

Discussion of "Rejection and Confession"

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0 : 00] The following is a discussion that our church body had in a Sunday evening worship service. From applicational points from that morning sermon, Pastor Mike Scrivani is currently teaching through the Gospel of John on Sunday mornings.

You may listen to or view the Sunday morning worship service either on our website at highlandparkbaptist.net or you may view the live stream on our Facebook page at 1030 in the morning live or you may view it afterwards.

Well, God's blessings on your day. Amen. Well, it's good to see everybody. This is the first evening that we are going to kind of change things up here on Sunday night, digging deeper into this morning's sermon.

Before I do that, I'm sure most of you received the email I sent out yesterday, and I have spoken to our three members who got COVID and got permission to give you an update.

You know, I think about Scripture. When brothers and sisters in Christ were struggling, they were, you know, you knew their name.

[1 : 07] You knew the situation. Now we want to respect people's privacies, right? Because we know that also we're living in a time where, you know, if you have a snuffle or a cough, you feel, you know, kind of afraid when you do that in public and everybody's kind of looking at you like, what do you, you know, you're going to give me COVID or something.

So Brandy Friend is doing well. She found out on, I believe, Friday and let us know on Saturday. Did go to the ER. She's back home feeling better, much better today, she said. So continue to be praying for Brandy. And then the Villarreal's, both Oscar and Georgia, found out on Friday as well that they had COVID.

Oscar is home and he's doing fine, you know, considering everything. Georgia is at the hospital. I'm not, I can't, I should have asked, not sure which one in Tulsa.

I'm guessing the major one, is that St. John's? Probably, I think it's St. John's. But she does have viral pneumonia. And, but she, she called, she, she called and we talked on the phone.

[2 : 20] And you could tell that, you know, she had a little bit of shortness of breath, but she's still Georgia. I mean, she was, she was making light of everything. And, but the one thing she told me to tell you is that she doesn't want any of you to be afraid for her.

And her biggest concern was that she didn't know. The last time they were here was a week ago. Brandy, it was two weeks ago. And so her biggest concern was, you know, for her church family. And I just explained that, you know, we don't, we don't know. Anytime we go out, go to work, go to Walmart, go anywhere, we take that risk that we might get sick too.

So anyhow, before we dig into this, let's lift them up in prayer, shall we? Will you pray with me? Lord, we lift up to you, Brandy and the Villareals, and we pray for healing.

God, we're thankful that they have been seen, that they've been diagnosed now, and that they are being treated. And so, Lord, we pray for their bodies, that they would fight this illness off, that they would, with each day, grow stronger and more able.

[3 : 35] We pray for their families, those around them, Lord, that you would keep them safe as well. God, we pray that as a church, we would continue to lift them up to you in prayer. And, Lord, that you would use us in whatever way we can to ease their burdens, to do whatever we can to come alongside them and to help them and their families.

And so, Father, we pray for them, and we just pray for our church, Lord, that we would walk in wisdom as we minister during this time.

Lord, help us to be focused on Christ and the cross and the mission that you've called us to be upon, but to do so in a way that is the right way, the way that you would want us to do that.

So, anyhow, Lord, we lift them up to you. And now, again, we pray for this time that we have to dig deeper into your word. And, Lord, we pray that you would use it to help us sharpen one another. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. So, this morning's text, again, was John 6, beginning in verse 60 to verse 71.

[4 : 49] And this is Jesus' closing remarks as he's given the bread of life discourse. And we know that a large crowd had followed him.

We understand why the large crowd had followed him, which is because at first they experienced the miracle of his feeding them with physical bread. And then, if you recall, they desired to make them their king.

And, again, their desire to do so was really self-motivated because they hated the Romans. And they had a misconception of who the Messiah was going to be and what the Messiah was to accomplish in his ministry.

And so, they thought, here's a guy with great power. And so, let's use it to regain our freedom from the Romans.

Of course, Jesus wanted nothing to do with that. So, he retreats. He distanced himself from that, sends his disciples out to the Sea of Galilee, meets them on the water.

[5 : 51] We have that interaction between him and Peter. And they get into the boat and are over on the other side. This crowd discovers that he has left. And he's now on the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

And, again, they follow him to the point where they somehow arrive in this synagogue in Capernaum where he preaches this message to them. And we know that the result of his preaching it to them is that many of them turned away and departed from him.

And so, you know, as I was preparing this message, one of the things that really stuck out to me, too, was how difficult it is to deal with peer pressure, isn't it?

And we all can remember, I think, being in middle school, elementary school, primarily middle school and high school, where there's so much peer pressure.

Pressure to look a certain way, like certain things, act a certain way. I remember when I was in seventh grade, at the time, it was really cool to be a skater.

[6 : 57] And now I didn't know how to skateboard, but I knew that skateboarders were cool. And so I wore the clothes and I grew my hair out and parted it down the middle with curly hair.

It looked horrible. I had to use a lot of product to try to make it straight. And so people would ask me all day long if I just got out of the shower. And it's like, no, man, this is cool, you know?

And I was a fraud, but that was the peer pressure that we were under. Now, as adults, we might think, we could think, that we don't experience peer pressure, but we do.

And it comes more in the form of people-pleasing, is what we call it, people-pleasing. And as I was thinking about that, too, we realized that today there is a lot of people-pleasing, especially in our society.

And we see it, I think, a lot amongst a professional athlete or somebody who is famous and has a platform where they're on social media or whatever.

[7 : 58] They have microphones in their face, more opportunities to say things. And they're asked about their opinions on what's going on in the world, whether that's related to COVID, whether that's especially with professional athletes kneeling during the national anthem and whatnot, and the election.

Every once in a while, you'll have an athlete actually say what he thinks. And if that athlete says what he thinks and what he or she thinks is contrary to what popular opinion is, then guess what happens?

And we've seen it. They waste that person. You know, how insensitive, blah, blah, blah. That person becomes, you know, a headline.

It's headline news. This person said that. And then what do they do once they face that kind of pressure? What do they usually do? They back down. Well, I was misunderstood. This is what I really meant.

Or they just come right out and they apologize. Because now, and I don't want to pretend like we're somehow above all of that, because you've been there before and you know that there is a lot of pressure with that.

[9 : 11] And so, when they feel that pressure, a lot of times they cave because it's so intense. That pressure is so intense. And so, one thing, and many things that we have to admire about Jesus is that here's a moment where, amongst many, as we read the Gospels, where that pressure was really on him, these people were not happy with what he had to say.

They wanted him to be someone who he wasn't willing to be. They wanted him to conform to their wills and their desires. And yet, he doesn't.

Not at all. Doesn't give an inch. As we've seen through this sermon, he reiterates all of his preaching points. Everything that he said, he doesn't go back and like, well, let me explain. You know, maybe you didn't understand it.

No, and if anything, I think he's explained it really well. And as he goes along, he becomes even more precise with what he's already said. You know, eat my flesh. Drink my blood.

And if you would have been paying attention to everything else, you'd understand what I mean now as I'm saying that to you. But that's one of the things that I admire as well in reading this passage of our Lord is that he was not a people pleaser.

[10 : 27] He was not a people pleaser. And we saw that ultimately, he would be crucified because the people were against him. And so as Christians living in these divisive times, it's just another reminder to me, I don't think I covered this as much this morning, of how important it is that we not cave to the pressures of this world and being people pleasers.

that we make sure that we are people of the word, that we are following Christ and his example. And we understand and we've been told and we've seen the example through scripture that as we do that, there'll be persecution.

But we understand that with that persecution, we are closely identified with Christ and God uses that persecution to advance his gospel in great and powerful ways.

But do you see that that's happening a lot in our churches that for many Christians, they are beginning to or have already caved to that peer pressure, to people pleasing.

I see a lot of you nodding your heads. And what message does that send to the world? We are in the world, but we are not to be of the world, right?

[11 : 47] We're here as ambassadors of Christ. Christ. And so we are in the world to testify to the truth of Jesus Christ and to share the gospel, but not to let the world taint the truth of the gospel and tempt us to in any way change it, water it down, ignore some maybe offensive teachings that the Bible has that would offend people of this world, that we are not to seek to please them, but to tell them the good news of Jesus Christ.

And so that was just a reminder again that as a church, you know, and as thinking of these application questions, how important it is that we make sure that it is our conviction that we are representing Christ well and that we seek to please God and not men.

And so I'm trying to remember where I saw that. Okay, Galatians. And it made me think of Galatians 1.10 where Paul says, for am I now seeking the approval of men or of God?

Let me back up to verse 6. I'm astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel.

Not that there, and again, people under pressure from the Judaizers. We've seen that Peter, who was a great leader in the church, also succumbed to the pressure of pleasing people, how he would associate with the circumcision party when they came and disassociated himself with the Gentiles.

[13 : 37] And so, again, verse 6, I'm astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel. Not that there is another gospel, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you receive, let him be accursed.

Verse 10, for am I now seeking the approval of man or of God or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

And that really is what struck me. If I was still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. Meaning that people, pleasers, do not serve Christ well, if at all.

And so, in thinking of that and all that we do as a church, whatever we're teaching, that the objective is not to please people, try to tickle their ears, but to be a servant of Christ.

[14 : 45] And in everything, that that should be our main objective, serving Christ, doing what he's asked us to do, being a part of the Great Commission, trusting the results up to him.

Because as we know, whatever you win people with is what you have to keep them with. So, if we have a raffle, as I've seen done before, and we say, hey, show up for Easter, and we're going to give away a big screen TV, which maybe isn't as exciting now as it was 10 or 15 years ago, but you know, whatever it is.

And, tickets to the Sooners on the 50-yard line front row. Some of you wouldn't want that either. But, you know what I'm saying, some kind of raffle, the objective would be to draw people in, and then, you know, we've filled the sanctuary with people, and then, we have the raffle, and one person wins, and the next week, you know, nobody, none of them come back, probably not even the one who won.

So, anyhow, and all these things, making sure that we are careful, that we are not motivated in whatever we're doing to please man, but to serve Christ. So, if you have your, I don't know if you have your outline still from this morning, I have the questions here.

It's okay, I have them, so I'll remind you. And these are some things I just want us to discuss. I just want us to sharpen one another. And so, the first question is, are there passages of Scripture that you take offense to?

[16 : 15] And I know that might be too personal of a question for you to answer tonight on your own. Oh, thank you, Lee. Man, magic Lee back there. How about other people though?

Or, you can think of, you can speak in generalizations here. Are there passages of Scripture that you know or have spoken with Christians and you've seen that they take offense to them?

And you can raise your hand if you have, if you would like to answer that question. I have the yellow mic here.

Okay, thank you, Mike. It was not, it was not that long ago when we as a church sat down to put into ragging what we as a church believe.

and I remember being with that group that was, I think they just got me because they wanted to be a regular person instead of somebody who was smart. But, I got to listen to Scripture and I'm so happy that there was a whole bunch of Scripture that was given that talks about how God has predestined, has chosen, has the elect.

[17 : 45] And that was hard for me. And I, you know, by teaching Sunday school I get many opportunities to talk about how we used to talk about things, how we used to do things.

When dad first, my dad, the retired pastor, now with the Lord, and when he first came to this church when he retired and heard the preaching, he told me, he said, Mike, that's how I wanted to preach but I couldn't.

He said, I would, you know, nobody would let me preach if I preached that way. And so I thought, isn't that amazing that even though there is a plethora of Scripture that backs up God and his sovereignty, that it was still hard for many of us to swallow because that's not the way we were raised.

Then I look at that and I say, how did the Jewish church leaders then feel or even the Jewish people because Jesus was teaching something quite different than what they had thought and believed. So I can understand how they were offended at many of the things that he had to say. Yeah, so I think what you said there too is often people take offense when Scripture rubs against one of their traditions.

[19 : 13] And certainly we've seen whenever you use words like predestination and election, though they're all over God's Word, that somehow people like to turn a blind eye to those instead of digging deep and actually reading what God's Word says about those things.

I agree. I think, and I'm sure a lot of you were here when that happened here at Highland Park and going through that, changing the bylaws and rewriting Statement of Faith.

And I've seen that too in other ways with just a tradition that people have in the church and we're able to point at them like, look at what God's Word says and we've always done it that way or if we do it that way, then people will leave or whatever.

And again, it takes courage because again, like Jesus, he's preached his sermon and at the end, this is a hard saying, who can understand it?

But that doesn't change anything that he had to say. He doesn't take any of it back. He devils down on it. Good. Who else?

[20 : 25] Anybody else? Are there passages of Scripture that you know, that you've seen, that people take offense to? Wes, and then Paul. I'm just speaking for Cameron and his friend that's, you know, homosexual and the arguments that those guys have and his friend has such an issue with what it says about that, but Cameron's trying to be really clear, this is what it says, and that's just the rub.

Like you said, Christ never backed down. This is what it says, and if we feel the Bible is our canon, our standard, this is what I go by, then we have to stick with that.

And so, I think you probably get a lot of that out there, where people think God is more tolerant and things like that than what he is. He sees sin as sin, and a lot of people just don't want to admit they're a sinner.

people take offense to their being a sinner. You know, well, God is love and he'll accept me no matter what.

Yeah, so any of those scriptures obviously, and there's many where we're convicted of sin instead of acknowledging that, being convicted of it, they take offense to it and want nothing of it.

[21 : 46] Paul? Darlene and I were talking a little bit this afternoon about that. I think something that is hard for many of us to understand and it's offensive to many is God's judgment on people and how it manifests itself in ways that we don't understand.

And be it in the Old Testament or in the New when you get to Revelation, that type of thing, but destroying whole cities, women and children, as well as men.

And when that happens, when he told the Israelites to do that, when the men that schemed against Daniel were thrown into the lion's den with their families, we have troubles really accepting that.

Further that conversation, that's where I'm at right now in my Bible studies, I've been looking at the prophecies and stuff and I see the end times and I see all the violence.

And like this, when I went through Daniel to the prophecies and I thought sometimes in my humanness and my heart hurts, it's hard for me to see that much pain and that much bloodshed as being a holy act.

[23 : 11] I have spent a lot of tears. A lot of y'all know I cry very easily anyway, but it's getting better because as I study and really look and understand, I'm going through resources, John MacArthur being one of them as far as the history and everything that's going on, and I have to lay it at God's feet.

And that's why I love our God so much because I can tell him during that time, right there, this really upsets me that you did this or whatever. I need to understand it better, but bottom line, I know to trust you, you know, and I tell him that, but I'm having trouble right now where my emotions are.

I'm upset with you. This is ugly. You know, how can this be holy? And it's just been a joy to go through those pressing times to be reminded about how bad sin really is.

in the eyes of God. And how we, I grew up maybe not as knowledgeable about the wrath of God and how fearful we should be, but how we don't have to be when we're covered with Christ, but to understand how God really sees that sin and how offensive it really is to him.

But he's had to basically drag me along to get to the point that he, you know, he's a wonderful, loving, he always extends grace and mercy, but there is always going to be a time for judgment if men do not repent.

[24 : 49] And it can get ugly, and sometimes it hurts. But the bottom line, he is sovereign, he has the last word, and I do trust him. Amen. I remember a lot of times in seminary, driving home, didn't live on campus, and praying, but it was more like me arguing with God about, but eventually, I mean, ultimately, if you believe this is the word of God, it's inerrant, then you know that you're a fallen human being, your opinions aren't always right, the way that you feel isn't always right, God's word says that it's true.

So eventually you get to that point and humble, acknowledgement that the word of God will stand, that ultimately you trust, and I think we've all been there before, and you know, we went through this video, American Gospel, Christ crucified, talking about this very thing, what do people find offensive about the cross, that Christ would die, that he would endure the wrath of God for sins that he did not commit, they are offended about hell, about hell's existence, and that it could be a just punishment from a good God that anybody would spend their eternity there, they're offended by the cross, all these things, and I think we can go through, and we could talk about that really all night long, and I think we've seen, and you know, they edit those videos so well that, you know, you're hearing the

different sides, but you're hearing two different gospels being preached, you know, you're hearing the true gospel of

Christ and the cross, the wrath of God, yet the love and mercy of God to save sinners, and then you're hearing another gospel that is more of like, well, you know, Jesus was more setting a good example for the rest of us to follow, and we're all going to go to heaven, nobody goes to hell, or hell is only for the really bad people who deserve it, in our eyes like Hitler, but yet if, and that's why I think it's so important that we be in the word of God regularly and daily, it needs to be abiding in us because we're constantly being bombarded by a world that wants to tell us a different message, which goes into the next question, and I know that we've seen across the board in our nation, our numbers are dwindling, church attendance is down, baptisms are down, and so many have been tempted and have given into that temptation to change their evangelistic methods, and so that's something I wanted us as a church to consider tonight as well in going through this and seeing what Jesus has concluded and saying here in

John 6, 60-71 and everywhere else about the methods that we are employing as a church to make disciples. Have they been more successful in drawing a crowd or making disciples?

disciples. My sister's church in Overland Park, Kansas, they, well you know last year the Chiefs were in the Super Bowl, right?

[28 : 31] and this was I think a Sunday before the Super Bowl and what their church did is that they had the Chiefs mascot who is Casey Wolf, if you didn't know, Casey Wolf came to the church and I think they have like three of them, just different people dressed up and you can hire them to come to your event.

They had Casey Wolf come, they had a Chiefs marching band there and everything was set up in the foyer and they encouraged people to come and wear their Chiefs clothes that Sunday and you know they had an area set up where you could take pictures with your family with all different kinds of Chiefs decorations in the background and get your picture with Casey Wolf and I love my sister and her family and I guess I'm glad that this isn't being live streamed but you know I would, I've still, we've spoken and you know posting those pictures on Facebook and just the comments that I read, Danny and I read, what a cool church, what a cool idea, that is awesome, wish we could have been there, didn't know, that was so neat and then just the conversation between us two is well what was being worshipped that Sunday?

You know it seems to me that the Chiefs were the object of the people's worship that Sunday and oh and oh and here's you know let's read a little scripture, let's sing a few songs but really the celebration this Sunday is not about our crucified and risen Savior but the fact that the Chiefs who haven't been in the Super Bowl in ages are finally there and have a good chance of winning and I've got to be careful with myself as well as you know to not be too much of a fanatic and not live and die with every win or loss and yet I wouldn't entertain the idea of doing that but you know again you're thinking what are we worshipping?

Yeah they got a lot of people in as a result of that at least it seemed that way from the pictures but is that a successful method? Is that a way that actually makes disciples or what kind of disciple does it make?

Now let's think about what we are doing as a church to make disciples and what are we doing? Well we are doing a number of things but primarily what I wanted to think about was our engage events and something that started when I came here where we you know we would have a number of outreach events throughout the community and the objective was to you know one let our community know if they weren't aware we're here and that we care and to interact with our neighbors and ultimately what we were hoping is to have gospel conversations through that as well and that you know people would be saved through that witness and we've done a number of them over the past couple years obviously we couldn't do one this year in a way that made sense with everything that was going on with COVID at the time and the uncertainties that we had about it back then and even still you know what message does that send to the community but regardless of that what about those events how successful have they been in making disciples and

[32 : 06] I want you to know that with whatever you say it's not going to hurt my feelings because these are things that I've been thinking about for a while and praying through as well but I want you to give me your feedback good and bad it can be all bad it can be all good you know but I want to know what you honestly think and feel okay Wes and Danny besides the point I think it was when dances with wolves came out and to avoid even still back then having a Native American mascot

was offensive so they went with a wolf well at the risk I don't really mean to step on any toes I really enjoy the engaged events that we've done and I think some of them are really great to get out in the community I know some people they see the red shirts and all that but I don't really know how many people have come to join our church after coming and getting a free pair of shoes and jumping on the thing and getting a free hot dog and or all the candy that we give away and at for the fall festival and stuff I'd be interested to see the numbers is that really bringing people that are coming to the church and then hearing the gospel preached and and becoming Christians

I know we try to evangelize while they're here I think if we do we should try a little harder I know they came in the sanctuary and there were kind of required to come through and look at a quick video but I don't think it was much I don't think a lot of people just wanted to kind of come in and leave and I want to get to the candy and the hot dogs so I don't know how much that's really been effective as far as reaching out to people maybe something and it's hard to do I know but knocking on doors instead and telling them we're Highland Park Baptist Church and do you know Christ is your Lord and Savior kind of like you talked about when you went and the big guy came to the door and all that kind of stuff I think I'd rather get dressed up and play games and stuff like that but I think truly to disciple to people and bring them towards Christ would be more centered on do you know Christ as opposed to we see a need in the neighborhood and it just seems like they come and get their stuff and they leave and we don't hardly ever see them anymore just my observation so when you're talking about the Chiefs thing it is exciting that they went to the Super Bowl but you still shouldn't do that on Sunday because it kind of seemed like they were more worshipping the Chiefs than worshipping Jesus and nothing is more important than Jesus amen thank you brother so go hand it to mommy well I think that can you hear me yeah okay

I think that a lot of the ways that we disciple is we take time to invest our lives in other people's lives I think that before you're really able to disciple someone they have to know that you care about them and that you love them that you are willing to listen to them it's not just a quick and it's not that you know like you're talking about Wes you know like maybe we should be evangelizing more at these events sometimes that doesn't stick quite as well as if we're taking the time to really build relationships with people so our women's ministry here Julia Crouch really came up with a great idea I know Yvonne was part of it Julie was part of it we started with five women and it was just a really small little trial thing to see if this discipleship group would work and we would meet but it wasn't just to learn about God's word we needed to get to know each other better and then we were able to to build off of that by you know if someone has an issue we're able to turn to the Bible and help each other out in that way and then us five women went out and we were to lead another group of five women and so while I do feel like it did it's grown quite a bit it went from five women to 32 women which is good but I also feel like it's it's more solid and it's it's slow going too whenever you're really taking your time to invest in other people and it's like I said it's slow going but it's also you have to be patient and sometimes you may not see the fruit from it and sometimes you do but we have to be diligent no matter what that's what I was going to say that you've got to start with a relationship talking with your neighbor over the fence or having them into your home for a meal or just befriending them at work you have to establish that as she said that you are interested in them that there's something important about them to you and of course that's based on the gospel and so I think for me that is the starting point for anything I do in terms of trying to either win people to Christ or to share the gospel with them is to have a foundation where where they would where they accept that so okay two of the things that I believe that we're doing right and they don't it all involves going back and going back and going back us going to them one is the lighthouse ministry going out there and feeding them once a month I know it's not much but I've got people now that come to me and say you're a red shirt they know and then we visit and we do make those connections that way they may not be coming to this church but they are going somewhere and that's more than we can ask sometimes and then the other that I think that is being done right is whenever you guys go to

Dick Connor that's really making disciples you're doing a good job and thank you for going and doing that and the last one that I think that we are doing correctly hopefully is when we when we go as and not because I do it just because it's done when we go as a team to these different countries and stuff like that I've got people that I'm still in contact with all the way back to when we went in whenever was to Mexico that are still following and walking with the Lord we're in contact with one another and we're encouraging each other in what we do in China in Latvia in where you know

Ukraine thank you Ukraine and I think that those things like that whenever you take your time and you take your life and another thing that we're doing right is Awanas I think that's a very important thank you Jack I think that's really important because you know we've got we've got our church kids you know hopefully they get churching from their families some families are too busy so we're making disciples of those people of those little people like somebody did for me when I was growing up and I think it's important that we don't give up on those kind of things like that because you know that really is a whole hour that they're they're learning about Jesus they're learning his word they're they're finding out somebody in this building likes them and loves them and will you know be there for them so you know on the upside there's those things and I think that we not need to not neglect them thank you and anybody else that wants to help come on

[41 : 10] I appreciate your comments and I want to kind of share where I'm at on it too and praying about it as well looking at scripture I think we've got to get away from evangelism as an event and move to evangelism as a way of life that we don't say well I will share the gospel at engage you know when I'm watching the kids bounce in one of the bounce houses I mean it we've got to get away from the thought of evangelism only occurs an event it's a way of life and culture changes you know it used to be a day and age where most families if they were going to gather somewhere in their house they would gather on the front porch but you don't see that anymore you drive through the community of Bartlesville and you can go all over I think in our culture and and see that not many people gather on their front porch anymore where do they gather in the backyard where or in the house not even outside at all but you know in the backyard where there's a privacy fence or in the house where you're you're surrounded by walls and so you know if if somebody knocks on your door rings your doorbell today what's your first reaction for us at our house it's somebody some kid wants Jack to play you know and it was Jack get the door because we know it's not for us but if I if it's a time of day where I know it might not be one of his friends one of my first reactions is almost a little bit of dread like oh who could this be you know

I don't I didn't get a phone call or a text message it's either somebody who wants to sell me something that I don't want or hopefully it's you know UPS or somebody FedEx just dropping off a package and you know and now you know even they just put the they put the package on the door ring the doorbell and they're gone at the truck they don't even ask you to sign for that anymore because we don't want that interaction at our front house for whatever reason because culture changes and so you know there was a time where door to door evangelism was more effective than it is now because people don't don't yeah they just you know and there might be other cultures where that still is the case but I like what Julie said Danny what all of you were saying is that and I think as we look at scripture evangelism is not an event where it's for the Christian where it's like okay now share the gospel it should be the way that you live and in our culture today as well as what we're seeing is as been mentioned by you ladies is that people need to see how much you care about them first once they know how much you care about them they're more willing to hear what you have to say and in my experience and that's why it's so important for me to be involved with

Jack in his sports because it's for me it's like yeah that's an opportunity for us to bond and I enjoy it but it's an opportunity for me to get to know his teammates more importantly their fathers and Danny their mothers and and and they're watching they're watching you know and in little by little we've had more and more increasingly more opportunities to share the gospel to the point now where you know I've I tried to back out of being one of the assistant football coaches because of all the other sports and all the other activities though I love it but but you know without being asked without my asking without my suggesting at all one of my my job now is on Saturday is our coach who's not a believer asked me to pray for the team and so I was like that's that's cool and so it's it's things like that you know what a great opportunity for me I get to pray for these boys they have an understanding of what my role is in the church and for these other men and so it's it's a good opportunity so I think that's why as

Christians we need to be more involved in our communities the day when you could open the doors of the church and just expect people to come in are over we need to be active and I think you see that in acts I think you see that with Jesus always on the move going to where the people were in sharing the gospel with them where they were at and it's not any different with us where you work where you live where you interact with your neighbors those are the mission fields evangelism isn't an event it should be the way of life for a Christian always looking for that opportunity to share the

good news of Jesus Christ now when it comes to the outreach events where I think about as well do they accomplish some good things I think that they do we've given hundreds of pairs of shoes to kids that whose parents couldn't afford them they were going to go to school wearing either in one case a boy was wearing his mother's old shoes or hand-me-down shoes or shoes that they've worn for the past three years that meets the need I think as Christians were called to write care for the poor and seek to meet those needs I think that we've accomplished that so it's more to me I think about maybe redefining what those events are for and to achieve you know we want to share the gospel and all the events that we're doing and that shouldn't change but you know we may say this is you know really the reason why we're doing this is we see that there is a this need in the community and we want to rise up and be used by the Lord to meet it but it comes more with what are we doing here in Sunday school and Sunday morning at Awana and youth group teach encourage our young people middle-aged people old people to be sharing the gospel all the time and just encourage them that this is and should be your way of life you don't need an event to do it Jack I'm gonna turn the microphone back on

I'm bringing back to football when you said about football and our coach and everyone always asked me and they say Jack why do you try so hard every time on drills and I'm like well I'm trying my hardest because I want to praise Jesus with everything I do and as long as he's happy I'm happy good yeah people are watching us right especially if they know that we're a Christian they're watching to see how we how our attitude is when stressful things happen at work or in life or in family somebody cuts us off in traffic you know and you've got that Highland Park sticker on the back of your windshield how are you responding to that people are watching people are watching all right last question how should Christians in the church measure their effectiveness so I know that oftentimes we know in the Southern Baptist world how have we measured a church's effectiveness numbers baptisms your budget your cooperative program giving and the bigger those numbers are the better now does that mean that that's a bad thing to baptize a lot of people and you know I give a lot to the cooperative program no no but I think we can be in a situation where we're so eager to baptize people that you know somebody comes forward and they want to be baptized and we don't really dig into maybe they've been baptized five times before we're like oh you want to be baptized let's go let's do it next Sunday let's bolster those numbers we our goal is to lead our association and baptisms and if we're not careful we'll do that by any means necessary forgetting about you know why we are called to baptize and so I know a lot of times we'll you know Willard knows we'll get those reports at the annual meeting for our association and what are the numbers they list average attendance cooperative or associational giving in baptism and I kind of you can kind of look around the sanctuary wherever all gathered and people kind of looking through those numbers right who's who's doing well and who oh we're doing better than them but we're not we're not quite to this this one yet you know and just to be honest we look at those and unfortunately that's a lot of how we determine our success yeah yeah and justify well they're bad they're leading in baptisms because you know they're paying people to come get baptized or stuff like that yeah not good all sinful yeah so those can be measures of effectiveness but what how should we considering what scripture says looking at Jesus again going back to the scripture today who preached the message who lost a large crowd as a result of it and again I think of the eyes of the world they would have seen that as a colossal failure you had this huge crowd of thousands and you're left with 12 and again one of them we knew was Judas who was a traitor but it obviously it wasn't a failure at all but so thinking about that how should Christians how should we as a church measure our effectiveness

[51 : 08] Willard almost forgot what I was going to say you took too long now in reality you know I know I know we like to see people we'd like to see the church grow numerically and we ought to but I think if if numerical growth is going to be the type of growth that we need to have it's got to come as a result of spiritual growth spiritual growth in God's people will produce evangelism it'll produce souls saved numbers increased and so forth you know Paul said in the book of Ephesians in his prayer and to the church to the Lord concerning the church at Ephesus his desire prayer for them was to know the reality of the power of God that dwells within us through the resurrection of Christ and that comes through spiritual growth I've believed for a long time that methods have been nothing but a sad substitute for the power of God in the lives of

God's people yeah and that's what we're lacking up here Jack get your microphone Julie that's okay I could ramble for a little bit until you recover to just go along with what Willard said more eloquently than I ever could but our effectiveness is based in the gospel the gospel is effective for bringing

salvation and so I think going along with what he said as long as that we're effective when we are preaching the truth of the gospel which is why I'm here every Sunday and that we are also as he said building ourselves up in whatever we're doing women's discipleship or Awana's or men's Bible study building ourselves up in the gospel so that we don't stutter like I'm doing when you're trying to when you're trying to to reach someone you know to reach the deepest part of their heart and that it is just that it just emanates it just it there's no that's all no you didn't we understand what you're saying yeah because um and I know we only have a couple more minutes left go ahead and run I said we would spend some time in prayer I still want to give us the time to do that go to west Jack um some things are measurable I mean we look at the Acts and it and it reports the number you know two thousand three thousand were added that day so I don't I'm not saying that we shouldn't keep track of those numbers because we see that in scripture but some things are not measurable about our effectiveness you know it's almost like your child you mark on the the door sill their their height as they're growing but how do you measure somebody's spiritual growth is that something that we should uh you know be working to present everyone mature in Christ how do we how do we measure that and I think we we got to be careful about trying to put measurements on it because otherwise then we could get into legalism you know um how many scriptures have you memorized uh how how many times have you attended church and all these different things and I think we got to be careful to think well that's how we measure spiritual growth we don't I think that's something we see um and we know when we see it and so some of these things how do we measure effectiveness yeah there are some things that are measurable but there's many things that are not measurable and so you can help me and be praying about this because this is something that I'm thinking about as well because it's still hard to get away from measurements because I think well gospel conversations and it's well how many gospels conversations did you have this week um what I would and I think we hope to see is that we again see evangelism is not an event a way of life and we I think as we hopefully are doing that as a church we'll see those measurable things from our our growth and our reaching out in immeasurable ways if that makes sense okay Wes I guess real quick I just kind of repeat a lot of what they said it is going to be really hard to actually measure that but I think as we continue with the different um bible studies and women's book and all the things that we're doing and kind of push each other to learn more and and become us become better disciples when we do that when we're out in the business world and things like that people are going to see and want to know what it is about us and it's going to help us to um share the gospel when those opportunities come I thought it was really great when we did that uh the the uh three circles thing I mean that was great training for us to have I share that a lot with people I still got the app on my phone and just the more as we develop each other we're going to be more solid Christians as we continue to be sanctified it's going to show in the places that we are that we're not going to whip the guy off when they cut us off in traffic or whatever and we're going to be patient with people and all that's going to start saying something to the other people around us and I think that's what's going to lead to the conversations and we practice and say it enough to where it's just kind of flows off our tongue and we'll be able to share the gospel with somebody not be all timid about it and then you know people are going to hear that and come to Christ uh God's words what's going to really save them right and then when we witness about it so I think it's we're on the right track as we continue to stuff like this we're talking about and sharing and just building each other up as spiritually as far as what we're know about God and our spiritual drive things like that good well and again this is something that I encourage you to uh in us as a church to be praying about and so as we close uh I'll open us up in prayer and I just encourage you not we're just going to take some time and encourage you in silent prayer to be uh praying about this praying about our church praying about our community praying about our evangelism for our church members who aren't here and then also encourage you just uh to be praying for your week um today begins a new week and be praying that uh as you go to work as you interact in your neighborhoods with your friends and your families or wherever the Lord has you to go that he would open your eyes more to the evangelism opportunities there as well and again I think it's got to not be something that we feel like we've got to check a box but something that we want the Lord to do in us to to use us to share the good news of Jesus Christ let's pray Lord thank you for this evening I thank you for the conversation that we've had and and uh sharpening one another and and asking ourselves some questions that I think matter as we consider what we're doing as a church what we've done and re-evaluating those things Lord because uh it's our desire that we do things your way that Lord if that means we've got to rethink uh

re-evaluate our outreach methods and and what they accomplish Lord I pray that we would be willing uh increasingly so to have these conversations to think more about what your word says and and how we as a church are supposed to represent you and and the things that we are to value and the things that we are to stand for and uphold Lord we know that um it is difficult to face the pressures of this world peer pressures being people pleasers and so God as we've talked about I know it's so important that we are in your word that abides in us so that Father we can shine brilliantly and brightly for you in the places where you have us to go so Lord now as we all are praying and praying in in silence

[60 : 26] Father we we pray that uh that you would hear our prayers and that Lord you would use this church to advance your kingdom in this community uh in in this world I'm going to close in prayer and obviously you're more than welcome to stay and and continue to pray for a while um um we pray Lord we want to be the kind of church your word calls us to be we want to be used by you in ways Lord that advance your kingdom and uh and not our own so God we pray that uh you would you would equip us that you would encourage us that we would encourage one another Lord that uh you would use our church that we would be a city on a hill in our community that Father we would be a church that you use to share the good news of Jesus Christ a church that makes disciples and equips disciples to make disciples Lord we pray that we would not measure our success based upon the world's standards of measurement but that God we would just seek to um measure our success by our obedience to your word as a church and as Christians individually be with us this week again Lord we pray that you would that you would have us rethink um where we're at in the different places you have us in life and rethink the opportunities that we have before us that maybe we took for granted to to share the gospel and to have that be a way of life for us always pointing people to the good news of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior in whose name we pray amen