

# Excitement

## Introduction:

- New series - GameTime
- Urgency/ Critical Time
  - Critical juncture for the Church, especially in US
  - Church in decline (stats)
    - NGA UMC - 2017 - 7% decrease in POF; 5% lower attendance
    - 4000 churches closed in US last year...
    - “The Great Opportunity” - Summary of Finding compiled by “Pinetop Foundation” from four major research efforts: the Religious Landscape Study produced by the Pew Research Center (in 2007 and in 2014); the Baylor Religion Survey (2007-2011); the PRRI/RNS September 2016 Survey conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute; and the Gallup Annual Religion Surveys (1992-2016) in the next 30 years:
      - 42 million youth raised in Christian homes will disaffiliate from Christianity, which is ~1.4 million per year
      - The overall Christian percentage of the population will drop to 54 percent, from today’s 73 percent [so 54% of Americans will call themselves Christian in a culture that no longer values that identification as it had historically.] It will feel very different (and already does to many!) when nearly half of Americans are not Christian
      - The unaffiliated population will more than double as a percentage of the U.S. population, from 17 percent today to 35 percent in 2050, an increase of more than 70 million people
    - Blog: Timothy Brown
      - The Church today is ‘Spiraling into self-preservation’
      - Too many churches are too occupied with propping up the past instead of embracing the future;
  - We got to do our job; God’s gonna take care of His part
  - **Worship Note:** Our job is to help get as many people as possible on Team Jesus

Mark 7:31-37 Jesus Heals a Deaf and Mute Man

**31 Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis. 32 There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him.**

**33 After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. 34 He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "Ephphatha!"(which means "Be opened!"). 35 At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.**

**36 Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. 37 People were overwhelmed with amazement. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."**

**Tension:** We see in this scripture that the people that saw Jesus perform this miracle couldn't stop talking about it or Him. Why are we silent (tongue-tied) when it comes to telling others about Jesus?

- Excitement
  - We talk about things we are excited about - movie, restaurants, sports
    - World Cup
  - Mark 7
    - Loosed tongue led to excitement, which then led to the people have 'loose tongues' and telling others about Jesus and what He's done
  - John 4
    - Samaritan Woman
    - Woman's excitement led to the salvation of an entire city
  
  - Cuban; South America; Africa ARE telling people - Gospel is spreading! People are excited! Doubling, even tripling at times
  - Why aren't we (Western Church) telling people about?
  - **Worship Note:** In the Bible, people can't **STOP** telling people about Jesus; we can't **START** telling people about Jesus
    - Is Jesus worth telling people about?

- Everyone says 'yes'
- Then why aren't you?
- Is it fear? Or simply that our excitement has diminished

## WHAT TIME IS IT. . . . .GAME TIME

What has diminished our excitement?

- Honeymoon phase
  - When we first come to know Jesus
  - Mountaintop experience
    - Retreats
    - Mission trips
    - Etc.
- Not experiencing signs and wonders
  - Bob Beckwith/Cuba
    - Ask God why they are experiencing these things and the American Church is not,
    - God's answer= "because they love me more than you (American Church) do.
    - All they have is God and family. God means more to them. They are completely dependent on him. They have less to compete with their hearts
- Culture
  - Consumerism: my own wants are more important than the needs of others
    - Keeps us from participating in God's mission
  - Entitlement: We deserve stuff
    - Because of who we are
    - Think we are better than others
    - No effort, because we expect we will be 'given' everything
    - Blocks community
  - Individualism: We don't need anyone else
    - Everything revolves around us
    - Success is totally dependent on me
    - Little kids
    - Blocks community
  - Materialism: Acquiring of possession / want of stuff
    - Keeping up with the Jones'
    - Prevents us in participating in God's mission
    - Spending on self instead of contributing
  - "Suburbanism" Matt Chandler
    - Good house, Good car, Good job, good family

- Why do I need God?
  - Let me be clear= WE NEED GOD
  - Story that I shared a couple weeks ago: Arm Rest
- Distractions
  - Bill Johnson
    - If Satan can't get you to commit sin
    - Gets you off track of your assignment/purpose
  - Good things
    - Family
    - Job
    - School
    - Relationships

### WHAT TIME IS IT. . . . .GAME TIME

- Idols
  - Money
  - Power
  - Success
  - Notoriety - being noticed and appreciated and moving up the ladder - careerism
- Busyness/Time
- Friendship with the world is enmity with God (scripture)
  - James 4:4 (NIV)
 

4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

Bottom line, we're more interested in this world and our stuff and ourselves than telling people about Jesus

Saved by grace, out of that love desire for others to experience

We can find a lot of 'excuses', but No excuse is Good enough

**Worship Note:** God wants our excitement, not our excuses.

- Even if we aren't 'excited' it's our job to tell others!

**Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. <sup>34</sup> He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "Ephphatha!"(which means "Be opened!"). <sup>35</sup> At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.**

- **We are too much like this guy pre-Jesus; mute**
- **What's it gonna take for our tongues to be loosened?**
- **We need to "Ephphatha!" ( say Ephphatha)**
  - **Open up**
  - **Speak plainly**
  - **You love the Bulldogs, or GT, or Alabama, and everyone knows it - do they know you love Jesus?**

Do we truly believe the Gospel (Is Jesus really the Way, the Truth, the Life, no one. One to the Father except through the Son)

- **John 14:6 (NIV)**  
6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

If not, what is the point?

**Jesus is compassionate, Healer, Savior**

- love that person, but not enough to get them to eternal life, here and now.
- Our #1 priority is to help Get as many people as we can on team Jesus
  - Great Commission
  - **Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)**  
19 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, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
  - **Worship Note** Tim Johnson: "Get saved"; "Get filled"; "Get Out"
- Rest of series going to talk about some practical ways to 'tell' about Jesus...

### **Closing**

- Coach Gilstrap Pep talk
  - You got ONE job!
  - Need you to be excited about it; GET EXCITED,
    - There's a whole world that needs Jesus
    - Trust your teammates to do their job, you do your job,
      - Tell people about Jesus
      - No Excuses
- Break on 3: 1,2,3 "Team Jesus!!"