

These are my personal notes, so don't judge me for the poor grammar...

# Braynes

Being Outward: Obstacles We Face

## Week 3 Notes

The past two weeks we looked at how Jesus is calling us outward. That his mission was not unto himself, but to us. He lived among us, related to us, hung out with us, all so he could tell us of himself, his kingdom, and upon his death and resurrection, invite us to have life everlasting. If we are to imitate him then we must be outward focused. But HOW we are to be outward focused, seems just as important as WHY we are to be outward focused. We must come along people, meet them where they are at, and love them as they are able to receive. Sam was telling me about Perspectives Class and how they talk about how each culture has a unique redemptive analogy. People wanting to communicate the gospel can use the culture's folklore, it's history and all the formative bits that influence the culture to communicate the gospel. This is also true as the group size gets smaller. In our postmodern, first world cultures we identify in more segmented ways (the obvious examples are cliques in highschool, fraternities/sororities, music scenesters, but can also include something more generic groups, like outdoorsy people). This pattern of redemptive analogies continues down to the single individual, and it is our goal to love them deeply and find out who they are, what they like and don't like, and bring the gospel in a way that makes sense to them.

Friendship



It's funny because we've used big phrases like missional incarnational impulse or platonic-dualism but essentially what we've been talking about and describing is how to be a friend to someone in the way that Jesus desires us to. It's really that simple. The harvest is great, now go work the harvest by going where the spirit is leading you and love others generously and pointing them back to christ.

Obstacles to being outward

So with all of that, we can know what we should do, and roughly how we should do it but in the end we still struggle to do it. Why we don't things can be a confusing and complicated thing. So it might be helpful for us to take a look at what are some of the obstacles that we face that prevent us from thinking outward as Jesus did.

It might be helpful as were talking, to think about how these obstacles are informed by our culture, our insecurities, and religious tradition. So let's talk about them.

Some of the obstacles y'all said were:

"I get social anxiety"

"I am scared of not representing Jesus well and not having the answer to their questions"

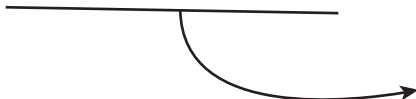
"I know that my life doesn't always line up with what I'm talking about."

"I am worried about being insensitive, like if they have church hurt."

"I don't always have time."

"It might just not be worth it."

Incarnational Outwardness



If you look at the list of obstacles that y'all created, (which are all extremely legitimate feelings) you can see that there is a ton of anxiety around the idea of being outward. I believe one reason we have so much anxiety about this is because we are still getting tripped up by a narrow idea of what it means to "go and make disciples of all nations" as Jesus commanded us to. I believe that is partially due to the evangelical church tradition of proselytizing has been based on contact evangelism, where you go up to a random person with the goal to convince them that they need Jesus through presenting a gospel diagram, or engaging in a heady philosophical debate. Don't get me wrong, many people have come to know Jesus through such encounters but I believe if that is the only or even main way we think about fulfilling the great commission we are missing out on the incredible truth of the incarnation. Jesus is calling us to love others generously, by entering into their world, learning their values, and developing a relationship that is directed towards the imitation of Jesus. This sort of outwardness doesn't require knowing all the answers, or being holy through and through. It doesn't work outside of the natural rhythms of our life either. This incarnational outwardness does require, however, an awareness to the people around you, and being led by the spirit as you practice patience, and perseverance. And this is what we are attempting to practice in this class.