



OKOTOKS EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

THRIVING AMID THE THREATS

THRIVING WHEN THE CHURCH DISAPPOINTS YOU

FEBRUARY 12-18, 2017

SERMON OUTLINE

Thriving When the Church Disappoints You

Acts 6:1-7

1. The Division personal disappointment Causes, . . .

1 Timothy 5:3-5

2. A community of Trust Overcomes

We must choose to Trust the Work Of God in
people, over a Mistrust of people

What do I need to do with what I have heard today?

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

MAIN POINT

Community will create conflicts and can be addressed with attention to mission and compassion.

THINKING THINGS THROUGH

Connect the sermon to the study.

1. When was the last time you had a conflict with a coworker, close friend, or family member?

2. How do our relationships shape the way we address conflict? For example, share a specific way conflict with your spouse, parent, or child is different than conflict with your coworker or neighbor?

Leader: Conflict is a natural consequence of living in relational proximity to other people. You likely don't have much conflict with people you don't spend any time with. This is why it is important to properly address and deal with conflict. Since the church is a community, conflict is bound to arise. This was the situation in Acts 6. One segment of the church felt their needs were being ignored, so the church community had to find a way to resolve the conflict by meeting the needs, which they did with compassion and commitment to their mission. The Bible is honest about relational conflict, but also provides a means for us to address it in a way that honors Christ. We find one such example in Colossians 3.

DIGGING DEEPER

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ COLOSSIANS 3:12-14.

3. Consider Paul's opening words in verse 12: "God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved." The words Paul used to describe Christians, and the church as a whole, show how much we mean to Him. If we believe God is this committed to us, how will it affect our relationships with one another?

4. Based on these verses, what attribute of a follower of Christ is hardest for you to exhibit? Which is easiest?

5. What is the connection between “bear with” and “forgive” (v. 13)? Does it help to know the word *forgive* is the verbal form of the word *grace*?

6. Paul used the analogy of putting on clothes to explain the transformation that happens to a Christian. Love is the last garment that covers everything else. Why is this so important? What is the result of consistently wearing these garments?

Leader: Our commitment to one another stems from our identity in Christ and our desire to follow Him. The believers in Acts 6 compromised to see Christ’s mission go forward. Christians take the initiative to model the virtues listed here because they were modeled for us in Christ. For example, Christians forgive others because of their personal experience of Christ’s forgiveness. We are guided by Christ’s love, which is why love is the last and most important garment. Above all, Christian communities are ones of love (John 13:34-35). Paul insisted believers were to put on love, a determined good will that seeks others’ best interests. Such persistent good will is the perfect bond of unity.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ COLOSSIANS 3:15-17.

7. What does it mean to let the peace of Christ rule (literally “take first place”) in our hearts? How are we “called to peace”? What does that look like?

8. Paul encouraged the believers in Colossae to worship and sing to God. Corporate worship is an expression of our commitment to God and to one another. How does our common redemption and purpose influence the way we experience worship?

Leader: The peace of Christ determines our actions. Focusing on this peace helps us live in harmony with Jesus and with other people. Worship does a similar uniting work in our lives. Singing joyfully expresses worship and praise. Our worship is not separate from our life in community with other believers in discipleship. Rather both are vital and support one another.

9. Verse 17 seems to be Paul’s conclusion. What does it mean to do everything in the name of Jesus? Why is relational unity (v. 15) and compassion (vv. 12-14) necessary to live in the name of Christ?

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

Leader: Paul urged believers to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. *Name* is a synonym for person. Thus the phrase is the same as “in Christ”—in close relationship with Him. The words *in the name of* can mean “in the authority or power of.” Jesus supplies power for Christian living. The title “the Lord Jesus” stressed that they were to represent their Savior and Master well in their daily lives. Our commitment to Christ fuels our commitment to one another.

DOING LIFE TOGETHER

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

10. How is your daily behavior changing to reflect your new life in Christ? Would other people identify ways your life has been changed by Christ?

Leader: The previous question may be one people have a difficult time answering aloud, so encourage some quiet time for reflection as needed.

11. What are a few specific actions you can take to demonstrate your commitment to peace (v. 15: “called to peace”) in the body of Christ?

PRAYER

Praise God for the relationships we have in the church. Pray that focusing on Him would help us to pursue peace and unity in our relationships with other believers. Ask that Jesus would guide you to see other believers with compassion and His mission with clarity.

MEMORIZE

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. – Colossians 3:13

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PASSAGE

COLOSSIANS 3:12-17

3:12. After commanding believers to “put away” worldly behaviors, Paul offered a series of positive commands to put on or to “clothe yourselves” (Rm 13:14) with behavior fitted for God’s people. The adjectives chosen (Isa 43:20; 65:9; Rm 8:33; 2Tim 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1Pe 1:1; 2:4,6,9), holy (Mk 1:24; Lk 4:34; Jn 6:69; 1Pe 2:9), and loved (Mt 3:17; Eph 1:6; 1Th 1:4; 2Th 2:13) were all applied to Israel, Jesus, and the church. The five virtues are just the opposite of the vices listed in verses 5 and 8.

3:13. The words accepting (cp. Rm 15:7; Eph 4:2) and forgiving (cp. Eph 4:32) express the habitual manner in which believers exhibit the stated virtues. Both verbs pertain to interpersonal relationships in the body of Christ. Just as the Lord has forgiven echoes Jesus’ injunction to forgive because believers are forgiven (Mt 6:12,14-15; 18:23-35; Lk 7:42).

3:14 .The imagery here suggests that the final and most important new article of clothing for God’s people is love, the perfect bond of unity, that binds believers together in complete oneness (Eph 4:3).

3:15. The peace brought by Christ should control believers’ hearts (Rm 8:6; 15:13; 2Co 13:11; Gal 5:22; Eph 2:14; Php 4:7; 2Th 3:16). Be thankful harks back to 1:3,12; 2:7 (cp. 3:17; 4:2).

3:16. The words teaching and admonishing express the means of how the gospel is to dwell among believers. Wisdom... singing, and gratitude characterize the manner of this teaching and admonishing.