

## **The Mission**

Sermon Talking Points – Pastor Joe Davis  
Union Baptist Church – 8/26/2018

### **INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?**

*Why are you here today?* To grow spiritually? To honor God and worship him? To do your religious duty for the week? To find encouragement and hope in a dark world? To make friends? To become more like Christ? To obey God's Word since it tells us God's people should meet together regularly? To do what feels right because church seems like a good thing and it's what you've done all your life?

*Asking the question:* What are we doing here? What is God seeking to accomplish through the Church? What is the mission God has given Union Baptist Church to accomplish by his power? And what role does each person in the church need to fill so we can accomplish that mission?

*The task:* An in-depth Scripture study by the elders to answer this question.

*The defining image in Scripture that describes the church:* **THE BODY OF CHRIST**...Christ as the head and followers of Christ as the body.

***As we think about this image of the Body of Christ, let's think for a moment about THE HUMAN HEAD AND BODY***

*A day in the life of my body this morning:* My head said time to get up. My body responded: "Not yet," and hits the snooze button.

Head tells the body what to do, the parts of the body work together to carry out what the head says to do; OR gets off track and sidetracked and drawn into destructive things in opposition to what the head knows needs to be done.

*Eating healthy example*

If the body and its emotional and natural impulses are overruling the head, we've got big problems. We end up hurting ourselves and other people just to fulfill our bodily urges and desires.

The body needs to be trained and brought into submission to truth the head knows and desires to follow...truth about what's good and right and safe for the body.

*Athletes example*

## **THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST**

1 Corinthians 12:27

***Now you (PL.) are the body of Christ and individually members of it.***

Ephesians 5:23b

***...Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.***

Colossians 1:18

***And [Christ] is the head of the body, the church.***

*Thinking about this image:*

- 1) Unity and cooperation in submission to the head;
- 2) Every part of the body plays a role and is needed;
- 3) The unified, Christ-led, Spirit-empowered church is like having Christ's bodily presence here on earth...his hand and feet...his human touch to people in the world.
- 4) A body needs to move and walk to be effective.
- 5) To be Christ's body we have to do it together – we can't do it on our own – a head with just a hand is not going to work – or a head sitting on one foot!

**BASED ON THIS IMAGE OF THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE TEACHINGS IN SCRIPTURE OF WHAT THE CHURCH IS MEANT TO ACCOMPLISH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST, I NOW WANT TO SHARE THE MISSION THE ELDERS HAVE ADOPTED FOR UNION BAPTIST CHURCH. THIS IS WHAT WE'RE CONVINCED GOD HAS GIVEN US TO DO AS THE UNIFIED BODY OF CHRIST HERE IN UNION, OREGON. AND WHAT WE HOPE IS THAT SOON, EVERY PERSON HERE WILL BE ABLE TO ARTICULATE TO THEMSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE THIS MISSION... THAT WE'LL ALL BE ABLE TO EASILY EXPRESS TO OURSELVES AND OTHERS WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE. I'LL PRESENT THE CONCISE SUMMARY FIRST, WHICH IS WHAT WE HOPE YOU'LL ALL PUT TO MEMORY. THEN I'LL EXPLAIN EACH ITEM WITH SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES.**

**HERE WE GO:**

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*Immersed in the love of Christ and filled with the Spirit*

**BIRTH THE BODY**

**BUILD THE BODY**

**BE THE BODY**

*Bringing great glory and worship to the one true God*

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***Immersed in the love of Christ and filled with his Spirit***

This is the spring of life that sustains and empowers and enlivens everything we do as followers of Christ. Without living in the love of Christ and walking by the power of the Holy Spirit through continual prayer, we're walking in our strength and in human religion and will fail miserably at carrying out God's mission.

Ephesians 3:14-19

***14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.***

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***BIRTH THE BODY – Make Christ followers, baptizing them and teaching them obedience to God's Word.***

The Great Confession/The Great Commandments/The Great Commission:

Matt 28:18-20

***18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."***

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**BUILD THE BODY – Equip Christ followers to do the work of ministry so that the body of Christ can be built up in love.**

*Ephesians 4:11-16*

**11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we ALL attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.**

Building up the body only happens when saints – every saint, by the way (ALL) – are equipped to DO SOMETHING and ACTUALLY START DOING IT. That something is the work of ministry – serving one another through love and proclaiming the good news of Christ in the world – which is what’s involved in *being the body*.

And what occurred to us as elders as we’ve been doing this study and re-discovering God’s mission for our church, is that we’ve been *trying to be the body without an organized, intentional plan and process for both birthing and then building the body...*which are both necessary for bringing about the unity of the faith and knowledge of God – the place where belief and knowledge are united and it shows in our actions.

The truth is, we can only effectively BE the body of Christ together if Christ followers are consistently being made, given a solid foundation for their new life in Christ and then disciplined and equipped to actually function in their spiritual gifting and fulfill the purpose God has for their lives...doing the work of ministry by God’s power and bearing great fruit through his work in their lives.

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**BE THE BODY** – *Be the body (the human touch) of Christ in the world; a unified, Spirit-gifted, Christ-led **community** serving God and one another through love and proclaiming Christ in both words and action.*

The properly functioning church is to be like having the presence of Christ in bodily form here on the earth!

The hallmarks of a properly functioning church:

- 1) Unity
- 2) Spirit-gifting
- 3) Christ-led
- 4) A community of people serving each through love
- 5) A people who go into the world to proclaim Christ in words and action

***The Galatians picture of life in Christ in the church:***

- 1) Hearing with faith (3:2, 5) – a new creation set free;
- 2) Faith working through love is all that counts now – not rules and regulations (5:6);
- 3) Through love serving one another (5:13-14);
- 4) Walking and being led by the Spirit and growing his fruit (5:16, 18, 22-26).
- 5) ***The fruit of the Spirit*** = love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

*Another picture of being the body:*

Colossians 3:12-17

***12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness***

***in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.***

Ephesians 1:22-23

22 And he put all things under [Christ's] feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, **the fullness of him who fills all in all.**

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***Bringing great glory and worship to the one true God***

Eph 3:20-21

***20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.***

***Through the church the manifold wisdom of God is intended to be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. – Ephesians 3:10***

## SO WHAT NOW?

**...An intentional, organized focus on birthing and building so that we can effectively be the body of Christ together. This will involve a focus on both learning and doing in our discipleship efforts...more than just building up head knowledge of Scripture.**

We will be evaluating everything we do here and innovating new ideas to accomplish this mission God has given us.

Some new things happening right now:

- 1) In October, I'm starting an initial discipleship group with 3 or 4 guys I'm selecting to be my "guinea pigs." We will be both *learning* and *doing* many things together. I will also be meeting with the other elders at our meetings to disciple them with the same materials so they will soon be equipped start their own groups. The men in my discipleship group and the elders will be sharing what they learn and do with their wives, or a family member or a close friend, with the hope that others will soon be equipped to disciple others in the same way. You get the picture. This is how we're beginning and I ask for your diligent prayers. This is going to be a work in progress and will change and improve over time.
- 2) All new believers will be appointed a disciple who will meet with them once a week to talk over their Bible reading and go through a new believer book. We've also talked about starting a one-year *Foundations* Sunday School class soon for new or young believers. If you're interested in that, please talk to myself or one of the elders so we can see if we have enough to start a class right now. You don't have to be a brand new believer, but just someone who would like to get a solid foundation in the basics of the faith and how to grow spiritually.
- 3) Fellowship Groups and what they're studying and discussing will be changing this year to better fit with our mission. I'm not going to reveal the details of that yet until we have our Fellowship Group leaders meeting tonight and get them up to speed on the plans and get their input. But trust me: You're going to want to be in a Fellowship Group this year.

4) The elders will soon begin systematically evaluating every ministry and program we're doing here right now in light of our mission. This will take some time and these evaluations and any changes proposed will be done with input and feedback from those ministries. In other words, this process will be done like it should be done in the body of Christ: with cooperation and input from ministry members and a true understanding of what's actually happening. But the reality is: Some things may have to go. Some things may need adjusting. We may need to come up with new innovations. It's clear that adjustments will need to be made if we want to effectively accomplish the mission God has given us. We can't just add a bunch of things to what we're already doing. Some things may need to be re-purposed. Others tweaked. A few could be dropped for more important priorities.

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**I want to close today with this question:** *If Union Baptist Church begins to more and more effectively fulfill our God-give purpose by his power, what are some things we should expect to see happening here in 5 years? In other words: What is our VISION of what an effective Union Baptist Church will look like?*

New believers are professing faith in Christ and being baptized every month  
*(Imagine a monthly Baptism Sunday, as we now have a Communion Sunday!)*

All new believers are participating in a weekly foundations class and  
have a designated discipler

Multiple adult discipleship groups are meeting weekly with an  
established curriculum *(Learn and Do)*

Youth are engaging weekly in an age-tailored foundation and  
discipleship curriculum *(Learn and Do)*

Those discipled are serving as disciplers for new believers and many  
are leading discipleship groups

Body members are cultivating relationships outside the church, doing  
works of service and actively sharing their faith

Real movement toward Christlikeness is observable among body members:  
*Faith and knowledge are united and love for God and one another is increasing*

Godly leaders are emerging regularly from discipleship

Discipled leaders are being sent out for mission work or to start new churches

Is this a pipe dream? Many might say so. Certainly we'll always be a work in progress until Christ returns. But this, my friends, is not a pipe dream, but something that our God, *who can do immeasurably more than all we can ask or think*, is committed to bringing about as we fully surrender ourselves to him and allow him to have his way in our lives...As we become true disciples of Christ whose joy and hope and dreams are fixed on loving him rather than the loving the world.

Are you ready for what he has for you and are you ready to change some of your priorities and commitments in life so that this vision can become a reality for you and I right here in Union, Oregon? I hope and pray so, and I look forward to what God's going to do!