

The Church's Mission is your Mission Matthew 28:16-20

I have always been interested in those people who make speeches for a living, the professionals, the ones who speak at conventions, banquets and motivation seminars. **They call themselves, "hired gums."**

I will confess to a certain degree of envy when I read or hear about them. Not because of the exorbitant fees that they charge, **but because they give one speech over and over again. Preachers can't get away with that, not very often anyway. We have to write a new sermon every week to preach to the same audience.** I am sure there are some liabilities to being a professional speaker. Every profession has its downside, the grunge work it has to do.

From a preachers point of view, I can tell you it looks like a pretty soft job. Probably they may have given the same speech over and over again and again, they probably never did it exactly the same way each time.

After preaching approximately 2,600 plus sermon, in almost 43 years, (*I was ordained June 26th, 1986*) not including, wedding or funerals I can honestly say I never preached the exact same sermon twice. Not even when we had two services, my second sermon was always different from the first, and Susan would tell me. Some would say how can you preach so many sermons utilizing the Scriptures, you would think you would run out of things to say. But we have to remember the primary subject matter we preach. Our main topic is is salvation by Grace through faith in Jesus Christ and about the mission Jesus accomplished while with us.

Mission belongs to the Church. Mission explains the Church. **The Church is founded to perform a mission. There is no other reason for the Church to exist, except to perform the mission that was given to it. The Church did not make up its mission. We don't sit around and wonder what our mission is. It was given to us.**

That mission is found at the conclusion of Matthew's gospel, where it records that Jesus appeared to his disciples for forty days following the Resurrection. On the fortieth day he gathered the disciples together on a mountain, and said, **"Now go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them all that I have commanded you; and remember, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."**

That is our mission. That is why we are here. In reality this is why you are here, to be part of that mission not just a casual observer. The Church of Jesus needs and desires active, not passive participants to endeavor upon the mission. We are here in the business of making Christians, and providing the evidence with our lives that the Christian life is the way you ought to live in this world.

That mission explains the Church. That mission is greater than the Church. It is transforming this world to be the kind of place God intended it to be. That is our mission. And it is given to us, ordinary folk who are gifted by God with certain abilities to

If I were an investor, and I found a company that was still around after 2,000 years of bad management, I think I would buy into it. I would conclude that they must have something there that they aren't aware of, some secret that they are hiding. And we do. That secret is the mission that has been given to us by our Lord, the mission that is greater than any one of us.

Everybody in the Church is supposed to have a part in performing that mission. That is why Paul tells the Corinthians that he sees the Church as being made up of people with a variety of gifts, and each person is supposed to find some way to offer their gift for the mission of the Church. **He says, there are no exceptions. Everybody is to offer something. Listen to him:**

There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each [no exceptions] is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

When you joined the Church, you vowed that you would support the mission of the Church with your gifts, with your talent, so that the mission of the Church would become a reality in this world.

For many those were just words said to a means to an end. **We really didn't take them seriously. We really didn't expect everybody to offer their talent. Their money, yes, I'll admit that, but not their talent. In fact, the Church has been organized for 50 years with the assumption that you wouldn't offer your talent.**

We always thought that God's mission, God's work, was done someplace else, by someone else in foreign countries. Just by definition, the Great Commission that ministering to all nations, making disciples of all nations, meant other nations someplace else.

We didn't worry about the mission here, because everyone we knew were Christians, or so we thought. After all who am I to tell someone what they should believe or they need to go to church. Well we were wrong and the statistics tell us that we were wrong. The mission field is not over there, it is right here, as I said last week when you drive out of our parking lot you are entering the mission field. There is just as great a story to be written here. And it will be written here when the Church in America realizes that God is calling the Church to perform a mission right here. No telling what will happen if the Church in America got a sense of mission.

We are not organized to do mission because we don't expect it to happen here. If we are going to make a difference in the lives of people, if we are going to make a difference in the quality of life in Lake Placid, in this county and in this nation, then we are going to have to engage a whole lot more people in mission.

Having a mission bigger than you are is the secret. Jesus put it this way, **"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things will be given unto you."** Perhaps some of you've enjoyed success in this life, but now you find your life is flat and unrewarding, you need to find a mission for your life. What can you do? What can you accomplish in your life? Perhaps you have a love for the lost, start inviting your un-churched friends to come to church or come back to church. Start a small group in your neighborhood and invite your friends to study the Bible. Maybe take over the food collection for Mana Ministry or the Middle School. Perhaps you have been blessed with financial resources, maybe you can give to one of the Seminaries or enhance our endowments to help those in need. Or leave legacy in you will to ensure Trinity cam move forward in the years ahead.

"Seek first the Kingdom, and all these things will be given to you." You can do that anywhere, but we have organized this church now so you can do it right here. You do not have to ask for permission to endeavor upon your mission. You've got a mission. It's waiting for you.