

Embracing the Vision of Camp Hill



Tell of the trip to Disneyworld.

Through my in-laws and wife, I had gained the vision of going to Disneyworld.

- It was not enough to only think about going to Disneyworld someday, but fully embrace it. We could have gotten in a car and headed southeast, but that did not mean we would hit the goal of arriving at Disneyworld.
- We could have driven to the site and not purchased tickets.
- We could have not had arrangements for lodging or food.

All these actions would have compromised the fulfillment of the vision. Embracing a vision always combines a goal, a plan, funding and a commitment of time. Until those four items come together, there really was no embracing the vision.



Camp Hill Church of Christ Vision Statement

We at the Camp Hill church of Christ have a vision statement and it has been on our bulletin, letterhead and wall for nearly three years. It is summarized in three non-connected participles:

- 1) Seeking the Lost
- 2) Equipping the Saved
- 3) Bringing all into the image of Christ

These are all admirable and scriptural goals. We are to take the gospel to the entire world (Mark 16:15). We are to equip the saints for the work of service (Ephesians 4:12). We are to be brought in the image of Christ (Romans 12:1-2). The first two participles are in complete agreement with the Great Commission and the third is the result of the fulfillment thereof. There is absolutely nothing wrong with the *goal* of our vision at Camp Hill, but have we fully embraced the goal?

In conjunction with our leadership and over the next few months, we are going to be covering a series of lessons aimed at fully embracing the Vision Statement and making it applicable to a larger number of souls, both in and out of the church. We will focus in three areas.

- 1) Gospel Training
- 2) Core Training for Converts
- 3) Leadership Development



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There will be multiple lessons on each of these topics. We would like to take the congregation to a level of preparedness for the fulfillment of our corporate vision. By the end of this year we will be in a much greater position to of Nehemiah 4:6, “the people had a mind to work”. Let us begin with the first lesson of the first segment: *Gospel Training 101*

Gospel Training 101:

Part 1: Understanding the Core Gospel Message

Why was this good news? How can the brutal death of an innocent carpenter be *good news*?

The Five Principles which must be communicated in sharing the gospel.

1) The Principle of Formation

We must share the message that there is a Creator of the cosmos! There is an obligation of the lost to understand there is a Creator responsible for our existence.

- Genesis 1:1, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- Job 38:4, “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding,
- Genesis 1:27, God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
- Matthew 19:4, “Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE”
- Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.
- Psalm 19:1 The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

2) The Principle of Deformation

Since the very beginning of mankind, we have been struggling with a sin problem. From Adam and Eve to All the gospel in the world is unable to assist a lost soul if they do not you and me, we have all fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We must give an account for our sins to the Creator. He will judge us lest we have mediation. *Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned*”. We of the FORMATION must understand that we suffer from a DEFORMATION of sin before God.

3) The Principle of Information

There is certain information the deformed formation must acquire. The core information which must be preached is the death burial and resurrection of the Son of God. As mentioned before, Jesus commanded his people to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” (Mark 16:15). What is the gospel message for which Jesus refer? The definition of gospel is *good news*. In particular it is the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Paul wrote to the Corinthians Christians in the following passage”

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1 Corinthians 15:1-4, “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

He preached them a message which they received, for which they took a stand, by which they were saved, held fast to and did not believe in vain. What was that gospel “good news” message which Paul preached to them? It was the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. When those of the FORMATION understand their DEFORMATION they must seek out the correct INFORMATION about the Christ.

4) The Principle of Conformation

In relation to conversion, the conformation process is the initial submission to the gospel message. Without a conformation to the gospel message, there could be no foundation in which to build the spiritual house upon. What were the standards set for in which to conform to?

Repentance:

- It means to “think again” and in the context it means to think again with the intention to come into agreement with God. This is not referring to a perpetual repentance that one carries the rest of their lives, but the initial repentance. That is the repentance where one initially changes their mind to align with God. Just listen to some of the great presentations of the gospel from the Book of Acts and look for the conformation standard of repentance.
- Acts 2:37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?”
- Acts 5:31 “He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

Confession:

- It is the confession that Jesus is the Christ that a man or woman provides a compass as to what is in their heart. It is in the confession of a man that one is setting the precedent that he or she will not deny their Lord in the face of persecution, but will be bold about the Christ.
- Acts 5:27-29 When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.
- Acts 8:36-37 As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?” ³⁷ And Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

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Baptism:

- This is the moment that a person dies to himself with the intention of living for Christ as based on the death, burial and resurrection of the Christ. Without this anchoring CONFORMATION there can be no true submission to that fact of history. This is why baptism was included in the CONFIRMING process of the early documented gospel presentations from the Book of Acts.
- The three-thousand of Pentecost: Acts 2:38 Peter commanded the repentant Jews to be baptized.
- The Samaritans: Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.
- The Eunuch: Acts 8:38 And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him.
- Saul of Tarsus: Acts 22:16 ‘Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.’
- Lydia and her household: Acts 16:14-15 “...and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. ¹⁵ And when she and her household had been baptized...”
- The Jailer and his household: Acts 16:33 and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household.
- The Corinthians: Acts 18:8 “...and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized.
- The Ephesians: Acts 19:5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

There was a definite initial conformation principle that could be seen in the sermons preached and responded to. Principally put, the FORMATION must understand their DEFORMATION and seek out the INFORMATION for a CONFORMATION in the name of Christ.

5) The Principle of Transformation

When a Christian converts to the graceful and merciful plan of Christ, there is a TRANSFORMATION process that is to take place.

It is an outward transformation:

- Romans 12:1-2 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

It is an inward transformation:

- 2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

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- 2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

It is a bodily transformation:

- Philippians 3:20-21 "...the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.
- 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

There is clearly a principle of transformation that must be taught and continued in through the life of the recipient of the gospel of Christ.

What is Gospel 101? It is when the **FORMATION** realizes their **DEFORMATION**, causing them to seek **INFORMATION** to have a **CONFORMATION** leading to a life-altering **TRANSFORMATION**.