

Expository Preaching at Mountain View Community Church **“Feeding and Challenging the Believer, Engaging the Seeker”**

At Mountain View Community Church, our threefold aim on Sunday mornings is to feed the believer with expository preaching, challenge the believer to godly living, and engage the seeker with relevant teaching and a clear presentation of the gospel. Our Sunday morning services primarily are geared to minister to the believer, but secondarily, are geared to impact seekers and encourage them to put their faith in Christ. On most Sundays the messages are “believer focused,” yet on some Sundays, the messages are “seeker focused.” Basically we want our preaching and our ministry to be both “deep and wide.” Below is a biblical, as well as philosophical, rationale for these positions.

First, we see Sunday mornings as primarily, though not exclusively for believers. This appears to be the pattern in the early church (1 Cor. 11-14), though their corporate worship service took place in the evening (Acts 20:7) and not in the morning. In 1 Corinthians 11-14 the apostle Paul instructs the Corinthians regarding how to conduct themselves in the assembly, addressing specific topics such as the woman’s headcovering, the Lord’s Supper, speaking in tongues, and prophecy. In chapter 14, Paul is placing emphasis on prophecy over speaking in tongues since prophecy better edifies the church. He also adds that a chaotic environment where many are speaking in tongues and where tongues are uninterpreted will have a negative effect on the unbeliever (14:22-24). Thus, while the gathering of the church is primarily for the believer, there should also be a commitment to expect unbelievers to be in attendance and to seek to reach them with God’s Word.

Second, we believe in expository preaching. From the start of MVCC we have placed a priority on expository preaching. This means that we want:

(1) to teach the Scriptures, Old and New Testament, as the inerrant and inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17), (2) to systematically teach through the Scriptures placing emphasis on: (a) books of the Bible, (b) great chapters, passages, and stories of the Bible, and (c) doctrines in the Bible, and (3) to focus on the meaning of the Scripture as intended by the author in the setting of that day, but also bringing universal principles, as well as relevant application, to the believer in today’s setting. We do not desire “exegetical” preaching, which merely explains the text. We will at times provide topical preaching, but in these messages great care must be taken to ensure that the text is not twisted to fit one’s particular topic. In our preaching, we want to instruct as well as inspire the believer. We are committed to not only presenting in-depth teaching, but also calling the believer to significant life change.

Third, we believe that a clear presentation of the gospel should be presented in every service, though not in every sermon. This means that in some way each Sunday we want the plan of salvation presented clearly whether this is done before the offering is taken, during the message, in between worship songs or at the close of the service. There are some people who attend MVCC once and do not return; we want to make sure they hear the good news of the gospel on the one Sunday that they do attend.

Although we prefer that invitations to accept Christ be presented regularly, we do not expect that a “formal call to salvation” be presented each week, nor that every message needs to contain a point by point plan of salvation. When formal invitations calling the unbeliever to repent and accept Jesus as Lord and Savior are given, they should be done in keeping with the central truth or “big idea” of the message. We do not want “tack on” invitations. Rather when invitations to accept Christ are offered, we want them to be done in keeping with the moving of the Spirit, and we want them to naturally tie back to the teaching of that morning. We are confident that when someone begins to seek God (Acts 17:27; example of Cornelius in Acts 10), it is because God is drawing that person (John 6:44) and that in time we believe all those who are truly seeking God will come to know Him, often through the faithful preaching of His Word. In our post-modern culture, many people need a one-on-one explanation of the gospel or a small group environment that addresses their questions. For these reasons, we do not believe that Sunday mornings are our only ways to lead people to Christ and that the worship service should be geared to the unbeliever. While we are committed to reaching the lost for Christ, our primary commitment on Sunday mornings is to feed the believer and exhort him/her to godly living.

The Elders of Mountain View Community Church
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