

MATTHEW: sermon study guide

Speaker: Pastor Ashwin Ramani

Date: March 7 / 8, 2020

Sermon Title: Matthew Series - A New Kind of Family – Sermon #2

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. What is a unique tradition in your family?
2. Was there a spiritual pillar in the life of your family/friends/community? How did they influence others? What impact did they have?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read *Matthew 4:23-25*

3. Pastor Ashwin said, "Teaching, preaching and healing are significant ministries of the church – they are part and parcel of a spiritual family on mission." What do preaching, teaching, and healing look like in both structured and unstructured gatherings?

Read *Luke 4:38-41*

4. How have you been ministered to by preaching, teaching, and healing? How do all these center on the Good News?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. Pastor Ashwin commented, "The church ought to be like a magnet – a teaching, preaching, healing community that draws people." How have you seen people drawn to the church through these ministries? On the other hand, why are many not drawn, and seem to have no interest in the church?

Jesus gives the church an example in two ways: First, he doesn't wait for the people to come to him, rather, he goes where they are. Second, he is not working in isolation, but has called others to go with him.

6. What might it look like for your spiritual family to "be where the people are" this month? On a regular basis?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Reflect on the people and circumstances that brought you into spiritual family. Pray what role you, as an individual, may be called to within your spiritual family.

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 4:23-25

²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴ News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them. ²⁵ Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

Luke 4:38-41

³⁸ Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. ³⁹ So he bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them.

⁴⁰ At sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them. ⁴¹ Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Messiah.

MATTHEW: sermon study summary

Title: A New Kind of Family – Sermon 2 **Pastor Ashwin - Matthew 4:23-25**

Faith Today magazine (2020 Jan-Feb) published an article by John Stackhouse that would startle any Canadian Christian – “Will Christianity disappear from Canada?” No trace remains of the seven churches mentioned in the Book of Revelation. Likewise, today some communist countries strive to wipe out a formerly strong Christian presence. Stackhouse points out some striking statistics. A mainline Canadian Christian denomination heard a breath-taking prediction: no members, attenders, or givers will belong to it by 2040. This downward trend is reflected across many different Christian denominations, including evangelicals. We see increasing numbers of Canadians uninterested in religion. Stackhouse observes that, “In Canada political forces and other religions have not been the main challenge to the Christian faith – instead the challenge has been a continuous experience of prosperity and security.”

Today’s message is not to discourage or give feelings of hopelessness or despair. It is meant to drive us to our knees, seeking the face of God to change this trajectory by renewing our passion and urgency for reaching the lost. Christian history shows that the darker the night, the brighter the light will shine! The first century world offered far greater challenges yet the church of Jesus Christ advanced. They didn’t just survive – they thrived in community, engaged and flourished in mission through spiritual families, and turned it into a world-impacting movement! That is true today! People are still brought to Jesus through the efforts of the spiritual family, and the family grows!

Jesus was rejected by his own biological family. He relocated to Capernaum where he formed a new spiritual family to engage in his mission to seek and save the lost. Jesus’ ministry was to take the good news of the Kingdom to the people and invite them into his spiritual family. Jesus goes intentionally, but not alone, to the land of darkness where the light of the gospel will shine the brightest fulfilling the prophecy of ministering in Galilee, (Isaiah 9:1-2). He has recruited, and brings with him, disciples who could replicate his mission and carry out the same task.

Jesus accomplished his mission by three main activities. He taught in the synagogues, expounding truths showing that he is the long-awaited fulfillment of prophecy. He preached – proclaimed – the good news to the crowds that followed him. The teaching and the preaching overlap: teaching aimed at the mind, preaching aimed at the heart. Jesus also healed the sick, showing his compassionate heart that cared not just for spiritual life but for the whole person! The impact of Jesus’ ministry was on a large and substantial scale as He drew people to him like a magnet.

Today we at Centre Street Church, and as smaller spiritual families in our communities, are called to do the same: to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God, to care for people physically, spiritually and emotionally, and be God’s instruments to bring holistic healing. Three practical examples were provided. A video of a couple inviting people to become an intentional spiritual family showed what God has done in and through them. Pastor Barry spoke of an intentional meeting up of singles once a month, describing this as providing ‘stepping stones’ to spiritual family. Val Hoffman described the Monday Night Street ministry to demonstrate that serving together in loving unity does not require conformity.

We are to shine as light in darkness, extending the invitation to those living in darkness to come to the light.