

The Heartbeat of Hope:***“Engage the World by the Power of the Spirit”******John 17:5, 2 Corinthians 5: 17-21; Galatians 5:25, and 1 Peter 2: 9-17******Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:***

“There has been a long tradition which sees the mission of the Church primarily as obedience to a command. It has been customary to speak of ‘the missionary mandate.’ This way of putting the matter is certainly not without justification, and yet it seems to me that it misses the point. It tends to make mission a burden rather than a joy, to make it part of the law rather than part of the gospel. If one looks at the New Testament evidence one gets another impression. Mission begins with a kind of explosion of joy. The news that the rejected and crucified Jesus is alive is something that cannot possibly be suppressed. It must be told. Who could be silent about such a fact?” – Lesslie Newbigin

*“In service which Thy will appoints, there are no bonds for me;
For my inmost heart is taught “the truth” that makes Thy children “free;”
And a life of self–renouncing love is a life of liberty. – Anna Waring*

*“The hardest task for people who believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ is in ‘living the sort of life that makes people say, ‘Ah, so that’s how people are going to live when righteousness takes over our world.’ The hardest task is simple, persistent faithfulness in our work and in our attitudes – the kind of faithfulness that shows we are being drawn forward by the magnet force of the kingdom of God.”
– Cornelius Plantinga*

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

- What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Are there lingering questions to be answered or rabbit trails to be followed for you?
- Now that we have started to deal with the third piece of our mission and vision (Engage), how do you see all the pieces fitting together? Why is it necessary to hold all three in balance? Which is the toughest for you personally?
- Why does Newbigin (in the quotation above) emphasize joy as the launching pad for mission?
 - What are some other motives?
 - How is the joy that “the rejected and crucified Jesus is now alive” enlivening and motivating mission for you?
- How are you connecting your vocation with mission in God’s kingdom? Do you really believe that God is using you (dim, faltering, inconsistent, ordinary) to build His kingdom? Why/Why not?
- Do you feel more at home and comfortable with Christians or non-believers? Why?
 - Jesus prayed that we would not be removed from the “world”. Why?
 - Where are you present in the “world” that is a struggle for you?
 - Where in the world do you see a possibility for engagement?