

Series: (None)

Sermon: "Missionary and Mission Survivor"

Text: Galatians 6:10

RGGJR/FBCCS 7-19-25 **UNEDITED**

- A few folks have asked, "**What is Mission Survivor?**" Sometimes we forget that not everyone has been part of FBC for decades. Sorry about that.
- I've been asked to take a little bit of time to answer that question this morning and to put Mission Survivor into the context of the values of FBC.
- I usually stress **three major values** that we want to live by TOGETHER as a church. There are other good things we care about but these 3 are foundational.
- The **1st** is that we value **being biblical**. That could sound a bit arrogant—almost like saying we value being **right**.
- The reality is that we suspect that we may not be exactly right in every single detail of biblical interpretation and application. However, we value always starting with the Word of God as God's self-revelation determining truth for us.
- We want to base how we think about God, our relationship with him and living life for his glory in the realities that God has chosen to give us in His Word. We want to know Him better and glorify Him more clearly based upon who **He** himself says he is and what he says he is up to from His Words versus simply from our own personal concoctions of God as we want Him to be.
- A **2nd** value that comes out of this 1st value is the value we call **free grace**. We believe **free grace** is simply God's **biblical** grace. Biblically defined free grace is the power by which we are born again, the sphere in which we live as believers and the enabling power that sustains us as we live TOGETHER as a church for God.
- We add "**free**" to "**grace**" to make it clear that we do not **frontload** the Gospel message of so-called grace with demands for overcoming sin or making promises to be less sinful in order to be justified.

Series: (None)

Sermon: "Missional and Mission Survivor"

Text: Galatians 6:10

RGGJR/FBCCS 7-19-25 **UNEDITED**

- Likewise, we say "free" grace to emphasize that we also do not **backload** the Gospel with our certain preferred requirements or acceptable visible evidences that prove to our satisfaction that the application of God's grace was actually real.
- ***Justification is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone for eternal life.***
- Those two values set the stage for the 3rd value we have emphasized and that one is: being **missional** as a church. The Bible teaches a grace from God that not only saves a sinner from an eternity without God, some day in the future, but also provides new life in a new community called the **church right now**.
- Biblically, by grace, that church of Jesus, which is his Body, is sent on **His** mission of redemption in the world. We share the Good News to make disciples of Jesus all the while loving each other as he loved AND also loving the world as he loved.
- Jesus' living model of sacrificial love leads us to say about *his* church that "The church does not exist for its own sake but for the sake of the World God loves."
- One way we carry out that mission, biblically, is as Paul instructed the *Galatians*, "... **as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.**"
- For two decades, Mission Survivor has been an important training ground for the **sacrificial** aspect of our value of *missionality*.
- The "**CUTS**" or "*cool unexpected things*," as they came to be called, may look like mere service projects. However, when we pull kids aside from their normal lives (and their ubiquitous) devices and intentionally work to reset their reasons for serving, something deep is so often surfaced in them even as young believers.

Series: (None)

Sermon: "Missional and Mission Survivor"

Text: Galatians 6:10

RGGJR/FBCCS 7-19-25 **UNEDITED**

- That something is the sacrificial loving heart of Jesus working in their own heart as they sacrifice comfort and energy in very simple ways.
- For many of the early years of Mission Survivor, some FBC folks thought it was only or mainly about the work that got done.
- Survivor has never been about that physical work. It has always been about the **heart-work** that God does teaching young kids who then become young leaders who then become adult leaders to live lovingly sacrificial lives TOGETHER in a way that God gets the glory.
- Many—maybe even most kids who have been part of Mission Survivor will tell you it changed something in the way they thought of the role of Church and their role in the Mission of Jesus.
- Inevitably, each year, one can see hearts changing even in many of the youngest participants. They thought they were escaping the house for a week in the summer but wound up sucked into the binding-together *koinonia* of the Spirit's work by being invited into a serving, sacrificing community of kids and adults focused on God's glory.
- Pulling weeds, shoveling horse manure, receiving instructions from a picky older widow lady, painting a school emblem, sorting and folding clothes to be given to those in need, interacting with foster families, listening to biblical lessons, meditating on purpose—suddenly all of these things seem to take on a different priority and intentionality.
- This regularly has proven to change hearts in so many who have taken part.
- Yes, Mission Survivor does practical work (*most of the time*—middle schoolers sometimes don't yet know how to do some of the things they are asked to do—well—I'm on the go back and fix it later crew).

Series: (None)

Sermon: "Missional and Mission Survivor"

Text: Galatians 6:10

RGGJR/FBCCS 7-19-25 **UNEDITED**

- However, Mission Survivor is not at all kin to what was once called the "**social gospel**" that purposed the church to make just better, more comfortable **earthy** lives for people by doing things for them.
- No, Mission Survivor is a living picture of the sacrificial loving heart of Jesus in the Gospel lived out in one small, short-term experience of a sacrificially serving community of believers.
- In Mission Survivor, weeds do get pulled (lots and lots and lots of weeds!)—bricks get moved—friendships are made—but these are happy side-effects of something much bigger.
- That bigger something is that boys and girls, teens, men and women of the church of Jesus **NOTICE** (that was the theme this year **NOTICING**)—they **NOTICE** something more clearly.
- We, the church TOGETHER exist here and now with a **biblical, grace-**empowered **missional** purpose. That missional purpose is to TOGETHER be like Jesus—to live with his sacrificial loving heart so that more than just some weeds being pulled—or some fences painted—people can better see and then believe in Jesus as the powerful, loving, sacrificial provider of ETERNAL LIFE.
- If one doesn't look very closely at Mission Survivor—if you don't **NOTICE** well (again, as emphasized this year) you might just see, and even smell, a bunch of teenagers, and young men and women doing a bunch of little tasks during the day and messing up a church building at night.
- However, if you stop and **NOTICE** Mission Survivor more clearly, you'll **NOTICE** God Himself at work opening up **servant-hearts** in all ages and all different types of people TOGETHER to be a bit more like his Son.
- This is the controlling purpose of Mission Survivor and Mission Survivor is just one way we practice our value of being MISSIONAL.