

Series Title - Pre-Season Training Camp  
HCC – 8/21/2019 + 9/1/2019 – 9:30am – Pastor Glen

<sup>2</sup> Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of thanksgiving*; <sup>3</sup> praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; <sup>4</sup> that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak. (Col 4:2-4 NAU)

**Sermon Title: NFL Prayer Attack; Learning To Pray For Our Neighbors, Friends, & Loved Ones**

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<sup>4</sup> that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

<sup>5</sup> **Conduct yourselves** with wisdom toward outsiders, **making the most of the opportunity**.

<sup>6</sup> **Let your speech** always be with grace, as *though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should **respond to each person**. (Col 4:2-6 NAU)

In 1959, the legendary Vince Lombardi, was hired to be the head coach of the Green Bay Packers with the difficult task of turning around a losing franchise. The legend goes that after a miserable showing, the players gathered in the locker room in silence waiting for Lombardi to enter and give them the verbal beating of their lives. After a few moments, Lombardi entered the room with a football in his hands. He stood in silence, searching for words. The players braced themselves for the worst. Lombardi lifted the football and broke the silence with arguably the most legendary quote in NFL history, "Gentlemen, this is a football!" He then proceeded to explain the boundaries a football field, the goal line, and how putting the ball across the goal line scores 6 points. Those five legendary words marked Lombardi's legacy as a coach. He would take his team back to the basics. He would demand perfection in the fundamentals of the game.

I have been asked on several occasions what is Pre-season Training Camp? Pre-season Training Camp is my way of getting us back to basics on a regular basis to make sure we are doing what scripture instructs and demands of the church. I find it most helpful to do this at the beginning of our ministry year annually. Seeing as how we begin our ministries with the start of school this lends itself naturally to reminding and encouraging even equipping us to do the work of the ministry the church is called to do.

The book of Acts tells us that the very first church in Jerusalem " <sup>42</sup> They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Act 2:42 NAU).

Scripture also tells me that " <sup>11</sup> And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ." (Eph 4:11-13 NAU) And that " <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." (Eph 2:10 NAU)

So if these are the foundational basics of the church it behooves us to review them periodically so that we can sharpen our understanding and technique that we would be more productive and successful in what Jesus has created, empowered, and commanded us to do.

This morning we will tackle the ministry of prayer.

I would like to share with you 5 very practical ways to pray specifically for our neighbors, our friends, and our loved ones.

**devote, keep alert, pray for open doors, make it clear, conduct yourselves, make the most, season your speech.**

**#1 - Devote yourselves to prayer - V2**

1 - devote means to actually intentionally plan time in to pray. The Greek word here implies

persevering with someone. To not quit. The English word devotion connotes an emotional tie that keeps us focused with that person.

2 – Paul is writing to the Colossians and notice that yourselves is plural. He is talking to all the Colossians not just one. This devotion is not a singular thing it is a church wide group wide endeavor.

3 – prayer is just a conversation with God. Don't make it more than that. Don't complicate the simplistic beauty of God's design for us to spend time with HIM. Just talk with Him like you would talk with anyone else.

4 – Stay away - "keep alert" don't fall asleep or do this when you are exhausted set time aside when you have energy and a clear mind.

5 – When you pray do it with an attitude of gratitude because you get to participate in God's plan of salvation for those you truly care about.

### **So how can you devote yourselves to pray:**

Set a time and keep it each day – morning, afternoon, evening – a time that you won't be bothered by others in your home.

Set a place aside in your home or room where you can remove all the distractions that will keep you from being alert and focused on what you need to pray for.

Set a group together that will support you in prayer and hold you accountable to be praying as well.

### **#2 – Pray for open doors - V3**

1 – Don't make prayer complicated – while you are praying for one another

2 – Pray for the Gospel to change them and for them to have the opportunity to share it with others

3 – Pray that we don't waste the circumstances of life but they become useful for the gospel

### **So how do I pray for open doors:**

Keep a list in a notebook that you use for your quiet times on the last 3-4 pages

Keep the gospel the focus of your prayer for each other.

Keep the people you bump into as you go about your everyday opportunities central in your mind

### **#3 – Pray for clarity and focus – V4**

**1 – The word clear has the meaning** to be visible, conspicuous, to make apparent, to show openly, to shine light on.

<sup>16</sup> "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Mat 5:16 NAU)

<sup>12</sup> Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation. (1Pe 2:12 NAU)

### **2 – pray that we know what the gospel is – *use the Gospel matrix slide here***

It is about God being a sovereign all-powerful creator -

It is about God being perfect in Holiness

It is about God being limitless in His love for the jewel in His crown of creation – humanity

It is about ...

### **3 – Pray we understand the Gospel not just know the gospel.**

Once we know what the gospel is we need to understand it so we can share it and keep things clear or we will chase rabbits and make no-sense with the individuals we speak with.

We also misunderstand how knowing what the gospel is doesn't change our lives; but understanding the gospel transforms us.

**Eph 1:1-14** – Paul tells us what we are to know about the gospel. But, in **Eph. 1:15-23** Paul helps us understand how knowing this gospel is to transform the way we live our lives.

### **4 – Pray for a passion to obediently share the gospel verbally -**

“ought” implies from its very nature, what it was created to do, a duty, a must -

The same word used for ought is used in - <sup>21</sup> *From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that **He must go to** Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.” (Mat 16:21 NAU)*

Paul uses this same word again at the end of Ephesians - <sup>19</sup> *“and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”*

(Eph 6:19-20 NAU)

<sup>16</sup> *“For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. <sup>17</sup> For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me.” (1Co 9:16-17 NAU)*

### **So how do I keep the Gospel clear:**

Devote TIME to study and understand what the gospel is.

1Cor 15:3+4

1Pet. 2:24

1Pet 3:18

Eph. 1:7

Rom. 3:24

2Cor. 5:21

Gal. 1:4

Col. 1:13+14

Devote TIME to memorize a presentation of the gospel that works for your personality

Devote TIME to write out your Elevator Story / a 30 second personal testimony of how this gospel of Jesus Christ has transformed your life.

3 questions -

What I was like before I met Jesus?

How I can to accept that Jesus was who I needed in my Life?

What my life is like now that I am walking in relationship with Jesus daily?

### **#4 – Pray that we make the most of our opportunities V5**

1 – pray that we see people around us, **now**, through the eyes of Jesus.

<sup>36</sup> *“**Seeing** the people, **He felt compassion for them**, because they were **distressed and dispirited** like sheep **without a shepherd.**” (Mat 9:36 NAU)*

2 – pray we see the function of our time as God ordained appointments with an eternal purpose.

<sup>14</sup> *“For this reason it says, “Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you.” <sup>15</sup> Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of your time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”*

(Eph 5:14-17 NAU)

3 – Pray that we live our lives in a way that is real and authentic not 2 faced.

<sup>113</sup> *I hate those who are double-minded, But I love Your law. (Psa 119:113 NAU)*

<sup>8</sup> *being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (Jam 1:8 NAU)*

4 – Pray that we live with maturity and skill as the demands and circumstances of this life impact us.

5 – Pray that the way we are living raises questions from our neighbors, friends and loved ones who do not know Jesus and are lost.

How can I have eternal influence for Jesus but still love, enjoy, and encourage these relationships; maybe, even if they never come to trust Jesus as savior?

*We believe that evangelism is not about a time, or an event, or a planned program. **The Gospel is LIFE!** It is about loving, living and **BEING the Good News** as a transformed ambassador for Jesus Christ. When people look at us they see us the same inside and out all about living and loving people to Jesus. **The Gospel is LIFE.***

The longer a person attends church, the fewer evangelistic discussions they engage in.

Do you get annoyed with people who act like the world, who swear, who cuss each other out up and down the side walk, who just break out into arguments in the middle of Walmart, who flip you off because you forgot to use your blinker, who are rude to you because they they don't actually want to work and have no intention of actually helping you so they give you attitude or just ignore you all together?

<sup>11</sup> Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," *which is* performed in the flesh by human hands-- <sup>12</sup> *remember* that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (Eph 2:11-12 NAU)

<sup>17</sup> So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, <sup>18</sup> being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; <sup>19</sup> and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. (Eph 4:17-19 NAU)

<sup>4</sup> that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, <sup>5</sup> not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; (1Th 4:4-5 NAU)

<sup>12</sup> Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation. (1Pe 2:12 NAU)

**We at Hope Community Chapel believe with all of our hearts and demonstrated with our lives that the longer a person walks with God, the more open their arms become to those who are far from God. The more they should look, speak, act, feel, like Jesus.** - "<sup>13</sup> Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus." (Act 4:13 NAU) We will talk about this next week.

<sup>13</sup> "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. <sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; <sup>15</sup> nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup> "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Mat 5:13-16 NAU)

<sup>5</sup> Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. (Col 4:5 NAU)

#### **Invest with Love -**

Love = TIME

<sup>5</sup> Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. (Col 4:5 NAU)

Conduct yourself with wisdom toward **outsiders** -

**Conduct** yourself with **wisdom** – *this is connected to point 4 above.*

**Making** the **most** of the **opportunity** -

<sup>15</sup> See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, <sup>16</sup> redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (Eph 5:15-16 NKJ)

**Investing means 2 things:**

*Developing Friendships* – relationships – One of HCC's Values -

Investing does not typically begin with faith it typically begins on common ground shared together. - This might be considered grace.

Kelsey Green does a great job of this...cite her group of moms with kids that get together weekly just to play and talk.

*Discovering each others stories* – This might be considered the truth. The truth of who they are, the truth of who you are.

**Invite with Life -**

Life means - encouragement and truth

**Inviting means 2 things:**

*Discerning next steps* – This might be considered Grace

**Discerning Next Steps:**

The 4 soils – Luke 8:4-15

The Seed – The Word of God / Gospel of Jesus – Vs 11

Beside the road – Absolutely no interest at all – Vs 5,12

Pray the Holy Spirit supernaturally moves in their lives –

Among thorns – They have heard and will listen but the cares and pleasure of this life are more important

Vs 7, 14 – Pray, Love, Develop – build the relationship and gently address the weeds and thorns

Rocky Soil – have believed but fall away because of road blocks – Vs 6, 13

Pray, Love, Build, + Remove as able those rocks and stumbling blocks

Good soil – Have heard, responded, and are growing – Vs 8, 15 -

Pray, Love, Build, Remove, Cultivate + Nurture their relationship with God so that more fruit is grown

*Discussing what the Gospel means to you and them.* - This might be considered the truth.

**Go back and review how Jesus interacted with people – choose 1 gospel and just go through it and look at all the interactions Jesus had and list them.**

John 1:14 - <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (Joh 1:14 NAU)

John 3 – Example of Nicodemus – or - John 4 – the woman at the well

**Jesus Exuded Grace and Truth – As disciples of Jesus we MUST exude Grace and Truth.**

This is connected to point 3 above.

3 Types of Disciples:

Cactus – prickly, always emotional and hard to be around

Chameleon – change colors, opinions, attitudes, behaviors based on the group they are with.

Contagious - people really enjoy the time with them and look forward to spending more time when they can with this person. In fact, contagious is a great word to use here because they would risk catching some cold or sickness from these people just to spend time with them.

**Investing and Inviting takes:**

Time

Effort

Intentionality

**Two commitments:**

**Commitment #1** – I will invest in people far from God because I truly care for them.

Go back and review the 3 basic beliefs that drive us as disciples.

#1 – we believe there is a heaven and a hell with all our hearts and everyone will spend forever somewhere.

#2 – Jesus said that what you decide about Him will determine where you will spend your forever.

#3 – Where you spend your forever isn't about how good you have done, but about what JESUS has DONE. More about this next week -

**Commitment #2** – I will **invite** people to **do life** with me and **know God through** me; because caring, about people, just isn't enough.

**So how do we make the most of our opportunities:**

Make a list of the places you go regularly each week

Make a list of the people you see at these places each week

Make a point to pay attention to these people and develop a relationship with them

Make TIME to pray for them regularly through out your week by name

**#5 – Pray we speak with GRACE V6**

pray that our conversations would make people's appetite want more not less

pray that what we say would go down as a tasty morsel not a bitter herb

pray that our conversations would be digested not spit out

pray that our thoughts and ideas would bring health and healing to the lives we speak with

pray that our attitudes would be influenced by the Holy Spirit

**So how do we speak with GRACE:**

Watch our tone of voice when we speak

Watch the words we use that they are not crass or vulgar

Watch that we are truthful and encouraging

Watch that we listen and ask questions to really learn more about the person

Watch our time that we are not cutting people short or making them feel they are bothering

us

Watch for the Holy Spirit to lead you to speak the Gospel or Scripture at the right moment into their lives through the natural progression of your conversation.

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**So how can you devote yourselves to pray:**

**#2 – Pray for open doors – V3**

**So how do I pray for open doors:**

**#3 – Pray for clarity and focus – V4**

**So how do I keep the Gospel clear:**

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**So how do we make the most of our opportunities:**

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**So how do we speak with GRACE:**