

St Martins C3 – August 13, 2023

Permeate (Mission Month) – Prepare Diligently

Sermon Notes:

This week we are continuing to learn about the amazing work of one of our mission partners, Bluebird. They are seeing scores of people come to faith in Jesus. We asked the question, what if that could happen here? Our challenge is, with the strength God gives us, to step up and commit to seeing whether a move of God can happen here.

For that to happen we need to build ourselves up to be the type of people who can bring God's Kingdom to the world. Bluebird showed us what those kind of people look like.

1 – Scripture Saturated People

Central to Bluebird's training is the emphasis on the power of the Bible. But they don't study scripture for information or entertainment. They study to see what it requires of them. They strive to be immediate doers of God's word.

Read James 1:22-25

Understanding – whilst important – is only a small part of the picture. The contention Bluebird have is that you do not know if you do not do. If we want to be missional we need to be people transformed by God's word in the way that we live our lives.

Consider your life and how you can bring it in line with God's Word every day.

2 – Compassionately Caring People

Bluebird leaders are compassionate caring people. They are big on community development and this is the area we have earmarked for our support. We are convinced this is the best place to invest in their work.

Read James 1:27

God loves it when His people love those who suffer, understanding their needs and compassionately caring for them.

Let's prepare ourselves to be ready to give to those around us and look for ways to serve them. We long to see St Martins changed by God's love and it begins by being overwhelmed with God's love for them, as He has loved us.

3 – Mission Minded People

One of the key principles of Bluebird is the way they always have the mission of God on their mind. This is the pattern of the early followers of Jesus: mission came before a full understanding of who God is.

Read Acts 18:24-26

One of the barriers to people doing mission is that they think don't know enough or they don't think that they are far enough on the journey. Yet God can still use us.

We need to go with what we know and then grow. Always have a mind that is thinking about how you can fulfil the mission of God, even if it costs you.

Questions for Connect Groups:

What stood out to you from today's message?

What inspires you about the work of Bluebird?

What would it look like to be a Scripture-saturated person, growing in your understanding and showing it through your life?

In what ways do you focus more on consuming scripture than living it out? How can you change this?

What would it look like for us as individuals to look deeply into the ways we can serve those around us?

Do you have any ideas about how we as St Martins C3 can love our community?

To what extent do you think about God's mission?

What would you like to see changed in the way you think about mission and how can we do it?

Where can you proclaim God's Word with confidence this week?

What would it cost you to give more to God's mission? What stops you from doing that?

Songs from Today:

Grace is On Our Side, God So Loved, Christ in Me, You Reign, Our God Reigns

Monday's Devotion – Centrality of Scripture

**Read Luke 24:13-35, Romans 1:16-17, Mark 4:26-29,
Matthew 4:4**

When we were in Indonesia, we asked Bluebird how they ensured that all 23 generations of believers stayed true to the faith. They responded by talking through a document called Permeate. In this document were 20 things that allow God's Word to permeate into unreached people groups.

As we look at this list we can see the things that can permeate our lives. In this devotional, we will consider five of the principles they outlined. Many of these principles have to do with the way Scripture is seen and understood. Here is what Bluebird say about the Word.

PRINCIPLE 3 - POWER OF GOD:

God's Word was and is initially verbal in contexts where the Name of Christ has not yet been planted and people are coming to faith. The starting point and central feature of God's Word is the gospel, it is the backbone of the Old and New Testament as interpreted by the Risen Christ (Luke 24:13-35). This feature in our Word system emphasizes not what is taught from God's Word, or who transfers it, but underlines the power of God inherent in His Word (Romans 1:16-17). God's power is inherent in the Word which is working even while the sower sleeps, yielding an abundant crop in time. In movements, God's Word spreads in unexpected ways yielding new fruit.

We too need to have God's Word central in our Christian experience. It is the power we live and love from. Consider how you may make Scripture more central in your life.

Tuesday's Devotion – Scripture Memorization and Prayer

**Read Psalm 119:9-11; Matthew 6:9-13; Psalm 51:9-13;
Matthew 26:39-43**

Another way that Bluebird keeps Scripture central is through memorisation and prayer.

Principle 9 – Memorized Word

Key verses of a passage discussed by a group can be memorized by the group during group time. Oral preference cultures today are much stronger at memorizing scripture and re-discussing it while coming to embrace it.

Principle 11 – Word Laced Prayers

The prayers of the New Testament preserved for us are laced with many truths from the Old Testament as well as the New. Praying and hearing biblically sound prayers is a means to inculcate the Word into hearts.

One way we can ensure we stay saturated in Scripture is by using it to fuel our thoughts and devotion to God. As we memorize scripture, we meditate on what it means and allow it to pulse through our veins and become our life source.

As we pray scripture, we ensure that our prayers are in line with God's will and connect our needs with God's revelation.

Today, spend some time reviewing scriptures you have memorized in the past and prayerfully let them marinate your soul.

Wednesday's Devotion – Others

Read Acts 17:10-15

One of the hallmarks of Bluebird is their reliance on small groups for evangelism and discipleship. Due to persecution, they do not have many public gatherings and have no church buildings to draw people towards.

These small groups are places for people to share, study Scripture and learn from each other. They commit to meeting together to study Scripture for themselves as the Bereans did and help each other apply it.

Principle 13 – Group Discovery

The advantages of group discovery include a) groups self-correct errant views, b) Bible study skills are trained and practised, and c) accountability and social support for living according to the Word. In unreached people groups, social pressures are so strong, we need social support for deep transformation of paradigms and life patterns. 'One another' commands in God's Word must be carried out in a small group setting, including 'teach one another'.

The social pressures we face in our context are very different to those in Indonesia, but we also need each other to transform our ways of thinking and life patterns. As we make a priority of meeting together, we can humbly learn from each other.

This week, prioritise gathering with other Christians and sharing your life with them. Look for ways to encourage them and ways in which you can learn as well.

Thursday's Devotion – Step Up

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-16; Titus 1:5-16; 2 Timothy 2:1-2

The church of the Living God is called to be the pillar and foundation of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). That truth is the proclamation of Jesus and his rule over the world (1 Timothy 3:16). For Jesus to become known, God's people must live by a high standard.

Principle 20 - Household of God

The principal criterion for elders is godly character, for their modelling of the Word beckons others to imitate them and stands as a prevention against false teaching done by teachers who corrupt character (1 Tim 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-16). Elders are servant-leaders in the 'household of God', the community of believers. The 'household of God' is itself 'the support and bulwark of the truth' (1 Tim. 3:14-16). In other words, properly selected leaders are visible symbols of the Word of God lived out.

This is especially true of elders, but it should be true of all believers as well. As one faithful leader has passed the truth on to you so you should pass the truth on to others who can then pass it on to others.

As such, you are a leader.

This means all Christians need to step up in the way they live their life. The requirements of elders are not so onerous that every Christian cannot look at them and see whether they are living up to the standard. Prayerfully, consider your life today and ensure that you are living to the highest possible standard.

Friday Devotion – Use Your Gifts to Equip Others

Read Ephesians 4:11-16

God has gifted you to do His work in and through the church. In some cases, this means He has gifted you with talents, abilities, and proclivities to perform, encourage or serve. However, He also gifts Christians to some extent with one of the five equipping gifts.

Here is how Bluebird reflect on the importance of these gifts.

Principle 2 - Teachers Who Equip

God gifts people to implement 5 critical functions (Ephesians 4:11-13). These 5 functions are not just about doing but equipping other believers. Because all believers, thus equipped, become active workers, their combined effort results in an expanding and maturing 'church without walls' in movements.

Which of the five gifts (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers) do you feel called towards? You might not feel comfortable calling yourself an apostle or a prophet, but it is important to see what your leaning is and how you can use that gift to build up the church and reach others for Christ.

If you feel an apostolic calling help those starting new initiatives. If you are prophetic help others to prophesy accurately. If you are an evangelist help others to share their faith effectively. If you are pastoral help others care well. If you are a teacher help others in the way they impart scripture to others. As you do, you will see God move in powerful ways.