

The Sermon - In 10 Sentences Or Less

Ancient Future Church 1 - Witness (Luke 24.46-48)



1. Series intent = By looking backward at the earliest or New Testament church, we're asking God to point us forward toward KW's future.
2. According to Jim Collins and others, first step of organizational decline is forgetting or straying from our purpose; this drift can happen as quickly as 3 months.
3. Luke's equivalent of "The Great Commission" in Matthew is a one word mission statement for Jesus' disciples - go be a witness.
4. By definition, a witness merely relays what he/she has seen or experienced firsthand; thus, without real connection to Christ or vibrant spirituality, it's next to impossible to be a witness.
5. Specifically, we are witnesses of God's great and good destiny for the world as started in the person of Jesus.
6. As New Testament scholar N. T. Wright puts it, "The message of Easter is that God's new world has been unveiled in Jesus Christ and that you're now invited to belong to it."
7. Also, we are witnesses of God's readiness to forgive, which far exceeds our own ability to believe how much and quickly He wants to forgive, and the opportunity to "repent," which, far from being a negative word, simply means changing course to head in a far better direction, i.e. the way of Christ.
8. "The Lord is more eager to forgive our sins than a mother is to carry her baby out of a burning building." (John Varney)
9. The latest research on American unchurched and non-Christian adults clearly indicates that we (the church) have an image or messaging problem, which is to say, we are not known for being witnesses of God's Kingdom emerging in and ultimately taking full form in the world, quick and willing divine grace, and changing course to follow the better way of Jesus.
10. Jack Canfield writes, "Purpose is the why behind everything you do"; for us as Christians, our why, the aspiration that every other part of our lives and church must serve, is to be a witness.

An Article on Witness

Click below for a short post by the late Dallas Willard on what the good news of Christ offers, no less than a full, new way of life...this is the message and reality to which we are "witnesses":

[There is More to Life than Guilt](#)

A Prayer for the New Year

We used this right before Communion; it'd work well as your week-long prayer for the new year:

A Prayer for New Creation (Adapted from Liturgy Alive – Modes of Celebration):

Lord God, Yours are the seasons and the ages. Give us a new heart and a new spirit.

Jesus Christ, You are the beginning and the end of all that is, including our lives. Make a new beginning with all of us.

Lord God, You breathe Your Spirit on all creation. Make our old world new again.

Father Almighty, let Your forgiveness and love come down on us day after day, and lead us into everlasting life, amen.