

Philippians 4:13
“Dig Deep and Reach Out”
8th Sunday af. Pentecost

July 10, 2016
Our Redeemer
Rev. Brent Hartwig

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you from God, our Father, and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

[Introduction] It was a good day at work.
No..., it was an excellent day at work.
Regina owned the business, cultivated the business, worked the business.

Typically, there would be 4, 5, maybe 6 customers an hour.
Her investment was low, low on capital and low on time.
But her profit, her profit was high.

And this day... this hour we walked up and said we will buy 7 snow cones at once.

Her business was selling snow cones, out of her car, parked alongside the street.
She had a license. It was on display – peeking out of her bra.
She assured us that her product was quality.
She didn’t water down her juice. Not like others.

One of the girls commented about the weather ... and the heat,
and she said, “Would you like a bottle of water?”

You see, we were carrying water around Austin and handing it out to people on the street. We were blessed and we wanted to bless others.

So Jenny said, “Would you like a bottle of water?”
To which Regina replied, “Now, wait a minute. You want to buy my product and you want to give me water? I have never heard anything as crazy as that.”

And think about it.
Have you ever said to a waiter, “What can I get you?”
Have you ever said to a cashier, “Here is my money and a mint for you.”
No, we say, “I wish the waiter would refill my drink faster.”
And to the cashier, “Boy this adds up quickly.”

And yet, because of being at UKANDU, because of focusing on outreach,
we were ready to buy snow cones, give Regina money, profit, and...
Because we were standing there, all 7 of us, do you know what happened?

A line formed. Right? That is human nature.
Where ever there is a line, it must be good.
And it became good for Regina. We bought four other people's snow cones.
And the line grew longer.

[*Outreach*] That is outreach.
 That is one of the stories from UKANDU.
UKANDU is a silly name – at least when you see it written out.
U – K – A – N – D – U
But when it is heard – You Can Do! You Can Do!
It comes from the Apostle Paul who said,
 “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” (Phil 4:13^{ESV})
And the same is true for you...
 You can do all things through him who strengthens you!

And that means reaching out.
As called followers of Christ it is our obligation, no... our joy to reach out and share the
good news of Jesus Christ.

If you read a good book?
If you saw a good movie?
If you heard a good song? What do you do?
 You tell. You tell anyone and everyone who would listen.

And so let that good news bubble up inside of you and tell.
Remember the old hymn? “I love to tell the story.” Tell it.

[*Doubt*] And so I was telling my dad. He wanted to hear UKANDU stories.
And so I told him about:
— Regina the snow cone lady
— the countless people the youth prayed with in the laundromats
— the children who registered for the school
— the neighbors we quietly impacted by saying hello
— the people surprised by the 3-3 basketball event between
 the Chicago police and local youth
— and on and on and on...

And he heard my excitement about reaching out.
And doubt overcame him.
He said something like, “I hope I have done enough outreach to get to heaven.”

And that is when I had the joy to reach out one more time.
Dad you don't go to heaven because of your works.
You go to heaven because of Jesus' work.

Doubt creeps in. The devil does his work, and we doubt.

Yet, we go to heaven because of Jesus' work.
His work at Calvary.
His work on the cross.
His work where the blood flowed.
His work where he took the wrath of God upon himself,
and through his resurrection he gives to us his glorious righteousness.

Corem Deo – before God, we are given the righteousness of Christ,
and there is nothing we do,
nothing we can do,
nothing we can forget to do, for we don't do it.

Christ does it all, and because He does it, we go to heaven.
Our sins are forgiven because of what Jesus has done.
Salvation is ours because of what Jesus has done.
Even life everlasting is our because of what Jesus has done.

[Reaching Out]

And that is so true. And that is so certain, and yet we get so confused because....

Well in justification we can do nothing, but in sanctification we do everything.

As saved people, as we live out our lives, we must do something.
No longer is righteousness passive, but it becomes active.
Now that we are saved, we live a life doing.

We live a life reaching out, and that doesn't just mean telling Regina, the snow cone lady, that Jesus loves her.

Reaching out means sharing the love of Jesus in all sorts of ways.

- The person who listens to the waitress who is having a bad day is sharing the love of Jesus.
- The person who smiles at the cashier and encourages them that in a short time they will be done with another day of work is sharing the love of Jesus.

We do not all have to be on the street evangelizing.
But we all do need to do good works.
We all need to show the love of God to those around us, to those in our lives.

[Dig Deep] And that can be hard. So we must dig deep.

Did you listen to the lyrics of the song Thrive.
Maybe you heard it on the radio.

[Maybe you realize we just sang it as our Sermon song.] *except 8:00 am!*

The song reminds us, that just like a tree that reaches out with its branches,
we need to have deep roots.

We need to dig deep to reach out and share the love of Jesus.

We need to dig deep by being in the Divine Service on a regular basis.

And not just be here, but learn and grow in the meaning of the liturgy.

We need to dig deep by being in Bible study.

And not just studying it by ourselves,

but by studying with a pastor, a vicar, a small group leader, even other Christians.

We need to dig deep by being in prayer,

And not just formal prayer at church,

but by praying at a stop light,

by praying before our meals,

by praying before we begin a task,

by praying when we wake and before we fall asleep.

By digging deep we are freshened by the Word of God.

And don't tell me you have heard all of the stories before.

You know, I hear that from time to time and I just laugh inside.

So have I. I have heard them all before, and yet each time I read the Word of God
my eyes are opened and my ears are unstopped.

[Conclusion]

As the song Thrive repeats.... we have....

Joy unspeakable, faith unsinkable, Love unstoppable, anything is possible

So let us dig deep and reach out. Amen!

Now, let us make a joyful noise unto the Lord. Amen!