**Evangelical and Free**

**Proclaim the Gospel.**

Evangelism video Goulash

**Intro**duction:

Why we’re doing this…

To know what’s unique about the evangelical free church.

Discover the rich history

What makes us tick

And just to be intentional about uniting local churches together. That’s been the heart-beat of the Evangelical Free church of America since the beginning when Swedish and Danish groups combined in 1950. In the mid-twentieth century, the country had deep problems with segregation and that mindset flowed into the churches. There was very little unity amongst local church congregations. Carl Henry called for churches to come together in effort to impact the world for the gospel. We could use that today!

I get to speak on the crux of who we are as the Evangelical free church.

Anybody willing to admit this morning that at some point in coming to an Evangelical Free church You asked the question what does the name Evangelical Free mean?

Who’s willing to admit they even had trouble pronouncing it? I did!

I’ve had all sorts of people ask me what the name means, and I’ve heard some interesting theories. Most interesting ones were of a man who thought we were escaped out of the gospel movement. Free from evangelicals. No, that’s no the meaning, another one came and thought that we were a church free of rules and could do whatever we want. No

Our name defines everything that we are! Evangelical is very old word with rich history and meaning within the name.

During the reformation in the sixteenth century, Martin Luther lead the charge against a very corrupt and lost church to rediscover the core Article on which the church either stands or falls. “Justification by faith alone.” That had gotten lost in the red tape of religion. Martin Luther and others stood up and said Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. God’s truth is found in scripture alone and Christ atoning death was for all who believe.

These people, were labelled evangelicals and then later called “protestants.”

Evangel-means the gospel.

Evangelicals are proclaimers of the gospel.

That’s our name!

The Free in our name means free from higher-arch rule. Each local congregation is self-governing. I like to say we are free from dyes and other artificial ingredients.

Our very purpose for existing as a church is to open up the bible and proclaim the gospel free from artificial flavorings and other added ingredients.

These six verses in 1 Timothy 1:11-17 really captures the Evangelical heart for me. In accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted. 12 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13 though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. 17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

**What have you been entrusted with?** The gospel of the glory of the blessed God!

**What is that Gospel?** The message of Jesus. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

I want to point out four things.

**1 This is God’s gospel**. This is the way God planned salvation. We receive this from God we don’t create it. This is not Ryan’s gospel.

**2 God’s gospel is according to the Scripture.** What’s that mean? That it comes to us authoritatively through God’s word in the bible. And I mean the whole bible, starting in Genesis through revelation, it declares the gospel of Jesus Christ. Gal 1 says anyone who teaches a gospel contrary to the one in the bible let them be accursed.

**3 God’s gospel alone addresses our deepest need**. Our sin. Christ died for our sin. This is a huge! Sin separates us from God. Sin brings a curse to the world. Sin is why bad things happen to good people. Sin imprisons people in darkness. Sin sends people to hell.

Before the gospel Paul acted ignorantly in unbelief. He calls himself the foremost sinner! He was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent of God. And he was deeply religious!

But God so loved the whole world that he sent his one and only Son to die for your sins and mine, so that who so ever believes in Jesus shall not perish in the darkness but have eternal life!

God defeated our greatest enemy! Death and sin.

This will transform lives. Just look at what it did to Paul. He received mercy and forgiveness when He accepted Jesus as Lord. Became a great evangelical

Just look at the transforming power the gospel had on your life! Who were you before you knew Christ? Who would be now if you had never believed?

This brings me to number four.

**4 God’s gospel requires a response.** God’s sovereignty and human responsibility are a yes yes. It is only by the Grace through faith in Jesus Christ that we are saved, it is not of works lest any man could boast. Our responsibility is to respond to this. To choose Christ. To turn to God in repentance of sin and receive Him as Lord.

We are Evangelical and Free when we proclaim this glorious gospel.

I love what our Evangelical Convictions tell us about this.

 “God’s gospel is now embodied in the new community called the church. This means not only that the gospel creates the church, but also that the church proclaims the gospel.”

The Church is not just the bearer of the gospel, the church is a part of the message itself.

Jesus Prayed in John 17:22-23 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

Wow! We exist to be the expression of the gospel to the world. How are we at doing that? Do we live up to our name? When is the last time you’ve shared the gospel? When’s the last time someone has stood up at the church and confessed with their mouth the Lord Jesus for the first time?

Three excuses for not Evangelizing

**#1 I don’t know how to**. People will say I don’t share the gospel because I don’t understand scripture enough, or I don’t know what to say. That’s what preachers and scholars are for. Who are the ministers according to scripture? This argument is ironic for me. In my experience the people who say this have been Christians for a long time. I want to ask, what have you been doing with God’s grace all this time you’ve been at church?!

I’ve found that those who just accepted Christ as Lord tell everyone they know because of how new grace is to them. How big grace is to them. They don’t know what to say but they say, all I know is God has forgiven me. That Jesus loves me. That I have been forgiven. Isn’t that what the blind guy said to the Pharisee’s. All I know is I was once blind but now I see! Were guilty of over complicating it.

For those who don’t know what to say, say this, Jesus loves you. He died for your sin and he desires to have a relationship with you.

The second common reason people use for not sharing their faith is

 **#2 I don’t really want to**. It’s not for me. I don’t want to seem like an extreme religious person. I don’t want to be labeled, I just want to blend in.

Will you be labelled for sharing the gospel? Yes! That’s a good thing! Christian means “little Christ”. I’ll be labelled with the same love, same truth, same forgiveness as God. I want to be known for that!

When a person comes to know Christ as savior, that “I don’t want to” becomes “I can’t help but speak”, because your life is transformed in Christ.

The third common reason people use is flat out

 **#3 I don’t need to**. It’s not a priority in my life. I’ve got too many other things going on in my life right now. Notice the common problem. All starts with “I”

Why is it that when we want something, urgency is justified? Yet when God commands something, we rationalize? I’ll invite that neighbor to church when life settles down, its just not a good time right now.

If someone screams help I’m drowning, we don’t rationalize, we don’t say, I’d help but it’s not a good time for me, life is chaotic right now. We help because we see the need.

Rescue is urgent because its needed. How much more the gospel? How much do we love Jesus and the gospel? How much do we want Jesus to rescue those we love drowning in sin?

**My point: If Jesus has transformed you, you must transmit the gospel.**

God’s People, have God’s mission, for God’s gospel.

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

At Trinity we call this the Five verb mission. Only God could take a cosmic plan of redemption and break it down to five words. Circle the five points of action in this verse.

**Go**- The Greek word says “as you go” meaning as you live your life everywhere you go, you are on a mission.

**Make**- This verb implies a “work in progress” What are you to make? Disciples. A family of worshippers. How?

**Baptize**- This speaks of our whole identity changing in salvation. We go from belonging to ourselves to belonging to God. We go from being dead in our sins and alive in Christ. Then we teach

**Teach**- the verbiage means keep on teaching them. A lifelong process devoting yourself to teaching others. Never retire from ministry.

**Remember**- God is with us through it all!

That’s our mission.

You are God’s chosen method to tell people about Grace. Ever wonder why that is?

Why does God want to use me? He should know how bad I am at memorizing the bible and how shy I am and how I stutter when I begin to talk about God.

Why does God choose to use me? Couldn’t he just open the sky and introduce himself to the world, I think that would be really effective! But I guess the stars do declare the glory of God and that doesn’t seem to get people’s attention.

Why don’t you use angels…Well actually I have used angels but it still didn’t cut it.

Well why don’t you get their attention by fire from the sky or flood the world or boils or hey… how about just coming down here and telling everyone...Already done.

Do you know why you are God’s chosen method of sharing the news of Grace?

Because you are the only creature who has actually experienced Grace.

Angels haven’t experienced forgiveness

Jesus doesn’t need His own grace

God the Father does need sins forgiven

You are the one who can say I was once lost and now I’m found. I was blind but now I see.

How much easier is going to an unfamiliar place with someone who has been there before and can tell you first hand where to go and what to avoid.

That’s why God uses you, because you are the most qualified! Wow…

Roman 10:14-15 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

I heard a preacher explain the gospel this way:

There is this infinite almighty, all knowing, all powerful creator God, who created all thing for his glory. We have a purpose in this creation but we have fallen short of that purpose because of sin. Sin separates us from God

Every one of us at one time or another actually believed that our way is better than God’s. We failed to acknowledge him for the very breathe he has given us, we question his rule and authority, we suppress the truth and instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, we place our idols on the thrones of our heart.

We have all sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God and God being Just, and right and Holy cannot allow the belittlement of His name. The wages of our sins demand death. God, then not being able to spare the wrath due for our sin, sends Christ in the flesh and crushes Him. And in so doing pours out his wrath, against the children of God onto the Son killing Him. God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right. His purpose: to redeem mankind, His plan: sovereign, His purpose: salvation, His presentation: to show His incredible steadfast love to us while we were yet sinners sending Christ to die for us. Then God raises Him from the dead, and that same power that raised Christ from the dead is now at work in those who believe. This is the gospel, that you and I can have right standing with God, not by our efforts, not by our works, not by our skill, not by whether we cuss or don’t cuss, drink or don’t drink, do this or don’t do that. We are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone Jesus declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.” Your sins? You’re not able to fix them on your own, your shame, you cannot fix it, your anger, hurt, rage, addictions, those deviances that follow you around, you do not possess the power of life and death, you cannot resurrect anything…Christ Can! That’s the good news, to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.

It's saying to God, if you’re real be real to me.

Be Evangelical and Free.

Pray!

Entrusted with the blessed glorious gospel.

God’s gospel, made authoritative through God’s word, to tackle our deepest need.

Receive Christ today as Lord.

Transform and transmit. Proclaim the gospel.

I received mercy for this reason, that in me, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. 17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. In Jesus name, Amen.