THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

January 5-6, 2007

Change the World!

One life at a time…

Pastor Mark Burch

"A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God's salvation.'"
(Luke 3:4-6 – NIV)

God has always had a voice! Even in the darkest days of human history, there has been a "faithful remnant" of His people who continued to hope, continued to trust, continued to pray and continued to walk in the steps of the Master. There may be days that we are tempted to give up the fight, to pack in our efforts to see the world become a better place…but today is not that day!

As we head into a new calendar year, God is calling us, perhaps like never before to champion and leverage all the resources He has placed in our hands, to be used for the transformation of our world! Are you up for the challenge?

HOME GROUP – STUDY QUESTIONS

This week's discussion will be a bit different from other weeks, in that we are talking about the vision and direction God is leading us as a church family and as individuals. Rather than being a study of one selected text, it is a philosophical discussion of the kinds of people God is calling us to become. Please take some time in prayer as you begin your discussion together, that God would raise up in us a radical passion for the cause of Christ, and a willingness to obey the call of God, regardless of the cost.

History – Making It Personal

1. Share around the room the names of people who have been an inspiration to you as you have studied their life; a biblical character or a historical figure. What was it about their life that inspires you?
2. Talk about who those "voices" in our culture today might be? Are there spiritual, political, societal leaders who are "making history" today? Do we lack for the "prophetic voice" in our culture today?
3. Why do you think so few people are able to achieve the level of transformation that we see affected by the "radical reformers" of earlier generations? What did it cost these people to "sell themselves out" for the cause? Are we willing to make such commitments today?

Digging Deeper – Taking a Biblical Look at our Lives

4. Take a few moments to list out as many names of biblical characters who stood out (and often stood alone) from the crowd, and made radical impact for the glory of God.
5. Having your list in front of you, talk about the common traits of their lives. What kind of people were they? What characterized their lives?
6. Consider Noah: Genesis 6:5-13 & 7:1; 2 Peter 2:5. What must this man have lived with, in order to obey the call of God on his life?
7. Consider Joseph: Genesis 39:1-9 & 20-23. What did it cost Joseph to "stand out" for God?
8. Consider John the Baptist: Luke 3:1-20. What price did he pay?

Taking It Home – Questions of Application

9. Talk through Willow Park's Core Values (listed on the back) and discuss which ones you think will be the hardest for us to actually live out. Why?
10. What barriers stand in the way of WPC becoming a church with radical impact in our region? What obstacles stand in the way of our individual impact? What things do we need to repent of?
11. Consider Luke 1:15. If we were to speak these words and believe them for each other – what difference would it make in our city? Why do we so often fall short of the "greatness" God has planned for our lives?
12. As you close your discussion, pray for each other, that God would call out the great plans He has for EACH individual in your group. Pray that barriers would be torn down, and that patient endurance would carry us forward! Pray for our church family, during these critical days of ministry!

Optional Activity:

Why not schedule a group movie night: rent the movie "Amazing Grace" (the story of William Wilberforce's life) and then discuss what it would take to be that kind of passionate spiritual reformer in our world today.

THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO BE FAMOUS!

Okay, not really, super famous. The winner will have their video played in our weekend services though - how's that for being pretty cool. Upload your video on the theme of our next sermon series starting in January. The theme is "Reboot." (Sermon on the mount Matthew 5 - 7). And the video must be 3 minutes or less. Deadline for the video submissions is January 18th. The winner will be chosen from the top 5 vote getters within You Tube.

http://www.youtube.com/group/wpcsouth