

All

Sermon Series & Notes



**ALL PEOPLE
PRAYED FOR BY NAME
CONNECTED WITH JESUS**

HOW TO USE



Introduction

In this week's Pray+Connect series, we are focusing on connecting people to Christian Community. As Christians, we are not meant to be lone rangers. It is easy to forget that when we were saved, we were brought into the family of faith. A family where we are called to love and be loved.

There are blessings to Christian community that God intends for us to experience. We cannot grow up into maturity in Christ without this family of faith that is bound together in love (Ephesians 4:16).

Today, we will look at **Acts 2:42-47** to see the blessing of Christian community and why we need it.

Main Points:

A community of devotion and power (vs.42-43)

- The early Church was characterized by its devotion and display of power. Believers devoted themselves to hearing the apostles teaching, fellowship, celebrating the sacrifice of Christ, and prayer. As they were devoted, God moved in powerful ways in their midst.
- God calls us to a corporate devotional life. We are to persist in listening to the teaching of God's Word together and being with one another both at the foot of the cross and in prayer. As we commit to this togetherness, we make room for God to move among us in powerful ways.

A community of unity and generosity (vs.44-45)

- The early Church was a community where everyone's need was taken care of. What produced such an exceptional generosity among them? It was their commitment to Christ and then to one another that preceded their generosity.
- As we commit ourselves to Christ, we are also to commit to the family of God. Our commitment will work itself out in sacrificing ourselves for one another, whether that be financially, materially, or through spiritual gifts.

A community of gratitude and multiplication (vs.46-47)

- The early Church was characterized by a spirit of gratitude and praise. As they rejoiced together for what God was doing among them day by day, God added more to their number.
- Christian community is called to be a joyful and fruitful community. When we give thanks for the work God is doing among us, we can see God do more in our midst.

TEMPLATE

The Pray+Connect sermon notes are designed to be customizable. Adjust these notes to accommodate the needs of your congregation and your personal study.

STRUCTURE

The themes throughout the Pray+Connect sermon series build on one another. Each sermon correlates with the Five Finish Line goals of All.America. As you structure your sermon, aim to emphasize the focus for that week.

STUDY

The Pray+Connect sermon notes are not intended to replace your personal study, but to serve as an adequate starting point. The outline of main points in each sermon can be supplemented with illustrations, examples, and cross references to explain each point.

6 WEEK SERIES OVERVIEW

All

WEEK 1 - WHY ALL?

As disciples of Jesus, it is our privilege and responsibility to make disciples of all nations.

- **Focus:** Committing to reach all
- **Text:** Matthew 28:18-20



WEEK 2 - PRAYER

The Church has the privilege and responsibility to pray for all people, especially those in authority.

- **Focus:** Adopting and praying for those around us
- **Text:** 1 Timothy 2:1-7



WEEK 3 - COMPASSION & JUSTICE

Jesus demonstrated the care and concern of God for the spiritual and physical needs of people.

- **Focus:** Showing God's love to those in need
- **Text:** Matthew 9:35-38



WEEK 4 - EVANGELISM

The Holy Spirit empowers and guides Jesus' followers to preach the gospel.

- **Focus:** Connecting people to Jesus
- **Text:** Acts 16:6-15



WEEK 5 - BIBLE ENGAGEMENT

Everyone who listens to and obeys God's Word will be kept from stumbling.

- **Focus:** Connecting people to the Bible
- **Text:** Matthew 7:24-29



WEEK 6 - CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

The early Church grew as they devoted themselves to God and one another.

- **Focus:** Connecting people to Christian community
- **Text:** Acts 2:42-47



All

Week 1

WHY ALL?

Text: Matthew 28:18-20

Focus: Committing to reach all

Big Idea: As disciples of Jesus, it is our privilege and responsibility to make disciples of all nations.

Synopsis

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples over the course of forty days to convince them he was indeed alive and to speak about the kingdom of God. His last appearance was on a mountain in Galilee. It is there that Jesus gave his disciples, both present and future, the honor of participating with him in a mission so far-reaching and all-encompassing that it would only be possible with his power and presence.

Introduction

The **All.America initiative** is helping to bring together the Body of Christ to reach every person in America. As a church, we want to focus on how we can do our part in God's mission. And we believe the vision of All.America is in line with what God has called us to do in this city as we seek to reach those around us.

Today, we will introduce the vision of All.America and look at **Matthew 28:19-20**, to see why we must take up our responsibility as disciples and reach all.

Main Points:

Jesus' authority is over all (vs.18)

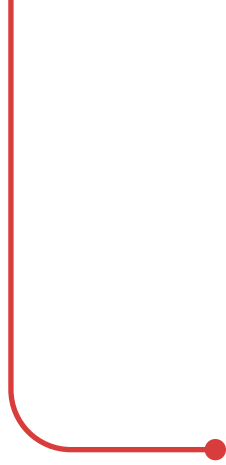
- Jesus' authority is over all and he is worthy of the praise and obedience of all. Jesus tells his disciples that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him. This authority or power was given to him by the Father so that his name is superior to any other, and his right to rule is above every other rule and authority (Eph. 1:21, Phil 2:9).
- When we understand that Jesus is the rightful king over all, it should compel us to see every knee in every nation bow at his name and every tongue confess his lordship (Phil 2:10-11).

Jesus commanded us to go to all (vs.19-20)

- Before his departure, Jesus instructed his disciples to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit, and teaching them to do all that he commanded. Because Jesus has commanded us to go, lovingly obeying his command should be our foundational motivation to reach all.
- Our command to go to all is a shared responsibility with the Lord. Jesus called the first disciples to himself, but in the command to "go", he shares the responsibility with us to call others into following Him.

Jesus promises his presence always (vs.20b)

- The disciples had spent every day with Jesus, watching him heal the sick, cast out demons, and proclaim the kingdom of God. Before he ascends, he assures them that he is still going to be with them as they do the work of the kingdom. The promise of Jesus' continual presence gives us confidence to carry the message to all without fear. Jesus will not leave us as orphans in the world (John 14:18), but will be ever near to us providing what we need.
- Reaching people means entering into confrontation with the powers of darkness. The continual presence of Jesus gives us confidence that the darkness will not overtake us (Matt.16:18) as we confront it.



Week 2

PRAYER

Text: Timothy 2:1-6

Focus: Adopting and praying for those around us

Big Idea: The Church has the privilege and responsibility to pray for all people, especially those in authority.

Synopsis

Paul instructs Timothy, an elder in the Church, on the importance of teaching believers to offer prayer for everyone, especially those in high positions. Their participation in asking God's blessing upon others would reflect their desire to please the Lord, who wants all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.



Introduction

In this week's Pray+Connect series, we will focus on praying for the people around us, even those in authority. What is the value of striving together as a church so that everyone in our neighborhoods, city, state, and nation is covered in prayer?

Today, we will look at **1 Timothy 2:1-7**, where Paul exhorts Timothy to teach believers to cover everyone in prayer, especially those in high positions. There are several reasons we can see in this passage for why the Church is called to offer prayers for all people.

Main Points:

Praying for people leads to a peaceful and godly life (vs.1-2)

- When we are regularly entrusting the needs of people to God, we will have peace in our souls. As we lay the burdens upon the Lord, we give up trying to manage it ourselves.
- When we desire the good of all through prayer, we reflect our heavenly Father who sends his rain on the just and unjust (Matthew 5:45).
- Paul specifically mentions the importance of praying for kings and those in high positions. When we bless authority through prayer, we acknowledge that all authority is established by God for our good (Romans 13:1-2). God is the one who can change seasons and times, removing kings and establishing them (Daniel 2:21). As we pray for those in authority, we learn to trust God as the ultimate authority and sustainer of our lives.

Praying for people is pleasing to God (vs.3-4)

- It pleases God when we pray for people, especially that they would be saved. God desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. He has planned that the prayers of His people would be the vehicle for His activity in the world, even that of bringing people to Christ.
- Think of your own story. Did someone pray for your salvation? Some of us are still praying for the salvation of loved ones, and this is pleasing to God because he desires that they would be saved. Through our prayers for people, we can participate in God's work to bring them to salvation.

Praying for people is an honor (vs.5-6)

- Praying for people is an honor (vs.5-6). Only the children of God can ask the Father to act on people's behalf. Praying for people is a privilege given to those who know Christ Jesus. Paul says there is only one mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus. Without a relationship with Christ, the mediator, no one can access the Father.
- As we pray for those around us, we are walking in the special calling God has given us as the Church.



Week 3

COMPASSION & JUSTICE

Text: Matthew 9:35–38

Focus: Practically showing God's love to those in need

Big Idea: Jesus demonstrated the care and concern of God for the spiritual and physical needs of people.

Synopsis

The ministry of Jesus consisted of teaching in synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, healing every disease, and casting out demons. In every city and village, this is what he could be found doing. As the crowds followed Jesus to hear his teaching and experience healing, he was moved with compassion for them.



Introduction

In this week's Pray+Connect series, we will focus on showing compassion to our neighbors. Practically demonstrating the care and concern of God for those around us is part of what it means to live like Jesus in this world, because this is what he did.

Today, we will look at **Matthew 9:35-38**, where we see Jesus moved with compassion for the crowds and instructing his disciples on the greatest need of the harvest.

Main Points:

Jesus went (vs.35)

- Jesus' life consisted of going to cities and villages, teaching in synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom on mountains, and healing every sickness that he encountered. He was able to demonstrate compassion to people, because he went to where they were.
- Demonstrating God's love begins with going to where people are and getting involved in the lives of those around us.

Jesus saw (vs.36)

- When Jesus saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them. He saw their needs and sympathized with them (Hebrews 4:15). He sympathized with where they were in need spiritually by preaching the gospel of the kingdom to them, and he sympathized with where they were in need physically by healing every disease and infirmity.
- If we are to meet the needs of those around us, we must begin by seeing those needs and allowing it to move us to action.

Jesus prayed (vs.37-38)

- Jesus engaged with crowds of people every day. The spiritual and physical needs of people were constantly before him. And although he was the Son of God, he could not preach everywhere and heal everyone at once. The prayer in the heart of Jesus was for more laborers to share in gathering the harvest.
- In the same way, the spiritual and physical needs around us are too much to bear alone. We need laborers sent from God who will join in the work of demonstrating God's compassion.



Week 4

EVANGELISM

Text: Acts 16:6-15

Focus: Connecting people to Jesus

Big Idea: The Holy Spirit empowers and guides Jesus' followers to preach the gospel.

Synopsis

Paul and his companions were sent out to preach the gospel. As they traveled from region to region, they depended on the Holy Spirit to guide them each step of the way. The Holy Spirit, who empowered them to be witnesses, also helped them know where to witness and went ahead of them to prepare the way.



Introduction

In this week's Pray+Connect series, we are focusing on connecting our neighbors to Jesus. More than anything else, people need to know the love of God in Christ Jesus. Connecting our neighbors to Jesus can be intimidating for some Christians. Thankfully, we don't have to do it alone. The Holy Spirit helps us reveal Jesus to the world.

Today, we will look at **Acts 16:6-10** and see the work of the Holy Spirit in helping us connect people to Jesus.

Main Points:

The Holy Spirit guides us to people (vs.6-8)

- The Holy Spirit guides us to where he wants us to go and away from where he doesn't want us to go. Paul and his companions were prevented by the Holy Spirit from speaking the word in Asia minor. We don't know why the Spirit kept them from traveling into the province of Bithynia, but it was clear to them that they were not to go there. They had to wait in Troas until they had a clear direction on where to go next.
- Connecting people to Jesus requires paying attention to the Holy Spirit's guidance. The Holy Spirit can give us discernment on where to go and who to talk to because he knows where people are in their spiritual journey.

The Holy Spirit prepares people for the gospel (vs.9-12)

- Before Paul and his companions had gone to Macedonia to preach the gospel, the Holy Spirit was preparing people in Macedonia to hear the gospel. Paul's vision of a man from Macedonia is an indication of the spiritual conditions occurring there - the harvest was plentiful (Matthew 9:37).
- The Lord can make known to us the spiritual needs of those around us. Who are the people at your job or in your school, who seem to be searching for truth and asking spiritual questions? How do you see the Holy Spirit preparing them to hear the gospel?

The Holy Spirit opens people's hearts to respond (vs.13-15)

- As Paul preached the gospel in Philippi, the Holy Spirit opened hearts to respond. Paul's obedience to follow the guidance of God to go to Macedonia resulted in people, such as Lydia, getting an opportunity to hear the message and respond to the work of the Holy Spirit in her heart.
- As we respond in obedience to God to connect people to Jesus, we must remember that our part is not to move their hearts. Our responsibility is to share the gospel and trust the Holy Spirit to work.



Week 5

BIBLE ENGAGEMENT

Text: Matthew 7:24-29

Focus: Connecting people to the Bible

Big Idea: Everyone who listens to and obeys God's Word will be kept from stumbling.

Synopsis

Jesus taught with authority on the kingdom of God. He admonished the crowds that it was wise to listen to His words and do them, because His words were truth. However, to neglect His words, would ultimately lead to one's downfall.



Introduction

In this week's Pray+Connect series, we are focusing on connecting people to the Bible. 2 Timothy 3:16 says, *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

As people become followers of Jesus, we want them to engage with God's Word, which is able to teach, correct, and train them in righteousness. Most importantly, we want them to learn to obey God's Word.

Today, we will look at **Matthew 7:24-29** and see what Jesus says about why we should build our lives on the Word of God by listening to and obeying it.

Main Points:

It is a solid foundation (vs.24-25)

- Jesus said that those who hear his words and obey them will be like a wise person building their house on the rock. Jesus' use of the "rock" metaphor is a way the biblical authors describe God's character and his Word. It is to convey the faithfulness of God's Word. What he said is absolutely true and can be relied on.
- When we connect people to the Word of God, we are connecting them to a solid foundation. They can depend fully on what the Bible says as the foundation for their lives.

It keeps us from stumbling (vs.26-27)

- Clinging to God's Word is safety for the storm. Those who hear Jesus' words and obey them are sustained in the storm. Consequently those who do not hear and obey his words are destroyed by the storm.
- What will keep us from falling into the ways of this world? The psalmist asked, *"How can someone keep their way pure before the Lord?"* The answer is, *"by guarding it according to His word"* (Psalm 119:9). The storms will come, but those who listen to and obey the truth, we will not stumble.

It has authority (vs.28-29)

- When Jesus spoke, he spoke with authority. His words were not the words of men, but the words of God. To fail to listen and respond to the Word of God is to fail to listen and respond to God.
- The Word of God has authority to instruct every area of our lives. In a society in which people determine what is right in their own eyes, we need to engage regularly with God's Word so that we don't conform to this pattern. Are you allowing God's Word to have the final say in your life?



Week 6

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Text: Acts 2:42-47

Focus: Connecting people to Christian community

Big Idea: The early Church grew as they devoted themselves to God and to one another.

Synopsis

The early Church was a community characterized by its devotion. They were devoted to God's Word, to remembering Christ's sacrifice, to prayer, and to caring for one another. Through Christ, God brought them together across socio-economic, ethnic, cultural, and gender lines to create a family that loved one another deeply.



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A community of unity and generosity (vs.44-45)

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A community of gratitude and multiplication (vs.46-47)

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- Christian community is called to be a joyful and fruitful community. When we give thanks for the work God is doing among us, we can see God do more in our midst.



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