

## The State of Us

### 1 Corinthians 14:6 – 12

#### I. Intro

- A. Talk about “Us” - this church specifically (this body) known as FBC Mt. Vernon
- B. Also, talk about sharing the Gospel, many refer to as evangelism; Webster’s definition – *the winning or revival of personal commitments to Christ*; word doesn’t appear in scripture but word *evangelist* does; Greek *euaggelizo* – *to announce good news, especially the Gospel*; also translated *preach* or *proclaim* – so, *evangelist* is one who preaches or proclaims the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and *evangelism* is the act of preaching or proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- C. *witnessing* – another term used to refer to sharing the Gospel, little different from evangelism because it refers to more of a personal testimony, or witness from personal experience
- D. Two important points: **1)** Evangelism is considered a spiritual gift, a special talent, skill given through presence of Holy Spirit in ones life - Ephesians 4:11 (NIV)  
<sup>11</sup> It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers; **2)** **Witnessing is not a spiritual gift, it is a command - Acts 1:8 (NIV)** <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
- E. Using the excuse that you don’t have the spiritual gift of witnessing is total misunderstanding of scripture
- F. Paul distinguishing between speaking in tongues and prophesying – tongues only benefits the person doing it, but prophesying benefits the whole church; **READ 1 Corinthians 14:6 – 12** (focus on v. 12)
- G. We can say both evangelism and witnessing certainly build up the church but evangelism is special spiritual gift given to certain believers; witnessing is directive that ALL believers are to be doing; **ASK:** Overall, for building up the church which would be more effective – evangelism or witnessing? Both, especially if truly ALL believers were obedient in following the directive of witnessing

#### II. GBMB 2011 Survey

- A. Book, “Evangelistic Effectiveness” by Parr and Crites; in this sense *evangelistic* being all about intentionally promoting and proclaiming the Gospel of Christ in every area of church ministry

- B. Numbers from research based on questions asked and responses from 2,081 Georgia Baptist churches
- C. **Question 1:** Do you have an intentional evangelism strategy that's woven into every area of your church's ministries/programs? (**SHOW SLIDE**)
  - i. Baptism ratio – average worship attendance to baptisms; lower the ratio the better
- D. **Question 2:** Do you have an organized weekly visitation ministry? (**SHOW SLIDE**)
- E. **Question 3:** Have you provided evangelism training in the past 12 months? (**SHOW SLIDE**)
- F. **Question 4:** Have you held revival services in the past 12 months? (**SHOW SLIDE**)
- G. **Question 5:** Are your small groups/Sunday School intentionally connected to your outreach strategy? (**SHOW SLIDE**)
- H. Final numbers of those churches that incorporated all methods (**SAME SLIDE**)

### III. Our Numbers (Last 5 years)

- A. Good news, bad news scenario (**SHOW SLIDE**)
- B. First good news – baptisms up; baptism ratio in 2014 (34.5:1); baptism ratio in 2018 (10.6:1); 225% improvement in ratio, 64% increase in total baptisms
- C. Bad news
  - i. Sunday School average attendance down – 23%
  - ii. Average worship attendance down – 18% (notice parallel trend of both)
  - iii. Total Giving down – 9.5%; from 2017 to 2018 down – 10%
  - iv. Total Mission giving down – 18%; from 2017 to 2018 up – 29%
- D. **Question:** See the tremendous need for being obedient when it comes to intentional evangelism methods, outreach and personal witnessing?

### IV. Close

- A. **v. 12:** ... *since you are eager [zealous] for manifestation [demonstration, evidence] of spiritual [things], strive to excel [in those things] that build up the church.*