

**2018 HPBC Goals**

1. *Individual Community Involvement*: We will endeavor to cultivate a culture of evangelism in our church this year by encouraging our members to advance the gospel through individual community involvement.
   * Specifically: We desire for our members to pursue a level of community involvement that brings them into regular contact with those who need Christ. “Community involvement” can be as simple as engaging a neighbor through a common hobby or as complex as participating in or leading a formal community organization (sports leagues, HOA, charities, etc).
2. *Church Family Gathering*: We will continue our goal from last year to devote ourselves as a church family to the practice of prayer, testifying, and discipling one another during our evening gathering.
   * Specifically: In addition to private and small group settings, we desire to see our church practice the commanded disciplines of prayer, testifying, and discipleship as an entire church family together. Our vision is for these practices to be essential and primary activities during our evening gathering. We will begin the process of structuring our evening gatherings to centralize around these activities.

**Reflect**

* *Sunday AM – Luke 2:1-21 – God’s Perfect Gift – Chris Barney*
  1. Sovereignly planned: Augustus ruled with an iron fist. “Peace” existed because of the fear of punishment for getting out of line. He enacted the tax law out of self interest to get money from every person in every city and village. Yet, as a result, Micah’s prophesy was fulfilled.
     + Can you testify of God’s providential working in your life? In hindsight, can you recount times that God has used others’ self-interest to accomplish a plan that makes sense now? Maybe a difficult boss, co-worker, family member, etc.
       - Consider times in your life that something has seemed unfair or unnecessarily difficult (Joseph and Mary’s traveling for the census). Initially you probably wished different decisions had been made by those in authority or others that have a direct impact on you. Can anyone testify to God using it for good?
       - For some, you may not see any good resulting from these difficult situations. What does Scripture have to say about this? What truths and promises?
  2. Powerfully Proclaimed: “Glory to God”
     + Do you enjoy regularly proclaiming God’s glory with others? Worship services, concerts, with friends when hanging out, with your family?
     + What leads to these times? (usually someone sharing what God has done!)
     + What are ways you can do this more often? Especially with friends and family since many of us struggle to worship naturally in these small group settings. At times, we may feel awkward doing this with family or friends. It may feel forced. Why? How do we change this? Has anyone found success doing this?
  3. Sweetly discovered
     + Have you ever experienced a time where you were able to share exciting news with someone and you knew it would bring incredible joy to them? (Healing of an ill child, financial provision, cancer going into remission, providing for someone’s need.)
       - Do we share God’s good news like this? Why does the excitement seem to be missing at times? (times when the energy seems to leave the room when we get to the “spiritual” stuff)
       - What are ways we can change this? Why does it happen?
       - How excited do you get when your needs are met? How about excitement over your greatest need being met?
         * Does the level of our excitement match the level of need that has been met?
         * How can we cultivate an atmosphere that gives room for more of this?
       - Mary also spent time pondering. A quieter time of reflection and praise. Do you regularly enjoy quiet moments of praise to God? How could you make this more common in your life? How would it affect the level of joy we have throughout our days?
  4. Requires our response: their response – praise and obedience
     + How would you feel about others giving you a strange look because your fiancé is expecting? Are they going to buy the “Spirit came upon her” comment?
     + Despite this shame, Mary and Joseph praised God. Why and how?
     + The battle between emotions and truth takes place in their minds. Can you relate? What helps you during these times?
* *Sunday PM – Proverbs – Power: Redeeming Authority – James Gass*
  1. What is our general culture's thoughts towards authority?
  2. What are your thoughts about authority? Where do you fall on the spectrum between disregarding authority and blindly following authority)? Why?
  3. How does God want us to think about authority? Discuss this together, maybe citing some specific Scripture texts.
  4. How does Jesus use of authority contrast so much of today's abuse of authority?
     + Particularly think through James' second point: Abusive authority prefers position to people. (See also Prov 28:15-16)
  5. What positions of authority do you hold? Name as many as you can think of?
     + In what ways is it easiest for you to abuse your authority?
     + What opportunities do you have to build up others in the realm of your authority?
  6. In groups of 2-3:
     + In what ways have you abused your authority? And in what areas do you need to improve?
     + Pray for each other.