

ETHOS OF WALKING THE WAY (1): SERMON

INTRODUCTION

Many people in our Churches will be totally unaware of what the initiative “*Walking the Way, living the life of Jesus today*” is all about. Therefore, before launching into the main body of your sermon, it would be good to explain the general idea behind it. What follows are simply notes, a few ideas, a skeleton onto which you can add the flesh. You might decide to create just one sermon from these notes or alternatively you could create a mini series of 3.

Each * shows when in the sermon the powerpoint should be moved on.

Please also take a look at the study notes which connect to this material. If you have study groups, please encourage them to use the material, If not, then it might be suitable for everyone in your church to be given a copy to reflect on privately at home.

WHAT IS: “*WALKING THE WAY... living the life of Jesus today*”

an ethos rather than a fixed programme

it has no start and no finish

it is to help churches redefine who they are and what God intends them to be

it is about re-discovering the fact that Jesus calls us to whole life discipleship not

something we simply do on a Sunday. The [diagram](#) produced by LICC is a

very useful visual aid to show that we are church (the red dots) when we

gather, but equally are church (still the red dots) as we scatter.



THE HEART OF BEING CHURCH

* BIBLE READINGS

Isaiah 61: 1 – 4

John 1: 1 – 5

* FIRST: JESUS: sent into the world.

This is a wonderful theme to reflect on as Christmas has just been celebrated.

a. Sent as a light *

b. Sent with a manifesto * (cross ref to Luke 4: 18 – 21)

Link to the second point by highlighting Isaiah 61: 4: the restored people of God have a responsibility, a part to play in rebuilding and renewal.

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* **SECOND: JESUS: promises to build the “Church”.** *Quote Matthew 16: 18*

What did Jesus have in mind when he used the word Church? This is really important for people to understand. *(You may already have a good understanding of this, but I have included some thoughts relating to this on page 3 below, which you may wish to adapt and use)*

* **THIRD: JESUS: sends the believers out** *Quote: John 17: 18, John 20: 21, Matthew 28: 19 - 20*

ERROR 1: * all too often we just think of Church as being “here”, what we do on a Sunday. Comment on the LICC graphic showing the Church as red dots: * when we are together, and * when we scatter.

ERROR 2: * we simply wait for people to come to us & bemoan the fact when they don’t

ERROR 3: * we interpret this as specific sending rather than generic sending.

What do I mean? Often these words have been read and interpreted as people being sent on a specific project, to a specific place, at a specific time. However I believe that we need to redefine them so that we understand that the implications are for wherever we go in our day to day life. As Jesus sends us out, he doesn’t just occasionally send us to a specific context for a specific moment, but he simply sends us out... and

“as we are going” we are to be His witnesses

“as we are going” we are to make disciples

“as we are going” we are to be channels of justice, peace and healing

“as we are going” we are to be good news to the poor

Jesus calls us to live the life of Jesus wherever we are and whoever we are with.

As we embrace this mindset, we will truly “Walk the Way...living the life of Jesus today”.

CONCLUSION

Encourage members of the congregation to identify the various contexts (Frontlines) they will find themselves in during the coming week.

SHOW THE VIDEO: [“Anne’s Story”](#) *

PRAY that God would send them out to be His Church wherever they find themselves each day.

*Rev Andy Twilley
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REFLECTIONS ON THE TERM "CHURCH"

Interesting word but often mis-used!

Have Churches sometimes become religious clubs? Groups of men and women who come together once a week, go through a ritual but then simply carry on with day to day life just like anyone else? Is this what the 1st century church was like?

GREEK WORD: *Ecclesia*: occurs approx. 115 times in NT

Strictly defined as: "*the called out ones*" or the "*elected ones.*"

Often used in Greek culture to describe civil bodies

Called or elected people

In Greek culture: an ecclesia was a select civil assembly

ordinary people brought together for a specific purpose
it always referred to people not a building.

VIEW OF JESUS & THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS

What did Jesus and the writers of the New Testament mean when they used the word "*ecclesia*" to describe a Christian body of people?

We can assume they intended to convey something of the original Greek meaning of the word:

a group / body of Christians

called or elected by God

called out from the Roman and Judean system

coming together as a separate civil community

It meant a politically autonomous body of Christians:

having no king but Jesus

having no other jurisdiction than that of Jesus

This was revolutionary: declaring Jesus as King not Caesar

TAKE THIS FURTHER

Paul & Silas weren't church builders as we might think in terms of trying to establish groups of believers known as churches

BUT They were "kingdom builders"!

They were dethroning earthly rulers in the minds of the people and alienating them from the hold Caesar had on them through heathenistic (central) government.

They were teaching the principles of Christian government.

They were presenting the call of God to whomsoever would hear and respond to the call.

And the consequence for any such believers:

They became citizens of Christ's Kingdom and became part of the ecclesia, or community of believers.