**02 What is God's Plan for You and His Church; Repent & Believe**

we love you Lord God we pray that you would just open our minds God to your word that we would just hear you speak through the words that we read God in your holy word we love you we praise you God and it's in your Holy Name that we pray amen you guys can have a seat good morning guys it's good to be here with you I mention it every time over the last couple years that anytime I come up to preach I still even in second service Ronnie I still am worried that I'm coming up after the wrong song because a couple years ago I came up after the second song started setting up my stuff you know and then Ronnie starts playing the piano behind me to like go into the third song and I was like never mind we're just going to sit back down for a second but fortunately I picked up on the right cue again so welcome to everybody here this morning you may be getting a feeling like wow there's a lot of like women in here and not a whole lot of guys it's because it's our men's Retreat this weekend and so we've got our men are up in Colorado skiing all weekend and I couldn't help but think and Jill as Seth's wife maybe you could shed some light on this Seth mentioned last week in his sermon that that he thought he was going to be a ski instructor that's what he wanted to do that was his whole passion in life and then God called him to Ministry and so is this some way of him like I'm just going to work in that ski life a little bit every now and then and so he's enjoying a retreat up in Colorado with the guys teaching up there with those guys and definitely having a good time out on the slopes and so that leaves me here I'm Bo Stevens I'm one of the elders here at Waypoint and I'm going to be continuing with what Seth did last week and last week Seth started a series it was entitled the big picture what is God's plan for you and as church and so starting the new year a good time to really kind of reflect and cast vision for the future and see maybe what God has in store for each of us and he was bringing out this point that as a church now we're about seven years old so we're not a new church plant we can't keep relying on that of like oh we'll figure it out we're new We're Young but we're also not a mature Church who knows exactly where God is taking us and what he has in store for us in the future but what we do know is we're in this period of maturation and growth and we can just kind of reflect on as Seth did maybe your middle school years growing up where it's kind of That Awkward stage you're not a little kid anymore but you're not big enough old enough mature enough to be on your own and to figure everything out and so we're in this maturation phase as a church and we really want to take time to reflect and look inwardly and see maybe where God's taking us and what he has in store for us in order to do that we really feel like we need to kind of do an assessment an assessment on each of us as individuals in us as a church to kind of see maybe where we're lacking and maybe where God is Desiring for more growth spiritually and maybe that will help pave away for us to see what the future holds for us as a church and so that's the series that Seth intro for us last week and I'm going to begin kind of the next phase of that series because as we reflect as we check on health of where we're at we need to see one do we have a grasp of what some foundational biblical truths are and two are we actually implementing those by walking in obedience to what we learn what we know what we hear and so over the next several weeks Seth's going to be covering a slew of topics like baptism prayer making disciples worship giving On and On Down the Line a lot of those just really basic foundational truths to the Christian Life and this morning I'm going to start us off with this idea of repent and believe and if you've grown up in the church at all if you've been to church very many times you've probably heard these words mentioned repent and believe and they are essential to the life of the believer they are foundational to the church repent and believe and as Seth did mention most of the stuff we're going to be talking about is very foundational it's going to be very much in line with or Orthodox Christianity but if we're here this morning and for the next several weeks to just learn new things that we've never heard before see new truths in Scripture that have never been revealed to us before then maybe this series is going to disappoint a little bit because we're really going to be reminding you of things that you've probably heard before we're going to be reminding you of things that that you've been taught before but we're not just going to leave it there because we don't just want to remind you of these things or teach these things we want to Spur you on to put these things into action in your life to walk in obedience to these things that we've all heard many times or over the years and so this is very much a series where the rubber meets the road and a call to action in each of Our Lives as we move forward so let me begin by laying a foundation for repent and believe we're going to talk about what those words mean and what Christ means when he says repent and believe but then for the second half of this morning we're really going to talk about what does that mean for you and how do you put these things into action in your life and so I want to begin by laying a very Firm Foundation being a a non-denominational church here we have people coming from all backgrounds and all walks of life and maybe you grew up in the church and could have been a Methodist Church could have been a Baptist Church could have been a non-denominational there's no telling where each of us have come from and so before I just start going off I want to lay a foundation not just for this week but these truths these foundational truths will be relevant for weeks to come with what Seth continues to preach and so I know the words up there are a little bit small for those of you towards the back but I'll be reading them and giving a little bit of reference to the scripture there these are foundational truths that we believe here at Waypoint Christian church if you pull up our statement of faith online or grab a hard copy of it you will see that these are very much foundational truths that we believe in and we believe this because we believe this is where scripture leads us in what scripture tells us so first we believe that God first moves towards us by calling us to him and persuading us of the truth of the gospel and I had a gentleman asked me after first service he said why is the word persuading in quotations there and that's because the word faith that that we use the word faith in the Bible means a Divine persuasion and so God is simply convincing and persuading us of Truth in the world and in that he's not the only one trying to persuade or convince or reveal truth Satan is doing the same thing just with lies he's trying to persuade trying to convince and trying to make you believe lies and so God first and foremost comes to us calls us to him and reveals truth to us God is acting first we see several scripture references there in Luke 19 John 6 John 12 and act 2 that would support that and then second after God has presented himself to us called us to Truth shown us revealed himself to us then we each as humans are allowed room to respond and we can respond in one of two ways one we can continue in sin and continue to believe lies and walk and live apart from God or by turning to truth in accepting the grace of Jesus Christ we can place our faith and our belief in him and be saved those are the two options that we have and God allows room for that he gives us space for that we don't know how much space we don't know how long but God gives us that room to respond to him and then we see again God then does an ongoing lifelong transformative work in each of us to shape and mold us into who he wants us to be and so this is in a word you could you could use the word sanctification this is God perfecting us making us right U making us holy as we walk this side of heaven with him and so we see God coming to us God doing a work we see our room and our opportunity for response and then we see God continuing a work in us see there are a lot of passages in Scripture that talk about how God Saves us about how God has created a way for us to be made right and how God is doing the work of salvation those are obviously all true but there's also a lot of scriptures that talk about the responsibility of man the responsibility of each of us to maybe repent to believe to be baptized to have faith and so on and so on and so what do we do with these two seemingly kind of competing passages that we have in scripture you know some scripture says this some says this is it God or is it me or who's to who's to be responsible and what we believe is that one the whole of scripture is true and so we hold all of those as truth and we hold these two kind of competing ideas or views in attention with one another because that's how God has designed it God doesn't say it's either I do all the work or either you do all the work to save yourself it's God does the work to save but we are responsible for how we respond to what God is done and so we hold him in tension with one another because if any of us are to be saved and to come to a relationship with God must do the work of Salvation he must come to us first he must extend Grace to us and he must sacrifice his son for us and persuade us of Truth for us to have any hope of Salvation and the good news is he has he has already done this work it is a finished work as far as God's end of the deal is concerned but that puts the ball in our court now and so how do we respond to that truth and if we respond in Repentance and belief then we can put our faith in Christ and receive what God has offered to us and then by the power of God he can continue to transform and perfect us and to allow us to walk in obedience to scripture you know talking about this tension that we hold scripture and look at Philippians if you have a Bible you can turn there on your phone and I will be reading directly out of here so if you don't have a chance to turn there I will read it correctly I hope Philippians chapter 2 in here in Chapter 2 verses 12 and 13 we see how Paul holds these two things in tension with one another both are true and in in essential for the believer chapter 2 verse2 Paul says therefore my beloved as you have always obeyed so now not only in my presence but much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who works in you both to Will and to work for his good pleasure and we see right there guys that both have to be true work out your own salvation with fear and trembling but who is working in us God is working in us so we see right there in one passage how this both of these truths are held if you if you can turn to Mark chapter 1 this is going to be our primary text this morning as we continue to discuss repent and believe because as we pick up here in Mark chapter one this is really early in Jesus ministry it's actually starting in verse 14 really his First Act of ministry here on Earth because in Mark 1 we see that Jesus is already been baptized by John the Baptist and then he's gone out into the Wilderness he's resisted Temptation from Satan for 40 days and then he's coming back to civilization and this is the first thing that Jesus does even before he calls disciples Jesus does this starting in verse 14 now after John was arrested Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God and saying the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand repent and believe in the gospel repent and believe in the gospel first thing that Jesus does in Ministry and I don't want to do the thing that I think that I think we often do when it comes to these words repent and believe I don't want to make the mistake of assuming that all of us are on the same page with what those words mean because coming from different backgrounds those can mean something different to you based on how much you've read scripture how long you've been in the church or the teachings you've sat under or the studies that you've done we all may have a slightly different interpretation or definition for those words but these words are really foundational for each of us individually and for the church as a whole and so I want to take the time to really go through what those mean because in church I think a lot of times we use these big words like sanctification or repent and we just kind of you know well if you're a Christian you'll know what those words mean but I think a lot of times we need to take the work to really dive into those words and see what those mean so we can really know what Jesus means when he uses the words repent and believe and 14:58 to kind of draw out an illustration of how we're maybe not all on the same page of what these words specifically mean couple weeks ago this is going to sound like Little House on the Prairie but it happened my family and I were sitting in the living room around the fire no TV on no entertainment we were just sitting around and we were talking and remind you this is like this happens once in a blue moon okay so this is not every night in the Stevens household but my wife and my four daughter and I were sitting around and the topic of repentance came up and so we were talking about this word repent and my kids ask my wife and I they say Dad what do Mom Dad what does repent mean and so like any good teacher I needed to have a little bit of time to formulate an answer so I said what does it mean to you guys what does it mean to repent to you guys and so as they responded they gave me responses like I think it might mean to forgive or another one I think it might mean to be sorry for something or it means to be saved and so now this was my you know spiritual head of the household right this is my shining opportunity to spiritually lead my children and so I said no kids that's not exactly what repent means but if you come to church in 2 weeks I'll tell you then exactly what the word repent means and so here's a couple of them here to hear my response of what repent means but I did give them an answer in the moment but even my answer was a little bit skewed on what the word exactly means and so I want to want to take time to talk about that word repent because I know that each of us think that like Seth when he's up here preaching man this guy is a genius he has so much knowledge we listen to other preachers or people who are eloquent talking about the word of God and they have all this knowledge and we're like man I wish I knew as much as they do guys every one of us can learn about these things you get a keyword Study Bible or you go to Blue Letter Bible online or Bible Hub we can learn about these words ourself as well and so we have a lot of resources available and I just want to bring up the word repent to just kind of show you through some study what that word means now when you talk about the New Testament the New Testament was originally written in Greek and so everything we have in our Bible our English Bible is a translation from the Greek so when we see the word repent in the New Testament basically every time you see that word repent it's coming from this word metanoeo in the Greek and so since repent isn't a word we use a lot in Daily conversation I think it's helpful to see exactly what that word means even all the way back to the Greek so the word metoo is primarily used in the New Testament to denote a profound change of mind often associated with turning away from sin and turning towards God or more simply put it means to think differently after so repentance is simply a change of thinking that's all it is nothing more and I know that that myself and maybe many of you attach other words to this word repent maybe we do think of the word apologize or forgiveness or salvation but repentance is really just a change of how we think a change of mind and so I know one of the ways that that I and this is how I described it to my kids a little bit faulty the word repentance I Des described it as a change of behavior not a change of mind and there is a distinction there because when we start talking about a change of behavior we may say things like oh I repented and so I used to engage in this sin now I don't or he repented so he used to do these things and now he doesn't we often attach the things that we can see the behavior but there is a distinction because repentance is simply a change of mind or we think differently after something that's it but what Biblical repentance does do is it leads to a change of behavior it leads to a change of Direction in our lives but I want us to be careful and I want to labor to drive this point home because when we kind of get the two mixed up we can put the cart before the horse and get a little skewed in how we pursue God or what God's doing in our lives and this is my personal test testimony because I grew up in the church from a very young age I heard the Bible stories I heard all the lessons the sermons and around the age of 14 I was confronted with this reality like you know Bo why you know you believe you say you believe all these things you believe scripture you believe in the god of the Bible why haven't you given your life to Christ why haven't you been baptized and said I'm a disciple of Christ and I responded I said because I haven't got it all figured out yet like I've got some things I need to get in order in my life I'm not good enough for sure to be a Christian yet I've got some stuff to figure out and that's an example of me putting the cart before the horse because I was trying to put my change of behavior before the change of mind and all of these things I was attaching the two together but guys to come to repentance and Believe In Christ and follow him it's a change of mind first we cannot change our own behavior there's 's a quote from CS Lewis in a book called Mere Christianity that I love and it drives this point home and I think it's so true C Lewis says no man knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good and I know that may resonate with some of you you've tried really hard to be good and to do it right but guys apart from Christ it is a fruitless Endeavor and so when we try to pursue the change of behavior first we're already going to get off track in apart from what God's design is because his design is for repentance is simple simply change your mind and So within this idea of repent I'd like to suggest that the New Testament from Christ on gives us two examples of two types of repentance there's some different types of repentance in the Old Testament John the Baptist was preaching a baptism of repentance but with Christ and for us now I suggest that there are two types of repentance one is the type of repentance that we've already talked about where you have a change of mind you no longer believe the lies of the world your mind has changed and you believe the truth of the gospel and you are saved and God Saves you that's a saving repentance that I believe we have the second type of repentance is very important as well but it's a continual repentance for the believer so once you become a believer as much as we'd like to think we'll never sin again we'll never stumble or turn away from God that's not my testimony at least as a Believer I have stumbled into sin I have had doubts where I start to doubt the truth of God I have in some way turned away from God in one way or another and the repentance that's required at that point is a repentance to turn us back to God I think of Psalm 51 David writes a Psalm there where he was a man after God's Own Heart he was pursuing God with all that he had but he had stumbled in to sin with ba Sheba and everything that transpired after that and God sent the prophet Nathan to David and convicted him of that sin and David had a change of mind and returned to the Lord in Repentance and that whole Psalm 51 is an awesome example of how to walk through that type of repentance but that type of repentance doesn't mean that as a Believer now you lose your salvation and you have to repent and return to God and then I messed up again so I lost my salvation so I Repent to God and I return no it's not that at all it's simply a part of what God does in us as Believers to make us more righteous and more holy as we walk with him I love the words that we sang this morning in the song Come Thou Fountain of Every Blessing these words came to my mind as I was kind of preparing for this sermon and talking about this type of repentance prone to wander Lord I feel it prone to leave the God I love we just sang those words and for me those words speak powerfully because for the believer often times we're prone to wander we're prone to leave the God we love we're prone to just drift away from God but God has given us the act of repentance in our lives to continue to turn back to him and so that's the second type of repentance I believe that scripture would support for us today but the repentance we're going to talk about the rest of the time is going to be that first of the saving repentance that brings us to Christ initially and so as we talk about that repentance that's a repentance that Christ was preaching when he said repent and believe the gospel I want us to now turn to the second word there believe now this word doesn't need nearly so much explanation it's a word that we do use in everyday conversation it's a word that I think all of us have a really good grasp on but just to kind of elaborate on what it means and what Christ is talking about here comes from the Greek word pisto and so believe and Faith are very closely associated in scripture when you see the word believe it's most of the time going to be from this word pisto when you see the word faith it's from a very similar word pistus and so you can hear this similarity in those two words faith and belief very closely tied together but specifically with belief here we see that it's to put your trust in Reliance upon something or someone when we believe something or someone we put our trust and Reliance on them we use these words all the time you may say Do you believe what I'm saying do you believe in Santa Claus I believe the article that I read or I can't believe that you would do that in all these instances we really have a pretty good grasp on what the word believe means and so now I want to talk a little bit about the relationship between those two words repent and believe because I don't think there's any mistake when Christ says repent and believe he is very much tying these two words together and establishing for us that we must change our minds from disbelief in the world to belief in the gospel or in Christ we must have that change of mind to not believe First and have that change of mind to now believe the truth of the Gospel Christ pairs these two words together because one naturally leads to the other biblical repentance will lead to belief in the gospel we change our minds from believing lies to believing the gospel so that's kind of the educational part of this morning's sermon about the words about what they mean and in kind of the knowledge-based portion of what I wanted to discuss but remember this series that we're talking about is not about gaining more knowledge or being reminded of truths and just you know they put this at the Forefront think about it pray on it this week and then move on no I want us to now the hard work of application we've got Waypoint kids meeting in the room over there right now kind of 12 and the under kids ages 5 to 12 and a couple of my kids are in there right now and I love what Destiny does in there with our kids week in and week out she does a great job and I love what they're doing this month in there each month they kind of have a theme and a question that they're asking and right now in Waypoint kids they're asking the question every week why do we need to be saved why do we need to be saved and the answer that they go over each week is because people are sinful and cannot save themselves why do we need to be saved because we are sinful and we cannot save ourselves so the first and foremost application of this it's not just for those kids but it's for us here have you repented and believed because every one of us is sinful and we need to be saved so have you repented and believed and yes I know we're at church on a Sunday morning and most or a lot of people that walk through those doors are already Believers and you've already given your life to Christ and you've repented and you believed but that's not the case for everyone and you see God knows our need for salvation so in his loving kindness because he knows that we need a savior he persuades us he calls us reveals himself to us he draws us to himself and he reaches out to us but in order to be saved we must respond with a change of mind by rejecting the lies of the world and believing the truth of the Gospel so my first call to action today is for you who may or may not be saved if you have not given your life to Christ my first call to action is to repent and believe in the gospel and for you maybe you've been hearing the gospel maybe you've had people in your life that have shown that to you and maybe you're at a place where you're ready to do that and I would encourage you find somebody after service contact somebody and allow them to walk through that with you this idea of repent and believe Proclaim that repentance and belief to somebody have them pray with you and then have them walk with you through what it looks like now after you've repented and believed what do I do now to be a follower of Christ walk through that with somebody and repent and believe no longer believe the lies of this world and of Satan but turn to the truth of the gospel and believe it and so that's for the person who hasn't given their life to Christ yet now I would assume that a lot of people in here have given their lives to Christ and so the question I have for the believer is next we're we've already repented from our sinful lives we've put our faith in Christ already so now what does this message of repent and believe have for us so from here I think we must do as Christ did in Proclaim that very same message to those around us repent and believe tell people about the gospel we need to be speaking in living the gospel everywhere we go every Walk of Life we need to be a living example of it and we need to be a verbal example of what it means to proclaim the gospel it was the first thing that Christ did in his ministry is he proclaimed repent and believe to draw people to God it should be our first and foremost responsibility as Christians today to do that very same thing and we see a lot of scripture that backs up this idea you see in Matthew 10 and Mark 6 Jesus Jesus has now called his disciples they're following him Jesus has done a few Miracles and signs and taught a little bit but very early in Ministry in Mark 6 and in Matthew 10 we have the same account of God calling the disciples to him and saying I'm going to send you out two by two and I want you to go out and proclaim the good news of Christ so very early in the disciples ministry as quote unquote young Christians Jesus tasked them with proclaiming the gospel now you'll also see in one of those accounts Jesus also tasked them to heal the sick to raise the dead to cleanse lepers and cast out demons I'm just asking you to Proclaim Christ okay so don't take a deep breath we're not going to have to do all those but I do believe that Christ calls each of us to proclaim the gospel and in Mark 612 we see what the disciples did it says so they went out and proclaimed that people should repent they did what Jesus asked them to turn to Luke chapter 24 if you don't mind Luke chapter 24 we see in Mark how Jesus very early in his ministry proclaimed repent and believe the gospel and we see here in Luke 24 and verse 46 and 47 at the very end of Christ Ministry what he says is of first importance so Christ has already been crucified and resurrected and just before he is taken back up into heaven he says Jesus said to them thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead in that repentance for the Forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to All Nations beginning from Jerusalem guys it wasn't just something Jesus thought was important early in his ministry his parting words to the disciples and for the church today guys these words are for us today as well is Proclaim repentance to All Nations we see all the way back even in the Old Testament many examples of how God calls people to repent it's in the example of Jonah if you've read the Book of Jonah then then you know that God told Jonah directly hey go to the east over here go to Nineveh and tell them to repent or they will be destroyed so Jonah does exactly what I would do and he says Nineveh’s over there I'm going to go west to tares and I'm going to escape this uncomfortable situation and he leaves and he goes to escape what God has called him to but God didn't just let it pass he sends a storm Jonah's thrown overboard swallowed up by fish spit on land and God says again hey Jonah do you want to go to Nineveh now or do you want to keep trying to run away and Jonah very begrudgingly drags his feet and says fine I'll go to Nineveh and he did not want to go it is very clear according to the account that Jonah did not want to go but he did in obedience go and he proclaimed repentance to Nineveh and if you've read the story if you remember what happened everybody up to the king heard the message and repented in turned towards God and a whole city was saved because one guy even though he was dragging his feet and even though because he didn't want to because Nineveh wasn't good enough they they were evil God just let them die God loved them God loved every person in that City and wanted Jonah to tell them the truth and we see in Matthew 12:41 how Jesus even references this story and says because of the words that Jonah spoke God saved them because they repented if you turn to Romans chap 10 there's a couple of really good verses here that we see that that really talk about the task that we have and why we have this task to proclaim the good news to preach the word of Christ in Romans chapter 10 starting in verse 13 we see Paul talking to the to the local Roman Believers there he says for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved how then will they call on him in whom they have not believed and how are they to believe in him in whom they have never heard and how are they to hear without someone preaching down in verse 17 he continues so faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ guys God has very clearly tasked us with the responsibility of proclaiming the word of Christ to those around us and how will people hear they will hear because God has sent each of us to Proclaim that word of Christ to them now let's be clear God does not need us to save people God doesn't need each of us in order for people to come to him in Repentance but guys God has chosen to use us to do that that's his choice that's his design is to use each one of you here to proclaim the word of Christ to those around you so that in conjunction with the Holy Spirit and God working in their lives they will turn to God and repent and believe and follow him God has chosen to use us so that brings us to the Natural next question how long do we Proclaim this you know is this going to be a 40-day challenge bow or you know what do how long do we need to do this and as Seth said last week in Romans 15:23 he said I've read this verse dozens a time in my life and somehow I never saw this verse Romans 15:23 Paul says there is no more room for ministry here so I guess we're going to proclaim the gospel to those around us until there's no more room for ministry here and then at that point when everybody in Clovis around Clovis and around us has heard the gospel has responded to the gospel well then I guess we're just going to go to the next town that hasn't heard it and we're going to go to the next town and the next Nation in the next tribe until everybody has heard because this is our task This Side of Heaven until Christ comes back or until we move on from this life and that's good news guys it's good news because God's desire is that everyone would be saved and come to know him through repentance we see it in so many scriptures we see it in the story of Jonah how God desired for all of n to be saved we see it in Luke 2 chap verse 10 and 11 where the Angels come to announce the birth of Christ and they say this is good news for all people it's good news for everyone John 3:16 God so loved the world that he sent as one only son guys God loves everybody in the world he has sent his son to save the world second Peter 39 God is Not delaying in coming back and in Christ's return rather God is allowing us much room as possible for people to turn to him because it says God's desire is that all men would turn to him in Repentance Romans 10 we already saw what God's desire is there and in Titus 2:11 clearly states that God's desire is for all to come to him and salvation is for everybody so praise God that he has tasked us with this and that he loves each of us enough to allow opportunity and room for us to turn to him but right now I want us to really start focusing in on now what's our responsibility because like I said this is application heavy what do we do next because it's really easy to come and you know we can take a few notes we can make a couple mental notes yeah I need to do this that's a good reminder okay like now I'm ready to continue on with my week but the difficult part is actually walking in obedience to these things and doing these things in our everyday life last week Seth had a quote he said you may have surrendered your life in Salvation but have you surrendered your life to him in discipleship have you surrendered your life to him to follow him in obedience and I know that many or most of us have done so for salvation's sake but have you actually submitted your life to actually walk in obedience proclaiming repent believe is not not just a request for Christians to do if they feel gifted and called that's always been one of my cop-outs is like ah spiritual gifts like to evangelize I don't think I'm there so that must be for somebody else but it's not it's for every believer it's a direct commandment in scripture and it's not some optional add-on to our faith it's a package deal it comes with it Seth said last week as well God won't let us move past these things without surrendering in obedience or confronting them this is going to be for all these sermons that we have coming up but especially for this one God won't just allow us to move past these things without surrendering in obedience look at Jonah he had he said nope I know what you asked me to do God I'm going the other way God didn't allow him to just walk away from that in time God will call each of us back to what he has commanded us to do in he will deal with us in these things that's what God's doing with me right now you see Seth started this sermon series last week this was always going to be the first sermon in the series and it just so happened it fell on the week that he was going to be gone we have our men's Retreat and this is just the sermon that fell in my lap but it's the very sermon probably the very last sermon I would have chosen because I don't feel gifted or equipped to evangelize the way I think scripture calls me to and I have avoided that I have been like Jonah going towards the West towards tarses I've been walking away from it but I believe that God is really directly calling me back to us and I to this and I believe that he's calling each one of us back to this and so if he's calling each of us to evangelize to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to Proclaim repent and belief the gospel for me I want to know how to do it how can I feel equipped what are some things that I can do to make me feel more prepared to share the gospel because as much as I'd like to say you know I'm just going to pray a prayer and God's just going to give me words he's going to speak through me I'm going to walk by the spirit that's a great thing and I hope you do that but I also think there's maybe some things that we could do that would help us as we prepare to evangelize or tell others about the good news I think one of the things we can do is find somebody around you who you know is a really good evangelist somebody who who's really good at just proclaiming the gospel and doing a great job of it in their lives because those are the kind of people you want to grab coffee with you want to sit down and ask them some questions how do you do it like where do you draw the strength where do you draw the courage how do you answer these questions ask those people how they do what they do God has given us Community for a reason we are not meant to live into walk in obedience and isolation we have Community for a reason so let's draw off one another we have people in this church that are actively doing evangelism and I would encourage you to get with them the next thing I would encourage you to do is is mentally get in the right frame of mind and do not treat people as projects because this week I'm not telling you hey let's all see how many people we can proclaim the gospel to keep a tally and then next week we'll come and we'll share how many people you proclaim the gospel to know that starts to turn people into projects but instead like Christ did let's have compassion and empathy for people let's love them well because God wants everybody to be saved because he loves them because he has compassion for them and that should be the attitude we take not this is a project or this person is my pet project this week I'm really going to work on them the next thing I think we can do to kind of frame it in the right frame and to give us a little more confidence moving forward is God has put each of you in a specific place a specific context for a reason so why don't we just have intentional conversations in existing relationships maybe it's co-workers maybe it's neighbors maybe it's friends maybe it's parents of our kids friends God has put us in relationships with people already why don't we use those existing relationships to now just have intentional conversations ask intentional questions and as a part of that let's meet people where they are at so as we have these intentional conversations one let's not set an a lofty unrealistic expectation of oh well I want to talk to you about Christ if you can do all 12 of these things and then get back with me now we'll start talking about Christ no instead of requiring something of somebody else in order to have a conversation or share the gospel why don't we meet them where they're at and this only happens through conversation guys through asking questions because it's going to change how you approach people because I don't believe that that for most of the time that that we need to be evangelizing and sharing the gospel I don't believe that kind of a canned one-size fits-all monologue is going to be the most effective way to reach people I don't think we see that in the example of Christ did not approach everybody he approached the same way he didn't say the same words to different people he got to know them he knew their hearts where they're at and then he catered and tailored it to them he met a prostitute where she was at he met a tax collector who was crooked where he was at he met Pharisees where they were at he met fishermen where they were at let's meet people where they're at and get to know them do they believe in God already or not that's going to affect kind of where you go with the conversation if they don't believe in in God we're going to start here if they already believe in a God just not the guide of the Bible well then we're going to start over here maybe they have issues with church hurt they grew up in the church they saw how crooked and depraved people in the church are and yes we are crooked and depraved but praise God for the work of Jesus in our lives to pull us out of that but guys we're still not perfected and people come out with a lot of baggage from how they grew up and maybe they went to church for a while and they have a lot of Church H that they're dealing with it's going to change where you approach and maybe they've never even thought about God or eternity at all they're just kind of flying by the seat of their pants well we're going to start in a different place with those people so get to know them ask questions meet them where they're at and then we can listen so that now the Holy Spirit can move with us and move us where we need to move in conversations in relationships and so I know this next one's a big one for me of why I struggle to share a lot of times and I've run into this when I have talked about the gospel with people have any of you ever felt like I don't know if I can answer some of the questions that they're going to ask me maybe they're going to ask what does it mean to repent and believe you just told me repent and believe what does that mean repent I don't know what does it mean to you know and we have an awkward conversation maybe we might say something a little bit incorrect we just we don't say it quite the right way it's not exactly what the scriptures said guys this is going to happen to all of us I know many of us have had tough questions I was meeting with the guy this last week and he was saying he's got a friend that was asking him some of the toughest questions about God and faith and he was like man I just felt so inadequate to answer these questions he's asking they're out there there's some tough questions guys but first and foremost I think we have to be in the word and we have to be praying I know that all of us want to come here and say okay I want to be obedient to God I'm going to walk by the spirit I'm just going to let the spirit carry me and I'm just GNA I'm GNA God's going to give me the words to speak guys God can and will do that at times but God has also tasked you with knowing his word we've got to be in the word and guys I'm telling you if you are not praying to God talking to God then you can cannot know God to the fullest extent possible we have to be in prayer with God know the word know God through prayer and you don't have to do these extensive studies and know the Bible as well as Seth knows the Bible or this awesome Theologian knows the Bible guys just be in your word and read it let it soak over you let it pour over you and allow God's spirit to do what he will with his word but be in his word and then the second thing I would do is use resources guys God has given us an abundance of resources to use to engage people in conversation I'm going to give you some examples of those now to preface it I don't believe every word in every book or thing that I listen to that I share with other people I have a different view than this guy on this topic and my view is a little bit different on this passage with this guy over here but that's okay hey they're a launching pad for us and we have books is the first thing that I think is way too easy to just give out to somebody now I'm not saying give a book and say go read that and like that's me proclaiming the gospel but as we go out to tell others about Christ to preach his word we can use some resources we may not have four hours to have a conversation on what it means to be a Christian with somebody but you can hand them a book Mere Christianity in a few seconds and then say hey why don't you read the first chapter I'll read the first chapter next week let's come back and talk about chapter one of that see what we think and let's go from there so I've got Mere Christianity up there by CS Lewis a great one for people that are like what is Christianity all about what does it look like what does it mean to be a Christian if you have somebody that's like I don't I don't even really believe in a God I don't think that science would back up that there is a God the reason for God by Tim Keller is a great book there's also another book I don't have enough Faith to be an atheist there's some really great books that meet people kind of on that more scientific logical pragmatic level of their questions that they have if you've got somebody that's kind of either a new believer or on the verge you know hey I think I want to give my life to Christ but I don't know exactly what that entails or what it means to be an active Christian the new believer's Guide to the Christian Life by Alex early is great and then if somebody's really hung up on this idea of Christ how could one man die for me and that means that I'm saved I don't get this like I don't even know if I believe that Christ existed or he was the Son of God the case for Christ by Lee Strobel I know a lot of you have probably at least heard of that before and so these books are just an opportunity for you to just hey here's something we can maybe have some common ground on and talk about from now on it's a launching pad into conversation with these people the next thing is podcast you know maybe some people aren't as much into books and they like to listen to things they got a commute to work they're on the treadmill they're working in the yard and so they listen to podcasts maybe that's a way you can connect and here's an example of just some different podcasts that are out there as resources for us 10-minute Bible talks really short quick hitting podcasts that talk about scripture knowing Faith making faith in in the Bible an approachable thing for believers and non-believers truth over tribe Theology and the raw Bible project that many of you have probably heard of just some resources that you can use and say hey maybe you don't want to read a whole book but why don't you listen to this one 10-minute podcast and then you know let's talk about that because I heard you ask this question or I know this is a hangup for you why don't we listen to this and then we can discuss it tomorrow just some resources for you guys and then last and by far most important books of the Bible guys this is always where we should be pointing people but where do we point them in scripture because if somebody that you're witnessing to and evangelizing to says okay like I'm willing to learn a little bit more like I I guess I want to read the Bible some like you know where should I go well it may be a little Dawning to say like well start in Genesis and just read every page all the way to Revelation and then come find me and we'll talk after that maybe we need to have some books of the Bible kind of readily available in our minds to hand out because if somebody that you're talking to doesn't hasn't heard the gospel a whole lot maybe doesn't know a whole lot about Christ in what he did man sent him to a Gospel Matthew Mark Luke or John sent him to any of those and I'm telling you John is never a bad place to start with somebody it's where it starts and it's where it ends for us Christ is the alpha omega and he is he is where our Salvation is found send him to the Book of John it's a great place to start with anybody maybe the person you're talking to is is kind of an intellectual type they may be a little more methodical and systematic and how they approach things and they're like you know I don't really understand how this all works send him to the Book of Romans man that it is it is meaty and it's in depth but if that's what where they're at and what they need send them to Romans it really walks through from A to Z how we go from being apart from God to now living under the reign of Christ in being saved by him and then the LA one of the last ones I mention up here is the book of Galatians you know Galatians is a book that's great if maybe the person you're talking to is coming out of more of a Works Space like I've got to be good enough I've got to do enough in order to be saved man Galatians preaches like hey you can't do enough you'll never be able to do enough like put your faith in Christ that's where it starts and maybe they're coming out of kind of more of a Hebrew roots or a Jewish kind of background that is gaining a ton of popularity in the US especially right now and it really speaks to people coming out of that kind of movement who have maybe heard that kind of gospel before is oh you need to do enough be enough and then you can eventually be saved Galatians does a great job of preaching against those things and helping us recognize it's not about what we can do how much we can do or how well we can do it it's about putting our trust in Christ and so find those books of the Bible that speak to people and how do we know where to send them in the Bible if we're not in the world word ourselves so be in the word and have some readily available books of the Bible the last thing I'm going to mention this morning and I think this is huge because I've been putting the responsibility on you and each of us to hey this is what we've got to do we've got to walk in obedience it's about what we need to do but guys don't have expectations on what God will do it's not about how well we do it how well we say it but it's rather about what God will do with our obedience and when we approach these situations with people and evangelizing as if we need to have the outcome mapped out we're probably going to be disappointed a lot we're probably going to say this didn't go quite how I thought it should go this didn't go the direction I think it should have gone but guys when we love people well when we pray for them and when we share truth with them in love God will do a work with that it's not about what we can do and how well we can do it 1 Corinthians 3: 5- 11 says at best Paul planted Apollo seed God Made It Grow God's going to do the work he's just asking for you to be faithful to proclaim the good news of repent and believe so father that is our prayer this morning God that we would put our confidence in you God in all of our weaknesses as we just sang father God let us put our confidence in you because father we know that you are the one who does the work of Salvation and God we put our trust in that in our hope in that God knowing that it is you who works and who Wills in each of our lives so father I pray that for every person here God I pray for the unbeliever father that you would turn their hearts and their minds towards you in Repentance and father that they would believe and give their life to you and follow Christ and God for those that are already Believers father I pray that we would heed the call that you make to each one of us God to Proclaim repent and believe the gospel God send us out father let us feel that call on our lives and God then please equip us and God give us the strength to follow through in obedience with what you've called us to God for everything we put our trust and our hope in you God we can do nothing 58:03 apart from you it is you father who saves who moves who changes lives and 58:09 leads to repentance so father let us act like it and father let us Proclaim that 58:15 good news the message of Christ it's in your Holy Name that we pray father amen