

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20



CHRIST SATISFIES

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"The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." 2 Corinthians 4:4

IT MUST BE GOD

Armed with flyers declaring "*Satan wants you to be ignorant; God wants you to know Him in TRUTH,*" James and a group from our church took to the streets of our neighborhood in north Minneapolis Thursday evening (7/19) at 6:15pm. The purpose was to invite people to a service at the church that would begin at 7pm. Spontaneity marks the lives of many who live here.

That was the inaugural meeting of "The Cross and the Community," an evangelistic outreach partnership between our church, Family Baptist (Girard Ave. N. & 22nd Ave. N.) and Christ Satisfies Ministries. This new ministry opportunity aims to reach those in our community who are out and about and bring them into the church for a time of hearing the truth of God's Word, singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs and enjoying fellowship and food. James and Pastor Lee will share preaching responsibilities with the focus being various aspects of Christ's cross work.

Unaware of how this approach would be received by people, we began to pray that the Lord would bless the meeting and bring at least 10 people from the community. We asked friends and ministry partners around the country to pray and appealed to the body at our church to be on their knees.

Just after 7pm with many flyers distributed and most of those from the

church who had done the inviting returned and ready to hear the Word, the worship time began and James headed up to the front of the sanctuary ready to preach about Jesus, the suffering Servant prophesied in Isaiah 53. As he took the podium there were a couple of guests from the community along with those from the church, seemingly not the 10 neighborhood people for which he hoped. Beginning to get discouraged, he bowed his head in prayer reminding himself that this was God's show not his own and trusting that the Lord could and would should He see fit use his Word preached to convict and rescue sinners whether 1 or 100 were present. Upon looking up after his opening prayer, James was amazed to see many, many more people from the community filling in the seats in front of him! Even some of the gang members/drug dealers that he ministers to throughout the week and whom he invited were sitting there in the church. "The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made," (Psalm 145:33b). Between 15-20 people from the community were present along with our brothers & sisters for a total of about forty. Praise the Lord!

When the service was finished, the group retired to the gym for pizza. Many of our neighbors and people from the streets were able to talk with believers and ask serious questions about Jesus, sin, death and their own future. A teenage mom who was there approached James with a broken and humble frame asking what she should read in the Bible. Not only was he able to direct her to the Gospel of John, but he was

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also able to point her to an older woman in the church who walked this young girl through the Scriptures sharing in detail the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Before the evening was over, she came back to James with tears rolling down her cheeks to share that she had repented of her sins and received the Lord Jesus. God is so good, so gracious and so kind. A young man from the streets who is pretty hard and tough talked with James afterwards and said that he would be back the following week.

With great rejoicing James, our pastor and all involved were blessed to be vessels of Truth in the lives of some of our neighbors here in north Minneapolis.

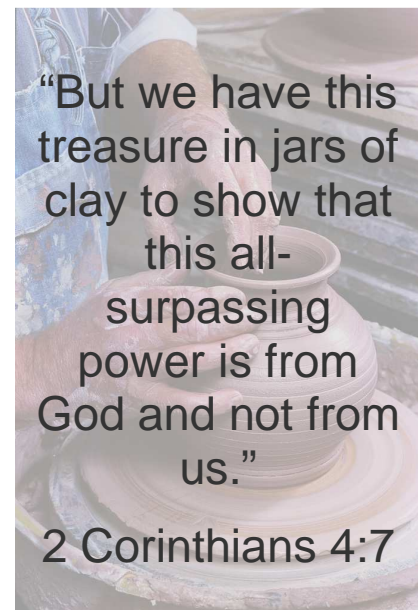
This past Thursday (7/26) at the second meeting of "The Cross & the Community" the Lord once again demonstrated His love for men through the gospel invitation. Again, we prayed for many to attend the service and enlisted the prayers of others to that same end. With flyers in hand a group of brothers and sisters took to the streets once more on foot and with vehicles. James along with another man and his wife drove one of the church's large vans up and down and in and out of the nearby streets handing out flyers, offering rides and inviting people young and old back to Family Baptist to hear about Jesus.

Near Lowry and Lyndale a woman, perhaps in her fifties, said that she would attend with her some of her grandkids and asked James to come back and pick them up. When he returned she, a girl around 11 and several young children piled into the van. Her daughter, the kids' mom, didn't make it in time for the van ride but later she showed up at the church having taken the bus to get there! The group then went off to one of the nearby streets to a house where many young men and women constantly hangout. Several hopped in and a full van headed back to the church. This time the Lord blessed upfront and many from the neighborhood were there at the start of the worship time. As the upbeat strains of the acoustic guitar launched into "Jesus, My Only Hope," voices rang out in song to the King. "Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;" (Psalm 95:6).

James had the privilege of preaching again this time on the doctrine of justification – our being acquitted and declared innocent in God's sight in addition to our being perfectly righteous – all through the sacrifice and work of Jesus Christ, the Father's gracious, indescribable gift to all who trust and believe. Hallelujah! An amazing 56 people from the community who had no affiliation with the church were present! The time following the service was sweet as brothers and sisters were again able to minister Christ's love and the truth of the Word to our neighbors. The Lord was working. One homeless man who was pretty low in his circumstances expressed a great desire for change and intently listened with a tear-stained cheek as a brother shared about the New Hope Center, a Christian-based recovery program which has a very strong, biblical structure. Pray that he would submit to the Lord as His Savior and seek to put on a new life.

A teenage girl who rode along in the van with James and his group expressed a clear understanding of what had been taught. Pray that the Lord would move that knowledge beyond her intellect and into a saving knowledge and faith by the power of His Spirit.

So "The Cross & the Community" outreach has begun with God's blessings. We are grateful and hope He continues to use this venture to reach many people and save souls. Looking forward there seemingly is a need for childcare during this time, which is a blessing because it would enable us to reach children in the community – fifty percent of which is under the age of 19 – with the precious promises of Jesus. There is also the possibility of developing a Sunday school class spinning off from the Thursday night meeting, which would teach the basics of Christianity. This would be a great opportunity to continue ministering to those who come on Thursday and give them a solid foundation in the Scriptures. Please join us in prayer for these efforts. Pray that God will continue to bless the Thursday night service, bring workers and build relationships so that sinners will be saved and angels will rejoice.



CHURCH GUY, TRACTS & CRACKERJACKS

Church Guy. That's just one of the many monikers James is known as around the neighborhood. Nicknames, which are a staple with the guys on the street, are a welcome sign of acceptance and even indicative of a level of trust among those he often ministers to in our community. Some of the others are Preach, Preacher, Fam (i.e. family), Pastor, Father (He tries to discourage that one!), Rev, Reverend and Minister. Praise Him for the rapport that is developing between James and those in our mission field.

Having a mutual friend with the chaplain of the Milwaukee Brewers brought some unexpected excitement to CSM in June. James was contacted by a member of the team requesting to meet and accompany him as he ministered in the community sharing Truth with those in need of Jesus. In town for a series with the Twins over Father's Day weekend, three Brewers who are brothers in the Lord joined James for a morning of ministering the Word, learning more about the challenges in North Minneapolis and seeing

firsthand the people who make this their home.

These brothers were a great encouragement and blessing to James. They are men of integrity who were trusting the Lord as they ventured into the unknown and risky business of



pulling up to groups of drug dealers and gang members and asking them if they would like a Word from the Lord. As they were driving north from their downtown hotel, James shared some of the trials we've experienced and some of the realities of the crime and poverty that mark the area.

They took turns riding shotgun, meeting the young men on the streets and handing out tracts. They also interceded for the people they saw and interacted

with before the Lord in prayer. Before their tour with James was finished, they stopped by our home and met the family. Each one was very encouraging and supportive of Christ Satisfies Ministries' efforts in the city. They were also challenged by our work to be more risk taking in their own ministry to those who don't know the Lord and were grateful to see firsthand life in the streets.

We are grateful to these men for their edifying words, their love and their time. They even invited our family to the game on Father's Day where Titus & Phoebe experienced their first homeruns and crackerjacks.

Recently we were contacted by the Twins' chaplain after hearing about the ministry from the Brewers' players and are looking at the possibility of future opportunities to meet some of the brothers on the team and minister together. Praise the Lord for the providential outworkings of His good and perfect plans. Please continue to pray for those we minister to and those who join us in ministry – they are the hands and feet of Jesus.

Down & Out in Minneapolis

In June, Pastor Lee and Doug, a man from our church accompanied James on an outreach to some of the homeless in the city. With care packages in hand, they drove to several familiar locations and began seeking folks to bless with God's Word and some items which might help ease the burden of the hot, humid days of a Minneapolis summer.

At the Basilica of St. Mary, an enormous shrine to Rome, some homeless men were gathered on a small patch of grass in front of a statue. Pastor Lee sat down with John while James

talked with Jose. Doug was able to minister to some of the other men who were there. All of them listened as Jesus was lifted up and were grateful for the packages, Bibles and tracts handed out.

Just a block or so away across from the Walker Museum they drove past a pregnant woman panhandling; next to her was a teenager with a sign advertising his need. James swung the van around, and they stopped to meet these two souls. Michelle was 8½ months pregnant and her baby was scheduled to be adopted just after

The King replied, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' Matthew 25:40

delivery. Adam was on the streets and caught up in addictions. Both of them accepted Words from the Lord. The woman said that she was “just fine” and not interested in any information regarding practical help. However, Adam took a flyer for the New Hope Center, which operates a Christian recovery program, and was thankful and gracious.

At one of the city lakes there is “the beach” which is known for its community of homeless people. James and Pastor headed down a wooded trail looking for some people to share with and give some supplies. After twenty minutes, a “lovely walk and good fellowship,” they still hadn’t found anyone. Heading back to the main beach area to return to the van, they saw two men. They went over to them with the care packages. One, offended at the “handout,” split. Using his “evangelistic Spanish” James was able to question and encourage the other man, Luis, about Jesus.

The last stop of the day was the Harbor Lights shelter. Lots of people were present waiting to get in for the night. The men witnessed to some. One man expressed interest in coming to church the next day. Pastor Lee agreed to pick him up at nine the next morning. When Sunday came, he was a no-show.

Ministering to these people can be hard, and sad, and tiring. At the same time it is encouraging and enlivening to see the Lord open hearts, provide opportunities and use mere men to extend the borders of His Great Kingdom. Please pray for the salvation of all those the CSM team was able to meet and share with on the streets.



*Jesus answered, “I am the way
and the truth and the life.
No one comes to the Father
except through me.”*

John 14:6

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PRAISES & PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise the Lord for the many opportunities to speak the Truth for the salvation of souls and the sanctification of His body.
- Praise the Lord for His protection of our family.
- Praise the Lord for the many committed supporters (both prayer and financial) of Christ Satisfies Ministries. Pray for an increase in partnerships so that we meet our support goals.
- Please pray for much fruitfulness for the ministry & us.
- Please pray for the August outreach to our neighbors. We will be having a yard giveaway on Saturday, August 18th. Pray for workers and opportunities to share the gospel.
- Please pray that the Lord would continue to bless and bring people in on Thursday nights for “The Cross & The Community” outreach.
- Please pray for the salvation of our children: Trace (15), Titus (4), Phoebe (2) and Hadassah (1).