Pursuing Our Mission
(Matt 22:37-40; 28:19-20)

Intro:
- Read in Bible of many diff. characters: Heroes we already knew – David, Daniel, Joseph, Jonah, Abraham, Noah, Paul; Others less heroic or less known – Isaac, Jacob, Gideon, Elijah, Balaam, Barnabas; Even women – Rebeckah, Rahab, Lydia, Priscilla.
- the key for each of these individuals was not anything extraordinary about themselves but rather that an extraordinary God was working through them.
- Another common thread among them is that each of them had a mission. (Remember the Blue’s Brothers?) Some more in tune to it than others, but all had it. We just finished a sermon series on Nehemiah and saw that the driving force that kept him focused was his mission of rebuilding the wall and the city of Jerusalem.
- This morning want to look at this as it relates to our Church. Did you know our church has a mission? Some of you may recognize that we have a Mission Statement– can you tell me what it says?
- Why important to know our Mission? How else can we know if we are doing the right things? (Imagine loading the family up into the van and setting out on vacation w/ no destination – recipe for disaster!!) Without know your Mission, there is no way to fulfill it outside a stunning coincidence.
- We cannot afford to wander as a Church and hope we hit the right things along the way. God has enlisted us in His Kingdom Work.

**Our Church Family participates in God’s Kingdom Work through the pursuit of our Mission**

- That’s why we developed a Mission Statement. To keep us focused on those things God has called us to do together as a church. To give us a direction to run towards. To function as a measuring stick to help us determine if we should take on a particular ministry or not. To serve as a compass if we should ever lose our way. To remind us why we exist.
- So what is our Mission? I’m so glad you asked.
- Because He has given his life for us, the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Boulder will impact the world for Jesus Christ…one life at a time, by developing mature, reproducing disciples who are:  
  - **Reaching Up:** Responding to God’s glory through faith, worship and growth in Him  
  - **Reaching In:** Reflecting God’s glory by investing in the life of His Church  
  - **Reaching Out:** Representing God’s glory by serving the world in order to reach others for Jesus Christ
- Our Mission Statement springs from two treatises given by Jesus Christ to his followers while he walked the earth. From these we derive our five-fold purpose which is the basis for our Mission Statement.
  - **Matt. 22:37-39** And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.
  - **Matt. 28:19-20** 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

1) EVANGELISM
- (Matt. 28:19) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations
- Jesus left us with the challenge of reaching the world with the gospel. Seems like pretty much a “no-brainer” and yet it is one of the purposes we traditionally struggle with the most. We have made evangelism into this big scary thing it was never intended to be.
- Pt of prob lies in transl.: lit. “As you go…”; Big diff betw loading up Bible Bus and “going” to inner-city to preach (some are called to this) and simply “as you go” telling those you encounter of God’s love.
- Jesus said, **Acts 1:8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- Witness? Tells what she saw. Simple, right? We can all do that.
- Again, our church family Reaches People individually as each member testifies to God’s love. But we also strive to develop strategies to Reach People as a group. In so doing, we must adopt the attitude of Paul
  - **1 Cor. 9:22b-23** I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

2) WORSHIP
- (Matt. 22:37) If we **love God** with our entire being, we will strive to honor Him with everything we have and are. This is called worship. Worship = woerthship, declaring His worth. “The more love God the more we recognize how awesome He is and. “WOW!!”
- **Psalm 29:1-2** Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness.
- **Rom. 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.
- To me this is the ultimate statement on worship. Not just about what happens when come together on the Sabbath, although this is a
crucial element of living a life of worship. But Sabbath worship should not be the only time we worship. Rather it should be the culmination of a week’s worth of worship living. Everything we do, say, think should bring glory and honor to God.

- As a church family, if we aren’t consumed with a desire to honor God this way, we may as well pack it in and go home. We honor God individually through our daily lives and we honor God corporately with our worship services.

3) GROWTH

- **Matt. 28:20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
- Not enough simply to bring people to Christ. Must equip them to grow in Christ and thereby strengthen their spiritual lives.
- Never dream of telling our newborn baby, “I’m so happy that you have come into this life. Now it’s time for you to go out and get a job and an apartment and figure out how life works.” And yet isn’t that too often what we do to new believers…throw them to the wolves and expect them to figure it out as they go? Raising babies takes nurturing, attention, discipline and mentoring, not to mention a lot of time and energy. And yet if we do it correctly, they will typically grow into responsible, productive, independent adults. The same can be said of newborn Christians. They need training. It is our job as a church family to give it to them.
- **Eph 4:11-13** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we may mature in Christ and thereby strengthen our spiritual lives.

First part of our Mission Statement – REACHING UP focuses on these three purposes.

4) FELLOWSHIP

- **Matt. 28:19b** baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- When a person is baptized, they are going public with their faith and joining something larger than themselves. They frequently go on from there to join the church. We are not interested in having names to fill the roll. Membership has to mean something. So we strive to incorporate people into the life of the church as we build the church into a strong family.
- **Eph 4:16** 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.
- This is where our covenant comes in handy. The members of our church are not bound to one another legally, financially or even ecclesiastically. Each one makes a voluntary commitment to the others which is spelled out in our covenant. Our church covenant (or our commitment to each other) is what binds us together as a family. The covenant basically says that we will do our part to honor God with our lives, support the ministry of the church and care for each other. This is more involved than pot luck meals and talking about football. It is a deep mutual caring for one another, knowing and being willing to give a pat on the back or a kick in the pants when it’s needed. It’s knowing that we’ve got each other’s backs. Being willing to ask the hard questions. Sticking with it through thick and thin.

This is the focus of the second part – REACHING IN

5) SERVICE

- **Matt 22:39** And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’
- Love others. Sounds easy enough, right? I mean, I love everybody. I don’t have any enemies. So I’m covered, right? Love here is an not a verb of being but rather a verb of ACTION!!
- Jesus showed us showed us what that means, didn’t he. That loving others involves caring for them and striving to meet their true needs.
- **John 13:14-15** If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.
- Some of the needs we must meet belong to those we know well and love.
- **John 13:14-15** As a church family, we have a responsibility to take care of each other. This too would fit in with the second part of our MS – REACHING IN.
- Other needs belong to those outside the church and sometimes those we have never even met. And yet we must reach out and demonstrate to them the very love with which our Heavenly Father has loved us in the hopes that our kindness might direct their attention to His love.

The third part of our MS – REACHING OUT utilizes our SERVICE but is about so much more than that. We recognize that over the years, service has been one of the strengths of our church. And yet is has been primarily directed to our own needs. We want to take that strength and capitalize on it to reach out to those outside our own walls with the message of the gospel. REACHING OUT is really about helping each individual to discover and begin fulfilling their KINGDOM PURPOSE which brings us right back to Evangelism – the beginning of the cycle - a passionate attempt to get others to REACH UP.

- Reaching Up, Reaching In, Reaching Out. That’s it. That’s our Mission as a church. We are committed to doing it ourselves and helping others learn how to do it as well.

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