



## Church, Part 2

May 17, 2020

What We Believe

An eight-week series on Valley's Statement of Beliefs

So far in our sermon series we have studied our beliefs concerning the Bible, the nature of our Triune God, the nature of us, spiritual growth, and what we believe about "The Church." This week we will focus on the second part of the statement, the church's task of giving the gospel to a lost world.

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*THE CHURCH — We believe in the universal Church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local Church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work and fellowship.*

*[Part 2] We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local Church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.  
(Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:38-41; Eph. 2:19-22; Eph. 5:25-27)*

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**Review:** Last week we looked at 1 Peter 2:9 which states the purpose of the church is: "to proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Believers are sent out by Christ to bear witness to Him. We saw this demonstrated in Acts 2, when the early believers worshiped God together and many saw it and were saved.

[Q] That early church was then scattered by persecution in Acts 8. Scan Acts 8. What were the results of the scattering of Christians due to persecution? What did the scattered people do?

### Giving the Gospel

Jesus told His disciples that they should "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). This evangelistic work of declaring the gospel is the primary ministry the church has toward the world. Accompanying the work of evangelism is the ministry of mercy, doing good to others in the name of the Lord.

Jesus said:

Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:35–36)

[Q] Who do you need God's love for right now?

[Q] What is the relationship between telling the good news of Jesus and doing good to your neighbor? How do good works beautify the gospel?

## Loving Your Neighbor

“...More people are out walking in our neighborhoods than ever before. As a result, we have a unique opportunity to build connections with the people that live near us that will make a big difference in their lives, and in ours. The key is learning how to do this six feet away!” — *Covid-19 Neighboring Toolkit*

[Q] How have you been able to connect with your neighbors lately? Which one could you pray for this week?

### Ideas for how you can love your neighbors from the *COVID-19 Neighboring Toolkit*:



- Ask God for opportunities to connect with your neighbors.
- Learn their names and jot them down on the neighbor map from the toolkit as a visual reminder.
- When you see people outside, make it a point to talk to them. See list of simple questions in the toolkit.
- Ask for their help and be honest about how you are doing.
- Check with older neighbors if there is anything you can help them with.
- Your ideas:

(Remember, your neighbor is person, not a project!)

[Q] How might strengthening your devotion to God’s Word, to fellowship and prayer with believers, increase your love for your neighbor? How will you do that this week?

[Q] How can we as a church encourage one another to bless our neighbors in practical ways? Be specific!

“It is only when we understand our true purpose that the church will shine in all of her beauty. United in truth as we hold to the Apostolic faith, we will declare and demonstrate to an onlooking world that our triune God is worthy to be worshiped and served. As the called-out ones of the Father, this is our greatest joy. This is the church: a people for His own possession who live together to glorify Him.”

—R. C. Sproul, *What is the Church?*

### This week, read:

- Luke 10
- Luke 15
- Acts 8
- James 2
- Psalm 96

### Download the *COVID-19 Neighboring Toolkit*:

[avon.valleycommunity.cc/event/1795926-2020-04-20-covid-19-valley-responds/](http://avon.valleycommunity.cc/event/1795926-2020-04-20-covid-19-valley-responds/)