

God is Our Direction

Part II

01/27/08

Rev. David G. Bostick

INTRODUCTION: (All Bible Quotes are taken from the **NASB** unless otherwise noted.)

Psalms 40:5-11

(This Psalm expresses the **gifts of God**, and the **response of man** to God's love. It is an appropriate scripture for us to look at this morning as we begin to take a look at our mission statement. Remember as we read it, **the gifts of God** and **the response of man**.)

[5] Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders which You have done,

And **Your thoughts toward us**; (God thinks about us a lot.)

There is none to compare with You.

If I would declare and speak of them,

They would be too numerous to count.

[6] Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired;

My ears You have opened; (Our relationship is not built on what we do, our sacrifices, it is built on our response to His revelation in our lives.)

Burnt offering and sin offering You have not required.

[7] Then I said, "**Behold, I come**;

In the scroll of the book it is written of me. (God created us for a specific function in His body.)

[8] **I delight to do Your will**, O my God;

Your Law is within my heart." (It is natural for us to know what God wants of us in each action of my living.)

[9] **I have proclaimed** glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation;

Behold, I will not restrain my lips,

O LORD, You know.

[10] I have not hidden **Your righteousness** within my heart; (It is not our goodness but His goodness within us.)

I have spoken of Your faithfulness and **Your salvation**; (He is utterly faithful to us.)

I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and **Your truth** from the great congregation. (He is loving and kind in all of the situations in our lives. He is an absolute authority that we can look to for truth in all matters.)

[11] You, O LORD, will not withhold **Your compassion** from me; (He is compassionate toward the sinner.)

Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually **preserve me**. (He is the one thing in our lives that is steady and unchanging. He is always there, offering these gifts to preserve us for His Kingdom and His use.)

Understanding this we can now begin to talk about our mission both as an individual Christian and as a congregation. Our mission statement addresses the mission of the individual and of the congregation.

SERMON BODY:

Our Mission Statement: Investing In Eternity, what does it mean? Today, and for the next few weeks we are going to look at our mission statement in detail. We need to understand where we are headed. Certainly God is our direction. He and His Kingdom are where we are headed both as individuals and as a congregation but we don't want to be left to wonder around without a clear path to follow. This investigation of our mission statement will help us to see clearly the path God has for us.

Investing In Eternity

(The acronym **A-C-T-S** explains our Mission Statement)

Aquire the investment already made for me through Jesus Christ

Continue to invest

Take the investment home

Share the investment with others

We will look at these four clarification points in a little bit. Last week we started talking about how God is our direction. He gives us His wisdom so we can walk through this life accomplishing His will. His will is revealed in discovering, developing, and deploying all of the resources He has given us including our talents, strengths, knowledge, skills, spiritual gifts, and physical resources. All of these resources are available to us, to use to perform the function He created us to carry out in His Body the Church.

The mission of an organization describes why it exists and we must understand this before we can move forward. So why does our congregation exist? Think about it. Are we a social community? Are we a service oriented organization? Are we a business, trying to be efficient in generating money to support a staff and some buildings we can meet in? The church must be all of these and much more. We must realize that our congregation has a function in the Body of Christ just like the individuals who are part of the Body of Christ have a function to perform. The function of a local congregation is best understood as a community whose members use their unique talents, strengths, and resources, to work together, to accomplish the mission that describes why they exist. Our text is a good introduction for understanding the mission of our congregation.

OUR TEXT:

Ephesians 1:15-19

[15] I...

[16] do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention *of you* in my prayers;

[17] that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

[18] *I pray that* the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is **the hope of His calling**, what are **the riches of the glory of His inheritance** in the saints,

[19] and what is the **surpassing greatness of His power** toward us who believe...

The hope of His calling – Paul wanted the Ephesians to know that the **hope** for the church here on earth lies in the fact that He called us. Let's look at the words **hope** and **call**.

(CWS-NT) 1680. Elpis, **Hope**, desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it. (For example:)

- Our hope for eternal salvation grounded in faith

Rom 8:22-25

[22] For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. [23] And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. [24] For in **hope** (desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it) we have been saved, but **hope** that is seen is not **hope**; for who **hopes** for what he *already* sees? [25] But if we **hope** for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

- Our hope for an eternal reward
- Our hope for a functional community of believers
- Our hope to function in this life with performance that goes beyond our expectations
- Our hope for our families, our church, our community, and the world around us

The hope of His calling – Paul wanted the Ephesians to know the **call** of God was something to be pursued, it is a gift from eternity, and it will keep us steadfast.

(CWS-NT) 2821. Klesis, **Calling**, to call. A call, invitation to a banquet. In the NT, metaphorically, a call, invitation to the kingdom of God and its privileges, i.e., the divine call by which Christians are introduced into the privileges of the gospel (Ro 11:29, "calling of God"; Ep 1:18; Phl 3:14; 2Th 1:11; 2Ti 1:9; Heb 3:1; 2Pe 1:10).

- Our calling is a pursuit; it is something we go after. It is not something we sit and wait for. **Phl 3:14** I **press on** toward the goal for the prize of the upward **call** of God in Christ Jesus.
- Our calling is a gift from God, granted to us by Christ Jesus, from eternity. **2Ti 1:9** God, who has saved us and called us with a holy **calling**, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus **from all eternity**,
- Our calling, diligently pursued, keeps us steadfast. **2Pe 1:10** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His **calling** and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, **you will never stumble**;
- Our calling is the mission we have here on this earth. That mission is to glorify the name of our Lord Jesus. **2Th 1:10-12** [10] when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—for our testimony to you was believed. [11] To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your **calling**, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, [12] **so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you**, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The riches of the glory of His inheritance – Paul wanted the Ephesians to know that they were not outsiders. They are now part of the chosen Children of God (Israel). They are part of God's family. Remember the verses we read earlier in Romans 8:23? It contains these words, "...waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons..."

- These riches are guaranteed to us by a divine inheritance, we are part of God's family. We were brought into the family by the blood of Christ.

- These riches are available for us to use, working together to further His Kingdom here on earth.

2 Corinthians 10:14-18 (NASB)

[14] For we are not overextending ourselves, as if we did not reach to you, for we were the first to come even as far as you in the gospel of Christ; [15] not boasting beyond *our* measure, *that is*, in other men's labors, but with the **hope** that as your faith grows, we will be, within our sphere, **enlarged even more by you**, [16] so as to preach the gospel even to the regions beyond you, *and* not to boast in what has been accomplished in the sphere of another. [17] But HE WHO BOASTS IS TO BOAST IN THE LORD. [18] For it is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord commends.

Paul understood that the Corinthians had a part in enlarging the reach of the Gospel where they were so he could go beyond them to preach the gospel in other regions.

- These riches are a gift from Him to us in a very personal way in that He created us with talents to use in His Kingdom here on earth.

The surpassing greatness of His power – Paul wanted the Ephesians to know that His power was greater than anything in the universe.

- His power is greater than principalities and powers in heavenly realms

2 Corinthians 1:3-11 (NASB)

[3] Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, [4] who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

[5] For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. [6] But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; [7] and our **hope** for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are *sharers* of our comfort.

[8] For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came *to us* in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; [9] indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in **God who raises the dead**; [10] who **delivered us** from so great a *peril of* death, and will deliver *us*, He on whom we have set our **hope** (*desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it*). And **He will yet deliver us**, [11] you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through *the prayers of many*.

- His power is greater than all of the handicaps that can besiege us.

OUR MISSION:

That brings us face to face with ourselves. You see we are a result of the work of Paul and those early Christians. They hammered out the theology that tore down the walls of prejudice and allowed the Gentiles into the accepted church. We have a mission to carry on, the circulation of the Gospel to our families, our community, and literally our globe. A couple of years ago some of the key people and leaders of Mt. View met for several months to hammer out our mission statement. We wanted to answer the question, "Why do we exist as a congregation?" We wanted a statement that was simple and easy to remember. It needed to express the reason we exist. Our hope was that each member of the congregation could catch the vision of what we were trying to say about who we are. So here it is, in case you did not know, our mission statement...

Investing In Eternity

We use the acronym **A-C-T-S** to explain our Mission Statement by giving it some detail. **A-C-T-S**, is the title given to the 5th book in the New Testament. The Acts of The Apostles, is as appropriate in our day as it was in the first century. That New Testament book describes how those early Christians moved out to accomplish the mission Jesus Christ had given them just before He ascended into heaven. The acronym **A-C-T-S** stands for four words: **A**cquire – **C**ontinue – **T**ake – **S**hare.

Acquire the investment already made for me through Jesus Christ (We are to pursue personal Salvation through the blood of Christ.) This is the necessary starting point in accomplishing our mission. If we are not saved we cannot help anyone else get saved. It all starts with me, with you.

Remember Ro 8:24 For in **hope** (desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it) we have been saved... The opportunity presents itself every time the Spirit of God speaks to you, every time you receive revelation from God about your spiritual condition. All you need to do is respond to His love.

Continue to invest (Pursue spiritual growth through a personal relationship with God.)

This spiritual growth is accomplished in the three things:

- 1. Improvement of self (relationship with God)**
 - Prayer (communication with God)
 - Studying the Word of God (You need to get it into your head; listen to it at the very least.)
 - Discovering our talents (participating in the strengths finder course)
 - Developing our talents into strengths (participate in strengths coaching)
 - Deploying out strengths (service to the King of kings)
- 2. Involvement in a local congregation (one foot in the church)**
 - Attendance (being part of a family)
 - Participation (deploying our strengths)
 - Stewardship (use of all the resources God has given you)
- 3. Involvement in the community (one foot in the world)**

Take the investment home (Bring the love of God home to Family and close Friends.)

Share the investment with others (Show Christ through Love, Relationships, Fellowship, Community Service, Giving, Sacrifice, and Evangelism.)

God is our direction and our mission is the path we choose to follow. We are either moving toward Him and His Eternal Kingdom or we are going away from Him in our own direction. As individuals and as a congregation we have a mission to accomplish. That mission has its roots set in His original commission to the first disciples who choose to follow Him. In 2008 will you make a commitment to discover your talents and gifts? Will you develop those talents and gifts into strengths that Christ can use in His Kingdom here on earth? Will you deploy those strengths to accomplish His calling in your life and the mission your congregation here at Mt. View and at any other church you may attend?

(HIGH) Oswald Chambers said, "Our Lord is our example of a life of self-sacrifice, and He perfectly exemplified Ps 40:8, "I delight to do Your will, O my God ..." He endured tremendous personal sacrifice, yet with overflowing joy. Have I ever yielded myself in absolute submission to Jesus Christ? If He is not the One to whom I am looking for direction and guidance, then there is no benefit in my sacrifice. But when my sacrifice is made with my eyes focused on Him, slowly but surely His molding influence becomes evident in my life (see Heb 12:1-2)."

NASB - Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

CWS-NT - Complete Word Study of the New Testament.

CWS-OT - Complete Word Study of the Old Testament.

- Both the **CWS-NT** and the **CWS-OT** are parts of the AMG Complete Word Study Dictionary - Based on the lexicon of Edward Robinson (as revised by Alexander Negriz and John Duncan), with constant reference to and citations from the works of John Parkhurst and Hermann Cremer.

HIGH - My Utmost for His Highest by Oswald Chambers - Copyright © 1992 by Oswald Chambers Publications Association, Ltd. Original edition copyright © 1935 by Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc. Copyright renewed 1963 by Oswald Chambers Publications Association, Ltd. All Rights reserved.

(dgb Comments in parenthesis are personal comments that I make concerning quotes or information from other sources.)