

Becoming Outward Focused

I. Our mission is *to equip Christians to become others focused and the church to become outward focused.*

A. The Church is not to be a haven until heaven, nor a refuge until the rapture.

1. It's an army whose focus is outward, whose soldiers are deployed in the malls, businesses, and neighborhoods where the lost live, play and work.

2. **Proverbs 24:10-12 admonishes us and challenges us on this much needed mission.**

a. Verse 10 states - *"If you remain indifferent in time of adversity, your strength will depart from you."*

1) **The "adversity here is not speaking of adversity you are in but adversity that others are in."**

2) The implication here is that if you don't use the strength that God has given to you to help others than you will lose it for yourself.

3) **The Hebrew word for strength is "Koach" which simply means "the ability to do something."**

- It's not just strength from physical attributes, but strength that comes from gifting, from knowledge, and from resources.

- **Ezra 2:69 - "According to their ability (Koach) they gave to the treasury for the work 61,000 gold drachmas, and 5,000 silver minas, and 100 priestly garments."**

b. It goes on to say in verses 11& 12 - *"Rescue the perishing; don't hesitate to step in and help. If you say, 'Hey, that's none of my business,' will that get you off the hook? Someone is watching you closely, you know, someone not impressed with weak excuses."*

1) **This passage condemns as criminal the non-interposition of the strong on behalf of the weak and distressed.**

2) This crime is committed for various reasons.

a) **For some it is purely indifference.**

- There are many in the church who are at ease themselves, and never concern themselves about the sufferings of others.

- **They are well fed, and it matters not to them who is hungry.**

- While their needs are being supplied, it matters not to them who is in want.

b) **For some it is moral cowardice and unwillingness to practice self-denial.**

- c) But this proverb seems to deal especially with the ignorant, those who have never considered the claims which others have upon them.
- **They are really ignorant of how many are perishing for the want of a helping hand. But this ignorance here is regarded as criminal.**
 - The church must consider how much actual wrong-doing on the part of some, is chargeable to the not-doing of others.
 - **How much sin might be prevented if the church, who has the power, would seek to deliver others from bodily, social, or moral death.**

B. 2 Corinthians 9:10 - Everything that comes to us is both seed and bread.

1. Bread for consuming and seed for sowing.

2. When you consume the bread and sow the seed you perpetuate the blessing of God.

The New King James states it this way. “supply and multiply the seed you have sown”

The King James states it this way, “God will supply and multiply your seed sown.”

Today’s English Version - “God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all that you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause.”

C. John 7:37-38, “Now on the last day the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘if any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture said From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.’”

1. In verse 37 Jesus is using the word “thirst” to address all mankind’s needs.

a. He could have just as easily said, “if any man is hurting let him come unto me and I will heal him” or “if any man is bound, let him come unto me and I will loose him.”

b. He is saying what ever you have thirst for, come unto Him and He has a drink. Jesus has what ever any person needs.

c. Jesus is addressing a crowd of people who, in some area of their life, don’t have enough and He is offering them a drink which represents just enough.

2. In verse 38 Jesus then challenges them to turn a portion of their drink outward to others.

a. In other words, when we give a portion of our just enough to someone who doesn’t have enough, then our just enough becomes more than enough, not only to the person we are ministering to but to us as well.

b. The drink becomes a river when we turn it outwards.

c. The abundance that scripture promises all of us doesn’t happen in the receiving but in the giving.