

## Union United Methodist Church

### Sermon Outline: **Blessed to Be A Blessing, Part 4**

January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Pastor Michael Larbi

Readings: **1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 4:23-25, 5:1-12**

#### 1. Recall from last 3 weeks

- *January 8: Identity & Purpose*
  - We each have a unique God-assigned identity and purpose
    - Where, when, and to whom we are born is not an accident (Acts 17:24-28) – important part of our identity
    - We have an added identity in Christ - redeemed, blessed, called, etc.
    - God has a purpose to save the world (John 3:16), and for each of our lives (Ephesians 2:10)
- *January 15: Divine Calling & Divine Grace for the call (1 Corinthians 1:1-9)*
  - God has a call for the universal church, our local church, each of us as individuals
  - We're called to be saints, to fellowship with Christ, to do God's preplanned works for us, to live in God's plan – in line with God's purposes for us
  - With the divine call comes divine ability (grace) to do what is required to fulfil the call
- *January 22: Blessed & Entrusted with the Gospel; Called to fish for people*
  - The Gospel is God's power to save anyone who believes. We are blessed with it the gospel, and its entrusted to us to share.
  - We are called to fish for people.

#### 2. The Power of the Gospel We are Blessed With

##### ○ **Recall: God's Power To Save**

Last week, we discussed Paul's teaching that the gospel is God's power for salvation. As he put it,

"I am not ashamed of **the gospel**, because it **is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the**

**Gentile**. 17For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith." Romans 1:16-17 NIV

Today, we look further at the power of the gospel.

- **Jesus, the Christ (Anointed One), God's Power & Wisdom**

18For **the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

"Since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, **God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe.**

**22For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, 23but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,**

**24but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.**

25For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength."

1 Corinthians 1:18, 21-25 NRSV

- **Jesus Demonstrated the Gospel's Power**

"Jesus went throughout Galilee, **teaching** in their synagogues, **proclaiming [preaching] the good news of the kingdom, and healing** every disease and sickness among the people." Matthew 4:23 NIV

Jesus demonstrated the power of the gospel and the anointing on him:

- **First, by preaching and teaching**
- **Second, in practical terms - healing the sick, feeding the hungry, etc.**

The gospel must be taught and preached.

We must also boldly call on God's power to heal and save broken lives and bodies.

Throughout the gospels we see that Jesus taught and preached a lot and these usually preceded the miracles. People must know the truth of the gospel, so they can believe and tap into the power of God.

### **Why is teaching and preaching so important?**

Salvation is by faith and confession of Christ.

**"If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."** Romans 10:9 NRSV

However, as Paul explains:

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And **how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard?** And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?

...

**faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ."** Romans 10:13-14, 17 NRSV

### **3. Blessings are Static & Dynamic, Present & Continuous**

We see that Jesus preached and taught, and people gained faith from what he taught and could tap into the power of God for their salvation and healing.

#### ***What are some of the things Jesus taught?***

In Matthew 5:1-12 we have what is commonly called the Beatitudes.

These are set of blessings proclaimed by Jesus and the conditions for obtaining those blessings.

As we have seen in the past few weeks, we are already blessed. But the blessings don't end there.

- **Blessings are both static** (what we have already) **and dynamic** (what additional blessings are available depending on what we do).
- **Blessings are present** (what we have already), **continuous, and can increase.**

- We can divide the beatitudes into two broad categories:
  - **Some blessings depend on a person's state of being**
    - 3" **Blessed are the poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
    - 4" **Blessed are those who mourn**, for they will be comforted.
  - **Some blessings depend on our disposition or inclination and actions:**
    - 5" **Blessed are the meek**, for they will inherit the earth.
    - 6" **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they will be filled.
    - 7" **Blessed are the merciful**, for they will receive mercy.
    - 8" **Blessed are the pure in heart**, for they will see God.
    - 9" **Blessed are the peacemakers**, for they will be called children of God.
    - 10" **Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

#### 4. The Gospel - Entrusted To Us

- Remember: We are called to be Ambassadors of Christ.
 

"All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us." 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 NIV
- **Remember: We have an obligation to preach the Gospel**

As Paul said about himself,

"If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for **an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!**"

1 Corinthians 9:16 NRSV
- **God's love should urge us on to share the Gospel, not live for ourselves**

14For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." 2 Corinthians 5:14-15
- We are called to proclaim and teach the gospel:
 

**But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?** Romans 10:13-14 NRSV