

Advance The Church: Reviving The Boneyard: Miscellaneous Conference Notes **Durham, NC, February 4, 2010**

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Matt Boswell: Leading the Church in Gospel-Centered Worship

Four Criteria for Picking Corporate Worship Songs

1. Is it biblical? Seek to pick lyrics filled with Scripture.
2. Is it gospel centered? Do the lyrics speak of the work of Christ on our behalf?
3. Is it accessible? Can the seven year old and the seventy year old sing it?
4. Is it contextualized? Does the style of music reflect the people and culture?

Recommended Teaching Series on Corporate Worship

- John Piper, ["Gravity and Gladness on the Worship of God"](#)

Gospel Discernment for Worship Songs

If the songs you sing would still be true without the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, then you have entertained your people with music, but you have not led them to worship Jesus.

Tyler Jones: Living the Mission

On Being a Witnesses in Our Communities

Do not let what you consider offensive alienate you from being a witness in culture. If you eliminate witnessing to people who smoke, drink, curse, are associated with a different political party than yours, and are sexually active outside of the boundaries of scripture, then you have eliminated almost everyone.

We do good making much of Jesus in our corporate worship; let us do good making much about Jesus in our neighborhoods.

What keeps us from witnessing? Pride! Our reputation is often more important than taking the risk to share the love of Christ and what he has done to reconcile us to God. We are afraid that our neighbors, friends, or co-workers will think of us as weird.

Personal note- Pride leads to poor evangelism and reflects a putrid love for Jesus (Rev 3:16). Father, give my church and me the heart of your Son—Jesus—so that we might witness His good news to the nations—beginning in our own neighborhoods.

JD Greear: Keeping the Gospel at the Heart of the Mission

3 Reasons Why The Early Church Grew (Summary from [*The Rise of Christianity: How the Obscure, Marginal, Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force*](#) by Rodney Stark.)

1. The creation of major urban areas also created major hygiene problems. Sickness and death was often the outcome. As a result, many began fleeing the cities for the rural areas. However, many Christians refused to leave the cities in order to minister to the sick.
2. The creation of major cities meant the influx of multiple ethnicities. This created great tension among diverse people groups. This inevitable social reality did not threaten or anger Christians. Instead of ostracizing others that were different from them, they greeted and valued everyone as part of God's created order—created in His own image. Christians viewed others as potential members of the family of God under the Lordship of Jesus—the King of all humanity.
3. Persecution existed for many—not just Christians. However, the difference seen among Christians was their response to persecution. Instead of striking out in revenge, many prayed for their persecutors.

Gospel-Centered Missional Service to the Community

Preach the Gospel and Engage the Community as a Sign of the Gospel.

- The church's community ministry should be a sign of the future kingdom of God. It should be, drawing from Leslie Newbigin, "signs among the rubble."

Implications for Gospel-Centered Community Engagement

1. Look for ways to give signs of the gospel to our communities—heal the sick and feed the poor ...etc.
Is there much joy in the community because we are here? Would the community know it or care if our church were gone?
2. Discipline church ministries to keep the message central.

"Be His witnesses not His carpenters."

Reflecting on the quote often attributed to Francis Assisi, "Preach the gospel and if necessary use words," JD emphasized the foolishness of such a statement/ philosophy for ministry. It is equivalent to asking someone, "Please give me your telephone number and use digits if you need to." How silly, your phone number is digits. Likewise, the gospel is words...it is the proclamation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus The gospel is words; the gospel is the good news proclaimed!

Church Leadership Car Analogy- Like a car out of alignment that will veer way off course if you take your hands off the wheel, the church, if leadership stops leading, will veer way off course—often toward social endeavors with no clear message of the gospel. The gospel will become simply pulling weeds and painting buildings.

3. Develop churches that are themselves signs of the kingdom.
 - Pray, aim, and work toward ethnic diversity within your church
4. Church planting should be our primary mission strategy.
 - As you go into a community to serve, seek to plant a local, self-sustaining church.

David Platt: Architecting the Mission

Church Mission Decision Guidelines/Principles

1. It must be biblical- God will only bless His plan.
2. It must be intentionally aimed at making disciples.
3. It must be reproducible.
4. It must be cross-cultural—the aim is all nations.
5. It must be radical—we want to risk it all!

Church Success- It should not be measured by how many we get into our buildings, but by how many we are sending out of our buildings.

Concern for the Church Today- The church of God is seeking to do the work of God apart from the Spirit of God. Are we gripped by our need for the Spirit of God?