

## Day 11, Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>: This Little Light of Mine

Read Matthew 5:14-16

*"...let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do, and praise your Father who is in heaven." -Matthew 5:16*

This week, our focus is on the ministries of Memorial. From the beginning, Memorial has been a church seeking to reach out beyond walls and doors to share the love of Christ with others.

Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." The church is made up of the laborers, called to serve together in ministry. And what a group of laborers God has assembled among the people called Memorial! The gifts of time, talents, and treasures make a difference. The many and varied ministries that happen every week help us fulfill the vision to welcome people, grow disciples, and serve others.

Most significantly, the laborers of Memorial offer themselves according to the principle found in Matthew 5. It is not for personal recognition or gain. These laborers are not seeking to grab the spotlight themselves. Rather, the goal is that our ministries will point others toward Christ. When the good things we do as a community of faith accomplish this purpose and bring glory to God, our light shines a little brighter.

What ministries of Memorial do you see that are shining a light for all to see?

How are you participating as a laborer in the harvest?

## Day 12, Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>: Graciously Welcoming People

Read Romans 15:1-7

*“So welcome each other, in the same way that Christ also welcomed you, for God’s glory.” -  
Romans 15:7*

There are some people who just have the gift of hospitality. They have a way of making others feel comfortable and at ease. They know no strangers and, from the first time they meet you, treat you as if you were a long-lost friend.

It feels so good to receive the gift of a warm welcome. Paul reminds us that when we participate in a ministry of welcome, people experience the love of Christ and God is glorified. Research shows that when people visit a church for the first time, most decide in the first ten minutes they are on campus whether or not they will return. That means that likely before the band plays, the choir sings, or the pastor preaches, they have already made up their mind about coming back. The way they are welcomed matters. It’s no wonder, then, that “grace-filled family” is an important piece of the Memorial vision.

Facilities are a part of a church’s welcome. Just like someone can tell whether you are ready and excited to have them in your home, so they can also tell if you are ready and excited to have them in your church. What a blessing it is for Memorial to have facilities that offer a warm welcome to persons of all ages. Give thanks today for the great care that was taken in designing and renovating our sanctuary building so that people of all ages and physical ability will be able to worship, study and feel at home in our space.

What do you remember about how you felt the first time you came to Memorial?

How might participating in this campaign be an expression of thanks for the facilities we have?

## Day 13, Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>: Intentionally Growing Disciples

Read Ephesians 4:12-16

*“God’s goal is for us to become mature adults—to be fully grown, measured by the standard of the fullness of Christ.” -Ephesians 4:13b*

It’s always good to have a goal in mind. Goals give us something for which to aim. They improve performance as we strive to reach them. Goals help us stay focused on what matters most.

We often set goals for ourselves in our careers, in our families, in our finances, in music, and in sports. If we set goals in all these areas of life, doesn’t it make sense that we would set goals for ourselves in our faith? Actually, according to the letter to the Ephesians, God has already set the most important one: for us to become mature adults. And maturity in this case takes on a very specific image...it looks like Jesus.

At the heart of Memorial’s vision is a call for people to “intentionally grow spiritually.” The process of becoming more like Jesus is what growing as a disciple is all about. Just like that original band of twelve, disciples today are those who desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. As a congregation, when we invest resources in helping people grow, we participate in pressing on toward God’s goal for each of us to become a mature disciple.

How are you growing as a disciple these days?

As financial resources are freed up through reducing our debt, what new opportunities can you envision for growing disciples at Memorial?

## Day 14, Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>: Generously Serving Others

Read Mark 10:35-45

*"...for the Son of Man didn't come to be served but rather to serve and to give his life to liberate many people." -Mark 10:45*

Apparently even those who have spent a lot of time with Jesus sometimes forget what it means to follow him. Maybe there is still hope for the rest of us, after all!

James and John were two of the twelve. A couple of Jesus' closest companions. One day, though, they began to worry about their future. They had just heard Jesus say something about dying and their immediate response was to be concerned not about him but about themselves. Jesus seizes the opportunity for a teachable moment. True greatness, he tells them, is not found in power or position. Instead, it is found through serving.

The final piece of the Memorial vision is to be a church that "puts God's love into action." The gospel truth is that when we serve others, as much as we may be a blessing to them, we also find ourselves truly blessed. Serving connects us with the heart of Christ.

What is one way you can generously serve others this spring?

What dream do you have for how Memorial can put God's love into action?

## Day 15, Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>: Worth the Risk

Read Acts 20:21-24

*“But nothing, not even my life, is more important than my completing my mission. This is nothing other than the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus: to testify about the good news of God’s grace.” -Acts 20:24*

It’s difficult to imagine the growth of the early Christian church apart from the ministry of the apostle Paul. He is the one who was captivated by a mission of taking the message of Christ out into the world. Certainly, he could not have imagined the impact he would continue to have on the church 2000 years later. His willingness to risk everything for the sake of fulfilling his mission was crucial to his success.

In some ways, the world today is more like the world Paul encountered than any time in recent history, particularly when it comes to faith. Millions of people claim no affiliation to religion and millions more have only a casual connection to faith. There is a huge opportunity in the year 2013 and beyond for the church to “testify about the good news of God’s grace” to a world filled with people who don’t know it.

What the church and the world need are risk-takers. Persons who are convinced that this good news is so important that they would be willing to risk whatever it takes to share it. There are more than 1,000 disciples who are part of our Memorial community. If every one of us becomes a risk-taker, the impact it will continue to have on this community for generations to come is beyond any of our imaginations.

Is there someone right now to whom you need to testify about the good news of God’s grace?

What are you willing to risk for the sake of sharing the good news?