THE BASIC MESSAGE

GUARDING THE TREASURE
### Last Week: Leader Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elder</th>
<th>Deacon</th>
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<tr>
<td>Above Reproach</td>
<td>Dignified</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loyal to his wife</td>
<td>Not double-tongued</td>
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<td>Sober</td>
<td>Not addicted to wine</td>
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<td>Self-controlled</td>
<td>Not greedy</td>
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<td>Respectable</td>
<td>Have discernment of false teachers</td>
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<td>Hospitable</td>
<td>Above reproach after testing</td>
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<td>Able to teach</td>
<td>Loyal to his wife</td>
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<td>Not addicted to wine</td>
<td>Good manager of his household</td>
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<td>Not Quarrelsome</td>
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<td>Not a lover of money</td>
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<td>Able to manage his household</td>
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<td>Not a new believer</td>
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<td>Good reputation in society</td>
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The Next Level Challenge

- What qualifies us is **Godly Character**
- Scale of 1-10? (you, kids)
- The key questions is **not** “am I a 10”?  
  - “How do I move from a ‘x’ to an ‘x+1’ “
- Our commitment to **Christ** and having **His character** changed the world as those inside and outside the church saw their lives transformed
- “**Follow me as I follow Jesus**”
- Note there are **two people** in this pic
Delivering *The Basic Message*

- **Super Bowl XLIV** was viewed by more people than any other TV show in history – over 106M
- Companies spent $2.5-3M for 30 sec spots
- Some of those commercials were clear with the basic message, some…not so clear

- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HvE3rXj_rOk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HvE3rXj_rOk)
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rS4Lb-ie4Lc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rS4Lb-ie4Lc)
Today: The Basic Message

- If someone challenged you to present the Gospel (The Basic Message) in 140-characters or less, how would you do it?

- **Rob Bell**, Pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church (Grand Rapids, MI) attempted this on Twitter
  
  “The Gospel is the counterintuitive, joyous, exuberant news that Jesus has brought the unending, limitless, stunning love of God to even us.”

- In today’s passage, **Paul** delivers the basic message of the Gospel in a clear, concise, less than 140-characters kind of way (in v. 16)

- Let’s look at the last two verses of the 3rd Chapter of 1 Timothy (vv.14-16), with particular focus on v. 16
The *Why* Behind the *What*

- Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. (vv14-15)

- **What instructions?**

- **What we have covered the last few weeks**
  - Teachers should not teach false doctrine
  - We should obey and pray for the ruling authorities
  - Women should be modest and not in spiritual authority over men in the church
  - Men should be Godly in their character and behavior
“The Household of God”

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- What does Paul mean when he calls the church “God’s household”?

- This term is used several times in the NT (“OY-kos THEH-os”)

- Jesus uses this term to describe the tabernacle – where God meets with His people (Matt 12:4; Mark 2:26; Luke 6:4)

- Also, the writer of Hebrews tells us Jesus made a new house of God – no longer the tabernacle, but Himself (Heb 10:19-22)
  - We now can have confidence to enter into the house of God as we are in Christ who is over the house of God

- The house of God is no longer a place in Israel – a point Paul emphasizes throughout his writings—READ I Cor. 3:16

- See…this isn’t just about how we are to act IN “church”, but how the Church is to act because they are IN Christ
“The Church of the living God”

- Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. (vv14-15)

- As God’s household we are the very representation of THE living God

- What happens when we fail at this?

- This is why we are the pillar and foundation of truth!

- Does this mean we are THE truth?

- No! Only Christ is the Truth

- I love this definition of truth – “when the word and the deed are one”

- This is why Jesus could say “I AM THE TRUTH” – His words and deeds were the same

- Here’s the problem...we are “His representation”, “God’s household”, we are “in Christ”, Christians (“little Christ”) and, THEREFORE, our lives should also be IN TRUTH

- Are your words and deeds the same?
Testify to the Truth

- Does the way you live give testimony to the TRUTH?
- Does the way you live cause THE TRUTH to be believed, received, and obeyed?
- Q: Does believing in Christ mean you know the truth?
- Did Satan believe in Jesus?...that He was the Son of God?...that He came to earth to die and reconcile man to Himself?
- Look at John 8:31-32 & what Jesus was saying to the Jews who “believed Him”
  - IF you hold to (abide in) my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know THE TRUTH and THE TRUTH will set you free”
How Can we KNOW THE TRUTH?

- We saw the word “abide” in John 8:31, not look a few chapters over in John 15 for a picture of how we are to know and live in truth & love.

- Today, if you are wondering why you are stressed-out, maxed-out, worn-out, fed-up and feel the weight of incongruence between your word and deed...God has three words for you “abide in me”.

- Look at the promise of the “if”, “then” statement in John 15:7!

- If we are abiding in Christ, THEN we are one with Christ and if we are one with Christ, then what we ask will be one with the will of the Father because the Father and the Son are one.

- Feeling fruitless? Abide
Now...The Basic Message in v.16

- Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. (vv14-15)

- Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great:
  - He appeared in a body,
  - Was vindicated by the Spirit,
  - Was seen by angels,
  - Was preached among the nations,
  - Was believed on in the world,
  - Was taken up into glory. (v.16)
The Foundation of Christian Truth

- **V.16** is believed by most scholars to be a quote from an early Christian creedal hymn (a theological statement in poetic, and probably musical form).

- It is likely that the reader of this letter in Ephesus knew the entire hymn of which we only have this portion.

- What Paul captured in his letter was specifically focused on the person and work of Christ and he expressed the essential elements of “the gospel” as the apostles proclaimed it.

- This gospel message could be communicated in 6 statements.
All 6 statements began with verbs that ended with the same sound ("oth e," "xth e," or "uth e") followed by the same preposition (en) followed by three sets of contrasting nouns:
- Flesh with Spirit
- Angels with nations
- World with glory

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1. “He Appeared in a Body”

- This hymn was written of Jesus and it begins with this difficult, but important truth.
- This is the essence of the incarnation of the second person of the trinity.
- Read Philippians 2:5-7
  - Christ was God, but did not consider equality with God something to be grasped and took on the nature of a servant.
- Also, read John 1:10-14
  - THE Word became flesh and “pitched a tent” among us.
- Jesus was the creator of the world, but the world did not recognize Him.
- We were separated from Him due to sin and we were unable to reach Him, so He reached down to us.
- John also writes in 1 John 4:2 that Christ has come in the flesh.
- Satan does not want us to believe this – see 2 John 7.
- THE TRUTH is that God himself came to us to buy us back.
2. “Was Vindicated by the Spirit”

- The word “vindicated” means “shown, declared, pronounced, or exhibited to be righteous”
- **How** did the HS exhibit the righteousness of Jesus?
- Throughout Christ’s ministry this was done…
  - **Matt 3:13-17** – At Jesus’ baptism the Spirit descended and God affirmed
    - Jesus was baptized to fulfill **ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS** and the Spirit demonstrated that righteousness by descending on Him
  - Peter tells us of the Spirit’s demonstration of Jesus’ righteousness when He **preached** – **Acts 10:38**
  - At Jesus **resurrection**, He was also pronounced righteous – **1 Peter 3:18, Acts 2:32-33**
- Throughout His ministry, the Spirit was vindicating Jesus, proving His righteousness
3. “Was Seen by Angels

- The ministry of Jesus, both on earth and through the Church, is of great interest to angelic beings.

- There were many instances when Jesus was seen by angelic beings –
  - When he was born – Luke 2
  - After being tempted in the wilderness - Mark 1:13; Matt 4:11
  - At his darkest hour in the garden - Luke 22:41-43
  - And especially at His resurrection in Matt 28:2-7

- “The apostle mentions this to show the greatness of our religion, since the noblest intellects are interested in it. Did you ever hear of angels hovering around the assemblies of philosophical societies?” (Spurgeon)

- Angles marvel at what God has done for us – they watch hoping that we will repent and turn to God

- Read Luke 15:10 – angels behold us all
4. “Was Preached Among the Nations”

- For the last 2000 years, one miraculous man’s name has been spread throughout the world.
- Why has it spread among the nations?
- A: Because He is TRUTH and the power to be set free from sin and death comes through Him.
- Paul himself was directly involved in spreading the name of Christ – first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles – so should we.

“God’s way of creating faith in men’s hearts is not by pictures, music, or symbols, but by the hearing of the Word of God. This may seem a strange thing, and strange let it seem, for it is a mystery, and a great mystery, but a fact beyond all controversy; for ever let the church maintain that Christ is to be preached unto the Gentiles.” (Spurgeon)
Without question, this is the single most important choice you will ever make.

What does the simple message of John 3:16 tell us?

- When we BELIEVE in Christ, we will live for eternity with Him and if we do not, we will die in our sins.

Romans 10:9 tells us that if we confess with our mouth and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, “you will be saved.”

Just after this in Romans 10:11 it says, “whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.”

This never disappointing, life-giving word is what the world is looking for and deeply longs for.
6. “Was Taken Up in Glory”

- This was the last point made in the hymn
- Jesus lived about 33 ½ years and was finally put to death on a cross, died, was buried for 3 days – BUT HE AROSE from the dead!
- Read Acts 2:22-24
- Also, in Acts 1:9-11 we have the account of Christ being taken up into glory
  - Two angels ask them a good question as they watch “why do you stand looking into the sky”
  - They also say that this is NOT the end of the story – “He will come back again in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.”
The Basic Message

- So this is the basic message
  - *He appeared in a body,*
  - *Was vindicated by the Spirit,*
  - *Was seen by angels,*
  - *Was preached among the nations,*
  - *Was believed on in the world,*
  - *Was taken up into glory.*

- This is **TRUTH** – God came to earth to reach out to YOU because you couldn’t reach out to Him & He died to take away the death penalty for your sins

- His desire is to give you **LIFE** and **LIFE MORE ABUNDANT**

- Our responsibility is to **BELIEVE** and to **ABIDE**

- What was true of Jesus will be true of us – read **II Corinthians 3:18**
  - “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”
The Basic Message to the World

- How do we display the Gospel to the world?
  - Remember you, the Church, are God’s household
  - We, the Church, are God’s called out assembly of representatives
  - We, the Church, are the pillar and support of Truth
  - When we act like THE CHURCH (as God intended) the Gospel is made known
How often and in what ways are you abiding in Christ?

- In Prayer, in His Word, in His presence?

Let you kids catch you abiding

Challenge your kids this week to come up with a tweet of 140 characters or less that summarizes the Gospel message.

Pray with them and when you do, repeat these core principles of the Gospel over and over.

See your spouse the way Christ sees you.

Who could you list right now that you are praying for an opportunity to share the simple message of the Gospel with?

If you can’t really think of someone, then we really must ask ourselves “am I abiding in Christ” because clearly, Christ’s heart is to SEEK and SAVE the lost.

Don’t use the excuse that you just don’t have enough Bible knowledge to witness to someone – you just heard the simple, basic message that brings life.

This week, “as you are going,” ask God to bring someone to mind and into your presence to present the simple, life-giving name of Jesus to this week.