

Growing in faith builds on our salvation as we grow in our love and knowledge of who Jesus Christ is and what he is calling us to do.

“Dear friends, ..., be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless teachers and fall from your secure position. ¹⁸ But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.”
2Peter 3:17-18

We are motivated in Godly love to **“Reach out to all”** because people are lost and separated from God and we of all people understand the eternal consequences of what that “lostness” looks like.

“The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”
Luke 19:10

Lost people matter to God – Lost people have to matter to us.

Reaching Out to All!

“Is Heaven a real place?”

Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. ¹⁹ “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. ²⁰ Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. ²¹ The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. ²² In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. ²³ At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?” Jesus replied, **“Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?” ²⁵ When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.” Mark 12:18-25**

Matthew 6:9 starts with this declaration:

“Our Father who is in Heaven”.

Jesus gives his disciples a glimpse of what awaits all of Jesus disciples:

“In My Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” John 14:2-3.

Angels testify heaven is a real place.

“Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11

- ❖ We have a firm foundation upon which to build our belief that heaven is a real place.

How are we harmed if we don’t believe heaven is a real place?

- We are denying the written Word of God
- We are denying the innermost longings of our own hearts.

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to cling to the hope of heaven so that we will not lose heart.

“Although we “groan and sigh” in our earthly state, we have the hope of heaven always before us and are eager to get there.”

2 Corinthians 5:1-4

- ❖ Looking forward to our eternal home in heaven gives us a perspective that enables us to endure hardships and disappointments in this life.

“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

- ❖ Heaven is a real place and we know this to be true because our faith is founded on the truth of God’s Word.

“Is hell a real place?”

According to the Bible, hell is just as real as heaven.

Jesus says in:

- Matthew 25:46 that hell is just as everlasting as heaven.
- Mark 9:44-49 that hell is a place of “torment” and “fire”.
- Luke 16:23-24 that hell is a place of “everlasting destruction”
- 2 Thessalonians 1:9 says hell is a place where “the smoke of torment rises forever and ever”.
- ❖ Hell is real. But the bible also proclaims that through Jesus Christ, all people can escape this eternal destination.

This is what the Good News of the Gospel is all about!

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not

condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son...

³⁶ Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see (eternal) life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”

John 3:16- 18, 36

Our Purpose statement says that:

“We are to be a community where people actively reach out to all.”

BUT WHY SHOULD WE REACH OUT TO ALL?

The number one reason we should “reach out to all” is for the same reason Jesus came to” reach out to all” people.

“The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

Luke 19:10

- ❖ Jesus love for lost people is the reason he came to earth.

Jesus desires to save lost people from:

- Sin, from eternal judgement, from hell, and from eternal separation from God.

Jesus desires to restore lost people to:

- The forgiveness, the acceptance, the love, and the restoration of a right relationship with God the Father.

“Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. 1John 2:2

“Jesus is the one who turns aside God’s wrath, taking away our sins, and not only ours but also for the sins of the whole world.” 1John 2:2

If we try to down play, to minimize, or diminish, the consequences of our sin, of the reality of hell, of eternal separation from God, for those who do not accept his Son’s sacrifice on the cross, --- not only do we discredit the truth of God’s Word and what God willingly gave up for us, --- his one and only Son --- we also lose any reason, any motivation, any purpose to “reach out to all” other than it makes us feel good about ourselves.

Our purpose is to be a community where people become deeply rooted in Christ, consistently grow in faith, and actively reach out to all.

Rooted in Christ starts with accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and surrendering our whole lives to him.

“Jesus declares, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he/she is born again.” John 3:3