

# Tangible Theology

Living a Life of Love: Part II  
*CSLI Urban Plunge 2015*

*“Preach the gospel  
at all times,  
using words if necessary.”*

- something St. Francis didn't say

Evangelism is inherently verbal:

*“Jesus came into Galilee,  
proclaiming the gospel of God  
and saying, ‘  
The time is fulfilled, and the  
kingdom of God is at hand;  
repent and believe in the gospel’”*

- Mark 1:14-15

*“Jesus of Nazareth,  
a man who was a prophet  
mighty in deed and word  
before God and all the people”*

- Luke 24:19

WORD person

or

DEED person

*Suffering is God's  
“megaphone to rouse  
a deaf world.”*

- CS Lewis

There's a deep connection between  
*physical* and *spiritual* problems,  
and also between Christ's solution for both.

Any honest person will admit the world is a mess. Oppressed people oppressing one another. Cancer, slavery, starvation, prejudice and pain.

But why? *Why* is everything such a mess?

God's answer: *All human suffering results from a broken relationship with God.*

Sin is the cause of suffering.

The Church is called to address  
the symptoms (*suffering*)  
and the underlying problem  
(*sin separating us from God*).



The Lord said to Moses,  
“I have heard the grumbling of the  
Israelites. Tell them,  
‘At twilight you will eat meat,  
and in the morning you will be  
filled with bread. *Then ...*

*...then you will know*  
that I am the Lord your God.””

- Exodus 16:11-12

The Lord is a *refuge* to his people, a *stronghold* to the people of Israel.

*So you shall know that I am the Lord your God.*

- Joel 3:16-17

I live in a country which has been torn apart by wars and violence on a horrifying scale. The unspeakable atrocities I have witnessed pushed me to draw the conclusion that God had quit our planet and was no longer mindful of our collective plight.

Ladies and gentlemen of Alexandria Presbyterian Church, you have proved me otherwise. And, hand on heart, I confess that I have been mistaken and that my pessimistic conclusion has been hasty. Definitely, God is still very much around and is overseeing every human undertaking. ***Your church is a visible sign of the divine presence in the world.***

Key Question:

*How can you be a  
“divine presence”  
wherever God has placed you?*

# **Small Group Exercise:**

*How will you help Cliff?*

In your small group, take turns reading through pages 5-6.

Answer the questions on page 6.

Choose a spokesperson for your group to share your thoughts with everyone.

# **Small Group Exercise:**

*How will you help Cliff?*

## **Discussion**

**SHOW** (deed)

*and*

**TELL** (word)



**Jesus Loves You!**

*(But I'm too busy)*

*“The heart’s distrust is greater than the mind’s blindness.” - Calvin*

The ministry of the church should always seek to combine the demonstration and declaration of the Good News.

What we say *about* God should be reflected in what we do *about* human suffering.

When our words and actions are *congruent*, they will be more persuasive to needy people.

*“Jesus went about doing good.  
And we are trying to imitate him  
now because I believe that God  
loves the world through us.  
Just as he sent Jesus to be his  
love, his presence in the world,  
so today he is sending us.”*

- Mother Teresa

**Burger King**

**Exit in 2 miles**

Jesus' signs pointed people back to Himself. His deeds of mercy were *self-referential*.

We must also do signs that point people, *where?* To Christ.

Our deeds of mercy must be *Christ-referential...*  
tangible evidence of God's love.

*“To be a Christian is to move  
toward need not comfort.”*

- John Piper

*The Lord said,  
“I have indeed seen the misery  
of my people in Egypt...  
I am concerned about their  
suffering. So I have come down  
to rescue them.”*

- Exodus 3:7-8

# **Helplessness in ministry is good!**

*Now when it was evening,  
the disciples came to him and said,  
“This is a desolate place, and the day is  
now over; send the crowds away to go  
into the villages and buy food for  
themselves.” But Jesus said,  
“They need not go away;  
**you give them something to eat.”***

(Matt 14:15-16)



*They said to him, “We have only five loaves here and two fish.”*

*And he said, “Bring them here to me.”*

*Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing.*

*Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.*

*(Matt 14:17-19)*

*“The kingdom of God is the structure of reality... It is the church’s purpose to keep this threatened, difficult-to-believe kingdom of God constantly before people’s eyes.”*

- Dale Bruner

# Your Homework

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Need: \_\_\_\_\_

What I Can Do: \_\_\_\_\_

Use your *Head, Heart & Hands* to:

1) See, 2) Feel, 3) Act, 4) Point

*These slides and more info are  
posted under “Resources” at:*

[www.tangibletheology.com](http://www.tangibletheology.com)