

SUNDAY RECAP

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

The *Sunday Recap* is a quick rundown of our time of worship together on Sunday and a quick look ahead. Our hope is that this will help us continue to reflect on the good news of the gospel all week long. Enjoy!

LENT COMMUNITY DEVOTIONAL

Here is a great Lent Community Devotional for you to consider and invite others to go through it with you: [Living Through Dying: 6-week Community Guide Through Lent](#)

Learning to live with “Gospel Intentionality”

A resource we have been going back to over and over to help us live ordinary lives with “gospel intentionality” and pursue those who don't yet know Christ together (and it's really SIMPLE which we like a lot) 😊 ----> [Simple Ways to Be Missional](#) by Verge Network

“THE MEAL” VIDEO:

In case you missed it or wanted to see it again, [here is the video](#) Ryan shared in his sermon a few weeks ago giving us a picture of what it might look like for the church to dine together. Watch it and get ready for our next **FAMILY MEAL on Sunday, March 18th!** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDuA9OPyp6I>

PREPARE FOR NEXT SUNDAY -----

Sermon Scripture: Acts 4:32–5:11

Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.” When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it. The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him.

After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. And Peter said to her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much.” And she said, “Yes, for so much.” But Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of

those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.” Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Let us worship God, who has done great things.

C: We rejoice in our God, who made a way through the desert of this world.

L: Let us worship God, who has caused streams of mercy to flow in the wasteland.

C: We are the people God has formed through Christ; we worship him, and we rejoice!

L: Let us worship God in spirit and in truth.

C: We praise God for the grace that has saved us. Alleluia! We rejoice!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. —1 John 1:8-9

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” **John 3:16-17**

L: Hear this good news- All your sins are washed away. You are forgiven!

C: Hallelujah! What we couldn't do for ourselves, God did for us. We are forgiven of all our sin and loved as if we were perfect, just like Jesus.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Around here we like to say "Who we are informs HOW we live". And who we are is a people who have received peace with God because of what Jesus did on our behalf. With that very peace, take a moment to greet one another as family here this morning.

BENEDICTION

L: May the God of love, who shared his love, strengthen us in our love for others.

May the Son who shared his life

grant us grace, that we might share our life.

And may the Holy Spirit dwelling in us

empower us to be only and always for others.

Go from here determined to live for others, and remember God is forever with you.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Peace be with you!

C: And also with you!

REFLECT ON LAST SUNDAY -----

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON

Acts 4:12

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In our call to worship we said that we are Christ's Ambassadors and prayed "Through us and through our worship may we announce the good news to all." What do you think that would look like- for us to announce the good news through us and our worship?
- For our Assurance of Pardon we read from Psalm 91 which says- "When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble" How does that go along with what we see in Acts 4? How is that verse a comfort to you personally?
- Does the message of Christianity have to be exclusive? Why or why not? What other scriptures point you to this conclusion?
- How would you respond if someone said- "If Jesus is really alive, prove it!"
- We've been talking a lot about Jesus being alive and active, and seeing it in the book of Acts, but where do you believe Jesus is absent or neglectful? Have you ever told him that? Why or why not? How about telling him about your anger, frustration, or hopelessness around that? Maybe He isn't going to shun you, but rather comfort you (and if you share it with someone else in our church, I bet they will do the same!)

QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

NEW CITY CATECHISM

Question 36

What do we believe about the Holy Spirit?

That he is God, coeternal with the Father and the Son, and that God grants him irrevocably to all who believe.

Question 37

How does the Holy Spirit help us?

The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin, comforts us, guides us, gives us spiritual gifts and the desire to obey God; and he enables us to pray and to understand God's Word.

Questions:

- How do you know Jesus is alive and working today?
- In the early church in the book of Acts we see them praying for *boldness* to speak the gospel to those who don't know Jesus. Have you ever had boldness to do that? Lets pray for God to give us a boldness to share about Christ with those who need Him!
- What can we thank God for today? How has He been faithful to our family? Our Church?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Articles: ["Why is Christianity So Closed-Minded and Exclusive"](#) by Nicholas Davis

["10 Things You Should Know About Persecution"](#) by Tim Keese

Podcast: ["What People Believe and Why"](#) by White Horse Inn

Book: [Basic Christianity](#) by John Stott

Sermon: ["Exclusivity: How Can There Be Just One True Religion?"](#) by Tim Keller

SONGS WE SANG *Check out our Spotify playlist here: <https://goo.gl/BQddvV>

[Open the Eyes of My Heart Lord](#) by Paul Baloche

[In Christ Alone](#) by The Gettys

[Amazing Grace \(My Chains Are Gone\)](#) by Chris Tomlin

[Come Thou Fount](#) by Kings Kaleidoscope

READINGS

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Let us worship God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ.

C: We are new creations; the old has gone, the new has come!

L: Let us worship God as Christ's ambassadors.

C: Through us and through our worship may we announce the good news to all.

L: Let us worship God in spirit and in truth.

C: Praise God! We are reconciled, redeemed, renewed!

—based on John 4:24; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: God of mercy, whose Son, Jesus Christ, longs to gather us in the wide embrace of his love, we

confess that we have been wayward children. We have disobeyed your commands

C: Our ears have been deaf to your call; our hearts have been cold to your love.

L: In thought, in word, and in deed we have hurt others and dishonored your name.

C: In your great mercy receive us yet again as your well-beloved children,

L: not because we are worthy but for the sake of him who loved us and gave himself for us. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Those who love me, I will deliver, says the Lord; I will protect those who know my name.

When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble,

I will rescue them and honor them and show them my salvation.

Receive the good news of the gospel: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

—based on Psalm 91:14-15

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Because of what Christ has done, we are a community marked by faith, hope and love. In the faith, hope and love we've received from Christ, let's take a moment to greet one another this morning.

BENEDICTION

L: Sisters and brothers,
let us claim the freedom Christ gives us
by his self-giving on the cross.
May he enable us to serve together
in faith, hope, and love
for the betterment of our neighbors
and the glory of God
Peace be with you!

C: And Also with you!

SERMON REVIEW

Sermon title: The Gospel in a Pluralist Society

Watch it again here: <https://cccplainfield.org/sermon/gospel-pluralist-society/>

Sermon Overview:

As we come to Acts 4, we are seeing the start of a turn in the story. Up to this point everything is looking good and it's all positive for the most part. But now comes the introduction of resistance to the gospel message and persecution for the gospel people (the church). I say "introduction" because the resistance and persecution will continue throughout the rest of the book (and the rest of history!). We

must wonder- "What will this do the progress of the gospel?" Will it slow it down? Will it stop it all together? Or perhaps, will it be like gasoline on a fire and propel it farther and faster?

I'd like to point out four things we notice here in Acts 4:1-31- How Exclusivity Works, How Signs Work, How Worship Works, and How Boldness Works.

First, How Exclusivity Works. Peter really gets himself in trouble when he says, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). There is one word that sums why most people can't stand Christianity (other than "Hypocritical" I suppose, but that is for another day) and that word is- *exclusivity*. Christianity is fine, as long as it can remain A way among other valid ways. Jesus is fine, as long as he is A savior among other saviors. But once you start this "only way" or "only savior" stuff is when you receive the charge of being a narrow minded bigot.

There are several issues with this "non-exclusive" view. Let's consider two of them- a) philosophically and b) Biblically. Philosophically it is a hypocritical thing to say "You can't have exclusive truth claims" since that very statement is an exclusive truth claim. So you are doing the very thing you are forbidding! Secondly, Jesus claimed exclusivity. In John 14:6 we have record of Jesus saying, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." That's as exclusive as it gets! He claims to be THE way to God, period. You can agree with that claim or disagree, but you cannot try to make Jesus a non-exclusive figure among other non-exclusive figures. He claims to be the exclusive Savior. This is why Peter responds by saying, "*Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.*" (Acts 4:19-20)

Secondly, How Signs Work. It's very interesting to see the tight spot the High Priest and council are in because they saw the healed man who was lame standing there (4:14) and it was seen by all the people so they couldn't deny it (4:16). What do they do now to stop the message? The problem is that the message and the sign are connected. The sign is *validating the message*. They are preaching that Jesus is alive and active and then they are seeing the very same divine activity (healing) as was performed by Jesus. That becomes pretty hard to deny! So the signs serve as a validation to the message. You can throw away the message, but when you have a visible sign attached to it creates a situation where you have "nothing to say in opposition" (4:14)

Third, notice something of How Worship Works. After Peter and John are jailed, threatened, and released, they go back to the church and tell them what happened. And their response is a little surprising- they "lifted their voices to God" (4:24) and start praising Him. What?!? Shouldn't they be concerned? Shouldn't they be fearful? Well, the reason they react like this is because they are seeing God's promise come to pass in their midst. God promised that they would receive resistance and persecution, and now they were, so they were seeing His Sovereign hand at work! They also remember what took place with Jesus, how He encountered resistance and persecution (and ultimately death) from these very same people- Annas and Caiaphas (see John 18). If they experienced the same thing Jesus did, it's further confirmation that He is alive and working through them! In their mind, this was not cause for sadness or fear, but thanksgiving for God's faithfulness to them.

Lastly, How Boldness Works. As surprising as their reaction to the resistance and persecution is, it's equally surprising what they pray for in verses 29-31- "*And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.*" They don't pray to be airlifted out of the resistance and persecution or even for God to bring an end to it, they pray for the ability to do what they saw Jesus do- stand in the midst of persecution and proclaim the gospel of the kingdom! They do not seek ease from the hardship, rather they seek boldness amidst the hardship. And they know where the boldness comes from- the presence of the Spirit. It doesn't come through a pep-talk, it comes through the presence of The Bold One Himself, Jesus, through the Spirit within that community. May God grant us the same! Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

YOUTH GROUP
Sunday nights @ 6:30

more info?
email: admin@cccplainfield.org



HELP NEEDED!
Our amazing little superheros need more teachers and helpers!

If you would be willing to help out in one of the kids classrooms or the nursery email Deb Lints lintsdj@gmail.com or the office: admin@cccplainfield.org

SUNDAY, MARCH 18th



FAMILY MEAL

Every 3rd Sunday of the Month after Service
Bring a dish to share. Sign up sheet at the welcome desk

MEN'S 55 (AND OLDER) BREAKFAST



SAT, MARCH 17 @ 7:30AM

BAPTISM SERVICE
SUNDAY MARCH 18TH



If you or your child needs baptized
email Pastor Ryan:
ryan@cccplainfield.org