

The Vision of East Valley Bible Church Tempe: Drawing In The Gospel of John Scott Maxwell

Introduction:

Which country?

- 5th largest un-churched nation with 187,000,000 citizens untouched by the gospel. . .
- Of the adults who do attend any given protestant church, half are not even Christians. . .
- Its churches are losing 2,765,000 people each year. . .
- Between 3500 and 4000 churches close their doors each year for the last time. . .
- Only 1100 to 1500 churches are started each year. . .
- Not a single county in this country has a greater percentage of church people today than a decade ago. .

God has made it unmistakably clear that:

1. Jesus alone reveals and provides saving access to God.
 - John 14:6-10; Matthew 11:27
2. Jesus is God's only object of attraction.
 - John 6:44, 65; 12:32
3. Jesus is God's only agent of choice.
 - John 6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 19
4. Jesus is God's unique repository of God's people.
 - John 6:37, 39; 17:2, 6, 9, 24
5. 'DRAWING IN' IS UNIQUELY HIS SOVEREIGN, SAVING WORK.
 - Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:13
6. His sovereign 'drawing' will continue through Jesus' disciples.
 - John 17:18-20

Application—When it comes to drawing in:

1. Jesus must be our greatest desire.

'Our power in drawing men to Christ springs chiefly from the fullness of our personal joy in Him, and the nearness of our personal communion with Him. The countenance that reflects most of Christ, and shines most with His love and grace, is most fitted to attract the gaze of a careless, giddy, world, and win restless souls from the fascinations of creature love and creature-beauty. A ministry of power must be the fruit of a holy, peaceful, loving intimacy with the Lord.' Horatius Bonar, *Words to Winners of Souls*, p. 13

The world cannot afford us to 'speak of Christ more by hearsay than from personal knowledge and experience, or without any real impression of Him upon the heart.' p. 31

'Nearness to God, fellowship with God, waiting upon God, resting in God, have been too little the characteristic either of our private or of our ministerial walk. Hence our example has been powerless, our labors so unsuccessful, our sermons so meager, our whole ministry so fruitless and feeble.' p. 46

2. Prayer must be our priceless discipline.

'Why is there so little anxiety to get time to pray? Why is there so little forethought in the laying out of time and employments so as to secure a large portion of each day for prayer? Why is there so much speaking, yet so little prayer? Why is there so much running to and fro, yet so little prayer? Why so much bustle and business, yet so little prayer? Why so many meetings with God? Why so little being alone, so little thirsting of the soul for the calm, sweet hours of unbroken solitude, when God and His child hold fellowship together as if they could never part? It is the want of these solitary hours that not only injures our own growth in grace but makes us such unprofitable members of the church of Christ, and that renders our lives useless. In order to grow in grace, we must be much alone.' pp. 44-45

3. Contentment in ministry will not be misguided.

4. Numbers submit to all of the above (mostly to God!).