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Driven by the Great Commission

Wade Allen
Lead Pastor

What is the driving force of your life? Is it your comfort or God's Great Commission? This question was posed recently in one of our Sunday morning messages. I wonder how each of us would answer such a probing question.

We recently started a brief study through the Book of Haggai, and what we're discovering is that the message of God through the Prophet Haggai is still as relevant to us today as it was to the all those living in Jerusalem over 2500 years ago.

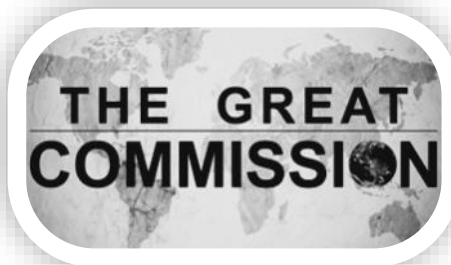
Our problem is that we are so consumed with making life more comfortable for ourselves that we do not have time for things like the great commission. I mean... really...

- Who has time to talk about the Lord with people we meet each day?
- Who has time to spend everyday reading, studying and memorizing God's Word?
- Who has time to add yet another thing like a weekly meeting with a mentor to their already overloaded calendar?

I hope that you can see and hear my sarcasm jumping off the page as you read this. It is easy for us to disregard these questions as the fallacy that they are—the problem is that these are the lies we tell ourselves everyday... and we believe every word of it!

The Great Commission—recorded in various forms in all four gospels and the Book of Acts—was Jesus' last command to His followers. If we read Matthew's account, He tells them that as they are going about their business day-by-day, they should be focused on doing the work of making disciples. That process includes evangelism, teaching the truth of God's Word and helping people to get connected with a local church family. Every single one of us share in this responsibility to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord!

This month at the Ozarks Baptist Encampment, our students will be learning all about the gospel and how to share it with their friends. This is something that our youth group has already been focused on this summer. I'm excited about what God is doing—and will do—through our young adults as they faithfully share the gospel.



Focus on the Eternal

John O'Connor

Pastor of Community Engagement

Recently, David had a lesson on sharing your testimony for the youth, and had the youth parents ask their students about that lesson. While we were engaging with Norah (our oldest) about her testimony, it got me thinking "When was the last time I told my Testimony?"

No matter the story or the storyteller, the gift of salvation and the following relationship with God we gain through that salvation experience is never trivial or boring.

John 9 is all about the blind man being healed—his testimony and how people received it. Often times, it's way easier for us to be "brave" (Romans 1:16) when things are bad. However, when times are "goodish to great" we don't want to rock the boat—the boat of "social norms".

Back in John 9, when the recently healed blind man told his story, they threw him out. Is that what you're afraid of? Are you afraid of being thrown out of the group at work, the social group you hang out with? Or are you afraid of a family member who doesn't know Christ?

I wonder what might happen to our day-to-day decisions if we cared less about our personal discomforts and more about the eternal outcomes of those who don't know Christ.

I encourage all of you to be faithful to share your Testimony to all that will listen.

Why I Am Not Ashamed

Ron Fields

Pastor of Senior Adults and Care Ministries

Cleaning up the garage a box of papers surfaced. Among the contents there was a clipping from a newspaper but undated. The writer spoke fondly of her parents' and grandparents' simple lifestyle. Among other things were listed a homemade recipe for toothpaste. The ingredients were simply unbelievable to my mind but Norma loved it and wanted to try it out.

"It's not realistic! She can't be serious!" I said. It's only there as humor, not to be tried!"

So, Norma emailed the author and within an hour a reply came. The recipe was a good one, of course! And the author wished her well in the effort to convince me.

What does it take to convince you? God led the nation of Israel through the Red Sea but weeks later the people were complaining and talking about going back to Egypt.

God destroyed the city of Jericho and consistently overcame the enemies of Israel but within a few years they were forgetting Him and worshiping idols!

A motley crew watched from afar as their leader, their master, died on a cross. They knew he was buried and the tomb sealed with a stone. They wondered as three days later he began meeting with them and continued to do so for forty days. After He rose toward the heavens they continued to meet. Soon they were accused of turning the world upside down.

Their descendants continue to share this Good News today. What convinced them? (2 Timothy 1:12)



Equipped for the Work of Ministry

David McEuen

Pastor of Family and Worship

WHAT GOD HAS STARTED...

It is with deepest sorrow and regret that I must inform you that summer is coming to a close. I'm not sure how it happened either, but it's true. We blinked and all of a sudden, school supplies started showing up at Walmart and the top of my calendar read August.

[Please pause for a moment of silence.]

Though students and teachers—and maybe even some parents—are grieving the end of summer, I can't help but find myself rejoicing over what God has accomplished in the lives of our students through our various summer activities. Over the last month, I've seen God open the eyes of our students to comprehend His Word and gain insight into His will for their lives. And IT. IS. AWESOME!



One student has grown in their understanding of the importance of proclaiming truth through the songs we sing in worship. Others have received a greater awareness of God's desire to use them to share the Gospel with their friends and family who don't know Jesus. (And God is equipping them with the methods to do so!) Summer may have gone by fast but it has definitely been fruitful!

But now as school draws closer and closer, I want to ask you to continue to diligently pray for our students. Pray that God would continue to bear the fruit of righteousness in their lives. Pray that God would strengthen them and protect them from discouragement. But ultimately, pray that God will give our students boldness so that by their witness, their friends might be delivered from death to life through Jesus Christ.

(Continued from "GREAT COMMISSION" on p. 1)

But the practice of sharing the gospel is just the first step in the process of making disciples. Being born again to new life in Christ is amazing but we wouldn't leave a new born to fend for himself, would we? This is why it is so important that people be taught the truth of God's Word.

I am excited to have the opportunity this year to teach the adults at OBE about the necessity of following up with new believers in order to help

them grow in their relationship with God. Would you please pray for me in this endeavor?

Or better yet, would you prayerfully consider being a mentor to someone yourself? The reality is that most people in the church have never had someone invest in them in this way. The process of leading someone to discover the truth of God's Word is one of the most rewarding things you can focus your time on. Will you let God's Great Commission be the driving force of your life?

Mark Your Calendars
UPCOMING EVENTS



- July 31- August 4** **Ozarks Baptist Encampment**
Camp Siloam—Siloam Springs, Arkansas
- August 6** **Community Groups Begin**
Three Week Session for August
- August 12** **Ladies Craft Day**
10:00 AM
- August 27** **Annual Business Meeting**
Sunday Evening at 5:00 PM
- Sept 8** **BMA of the Ozarks Annual Meeting**
Fellowship Baptist Church, Bella Vista, AR
- Sept 10** **Fall Session Community Groups**
Ten Week Session for the Fall
- Sept 16** **Student Ministry Matters Workshop**
Central Baptist College, Conway, AR
- Nov 2-3** **BMA of Arkansas Annual Meeting**
Central Baptist College, Conway, AR
- Nov 19** **Churchwide Thanksgiving Fellowship**
Sunday Evening at 5:00 PM



Please pray for church camp—
July 31st through August 4th! Bro. Paul Young
will be the main speaker each evening. Pray
for the lost to be saved and people to
surrender their lives to the Lord.



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