

Sat/Sun 10/6-7/2018

Why Me?

Grace, Peace and Mercy from God the Father, Jesus our Lord and Savior, and the Holy Spirit our comforter. Please join me in a word of prayer:

You may have already guessed what the topic of our time together today is by the scripture readings. In case you missed any of them, for whatever reason, let me put it this way – MISSION.

This weekend is LWML weekend. Most all of you know what the letters represent – Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. This league does not play games against any other teams, but they are members of a much larger organization, and maybe the use of “league” is a bit outdated. Some critics may say the whole LWML is outdated and should be done away with. I say: ***“Not so fast my friend!”***

Tomorrow (Today) the members, the ladies of First Good Shepherd will hold their annual bake sale after church. Normally the proceeds are donated to a specific “mission” project or organization. This year they are donating monies to the Youth Ministry here at FGS so our youth can attend the National Youth Gathering next summer. That’s not a “mission” you might say, I say: ***“Not so fast my friend!”*** Consider Timothy – he was taught the word of God by his Grandmother and Mother. Later Paul becomes his mentor and is sent out to spread the Gospel message of salvation. So,

our youth are gathering to hear the word of God, be taught and encouraged, and we pray they will be inspired to be like Timothy and tell others about Jesus and His work of salvation. With the support and prayers of the women of the LWML. MISSION

So what is the biblical mission of the church? The church being the Body of Christ, every believer everywhere. The church is here for a Divine purpose. New PSD President Mike Gibson puts it this way, "God did not give a mission to His church – He created His church for His mission." God didn't sit around and think, "I've got all these folks who believe, and follow Me, what should I have them do?" No, he created the Church (the Body of Christ) to fulfill His mission of salvation for all humanity. Acts 2 verses 38 & 39 tell us: "And Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." MISSION! Of course, we all have heard the words in Matthew 28:19. The "Great Commission."

You and I might not be Peter's or Paul's, gifted to go into "all the world," and preach or teach, so let's look a little closer to home. What's the local church's mission according to the

Bible? Number One: Proclaim the Gospel – Jesus charged the apostles with telling the Gospel to all nations. Preaching the Gospel is central to the church’s mission. Number Two: Preserve the Gospel – how do we do that? By preaching the truth of the Gospel – refuting false teaching, and maintaining doctrinal and moral purity. Number three: and this may be the one we can accomplish best without much training – Display the Gospel! Through the “Christ-like” lives we are to live – through our unity in diversity – the church is called to be a living color display of the Gospel it preaches. The west side of this building is telling the people of this neighborhood and anyone else in this city who see it, that this is what God wants heaven to look like, and we are here to fulfill His vision. – It’s part of our local MISSION. The title of the message this week is “Why Me?” To quote Isaiah again: “I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send?” Then I said, “Here am I, send me.” Was this the inspiration for me to go into the Lay Leadership training program and get this Deacon designation? No – I thought I had other reasons, other objectives – other plans. Now, I have the humbling opportunity to stand in this place and talk with you today. So – yes – I guess I did answer – send me.

“Why Me?” Because Jesus lived a perfect life, because I couldn’t. He suffered at the hands of men – so I wouldn’t

have to. He died on a cross – so I wouldn't have to. He rose from the dead on the third day and lives with the Father – so I CAN TOO!

Let me wrap this up – and you may not think of this as a story of MISSION, so bear with me for just another moment. This is part of a devotion from Lutheran Church Charities: Noah's ark measured 300 cubits in length, 50 cubits in width, and 30 cubits in height. A cubit is the equivalent of 17.5 inches. The internal volume of the ark was 1,518,750 cubic feet – that's around 350 buses. This capacity would mean the ark could have had about 125,000 animals. Impressive as that is, the really amazing thing is that he was building this boat in the middle of the desert. It took him 120 years to get it done, and I might add, not a moment too soon. Noah's act of obedience literally changed the world – and obedience will change our world too. Obedience to be in MISSION.

Do the things God told you to do – then let Him do the things He promised He would do.

So now may the peace of God which passes all understand be yours, and be part of fulfilling His MISSION.
AMEN.