 6:16 says, "in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one."
 3. Person after person in the Old and New Testament was victorious because of their faith. Examples include Abraham, Caleb, Jonathan, David, Jehoshaphat, Job, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Paul. Brethren, we can be victorious by faith and I want all of you to be victorious by faith.
 4. One of the prime responsibilities that a Christian has is to remain faithful unto death (Revelation 2:10) and grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). It will take strength and dedication to fulfill that obligation. We hope to hear good things of all the brethren remaining faithful and growing as they should.

II. *What I Would Tell The Unsaved*

- A. I want to tell you about your soul's need.
1. Every person who is able to distinguish between right and wrong in this room is a sinner. If we can know right and wrong, and if we can know that God offers for us plan of salvation, then we are sinners.
 2. A sinner is separated from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). This separation began in the Garden of Eden and will continue until the end of

time. If we do not change this separation, we will be lost.

3. A sinner's greatest need is to be aware of their situation and then realize that the situation needs to be changed. Jesus asked in Matthew 16:26 what would it profit someone if they gained the whole world but lost their soul? What does that mean for you?

B. I want to tell you about rewards and punishments.

1. The New Testament promises both rewards and punishments for all those living on the earth. It is very important that each one of us realize and understand those rewards and punishments. If you live a faithful life, you can have the hope of eternal life. If you never obey the gospel, then you are taking the biggest risk in your life that you will end up condemned to hell.
2. The Lord promises rewards for all those who sacrifice to follow Christ (Matthew 19:27-29) and for those who seek after God (Hebrews 11:6; James 1:12). God will reward those who have produced good and faithful service (Matthew 25:21) with an imperishable crown of righteousness (1 Corinthians 9:25; 2 Timothy 4:8).
3. The notion that God would not punish people because He is so loving is absolutely silly. I am certainly not doubting the love of God, but what do you think when you see parents punishing their children? Do you think that is wrong? I would dare say that none of us would feel that way; if anything, it would make us feel the opposite.
4. Paul sternly warned the Thessalonians about the consequences of not obeying the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Rejecting Christ is a very important decision (John 3:18-19). After Peter surveyed what would happen at the end of time, he said, "What sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness" (2 Peter 3:11).

C. I want to tell you about Jesus Christ.

1. As we close this last lesson, I want you to know about Jesus. The most vital point of any lesson and with every person is a knowledge of Jesus Christ. I want you to take that knowledge and obey Jesus Christ.
2. Paul stated the heart of the gospel in 2 Corinthians 5:21 and 1 Timothy 3:16. By becoming a child of God, you can become that righteousness of God.
3. Through faith and obedience, you can partake of the good news of the salvation of God (Romans 16:25-27). All it takes is hearing, believing, repentance, confession of Jesus Christ as

the Son of God, baptism in this water, and living a faithful life. Wouldn't that make a beautiful postscript to your life? I believe it would. I cannot tell you how desperately I want to hear of all you out there who need to obey the gospel, to have submitted yourself to God's call.

Conclusion. We certainly wish to hear good things concerning all you brethren. These are just some of the most important things that I feel you need to know. I would ask that you think on these things and if you need to make a change, then do it and do not wait any longer.