

Notes for a short sermon delivered on December 28, 2008 in the First Christian Reformed Church Zeeland, Michigan:

## **“Being the hands and feet of Jesus”**

This message has three goals. To:

1. Encourage / motivate you.
2. Pose some questions (without giving you the complete, exhaustive answers to them).
3. Give you some Scriptural basis for being the hands and feet of Jesus.

### **Question 1**

What is “church” or what is it not?

There is no time to go in on this in depth in order to give a right answer but let’s look at some of the erroneous views and prejudices. To some it is a social club, to others it’s a place for upholding a set of traditions, and according to postmodernism it’s empty, dead and not relevant. But is that the real Church? Church in the Bible is “Ecclesia”. That word is best translated: called out, summoned. So if it’s not a religious institute but a people that’s been called out, we come to the next question.

### **Question 2**

What are we, the Church, called to do, why and in what manner (attitude)?

What?

We look at Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

The great commission (*make disciples, baptize them, teach them*) is not a narrow command in the sense that there is only one way to do these things.

Why?

Some more Biblical input for the what and the why (and the who) can be found in 2 Corinthians 5:14-21(NKJV)

*“For the **love of Christ** compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.*

*Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the **ministry of reconciliation**, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

*Now then, we are **ambassadors for Christ**, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”*

1. It starts with love of Christ. There’s simply no other lasting motivation. (why)
2. We’ve been given the ministry of reconciliation. (what)
3. We are ambassadors for Christ. (who)

In what manner (attitude)?

Let’s look at the life of Jesus.

Matthew 9:9-13 (NKJV)

*“As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him.*

*Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”*

*When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”*

He sought the lowly people, the outcast. They connected to Him (unlike the religious leaders of that day). He treated them as a physician and at the same time as a tender nurse (as the Holy Spirit does to us too). And that is the attitude with which, the manner in which we are to approach this ministry.

### **Question 3**

Where do we start?

Look at the patterns in Acts. Let's start with verse 1 of chapter 2.

*"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."*

As seen in Chapter 1, they were gathered as one. They practiced two things.

1. Prayer.
2. Patience.

This led to one thing.

Power (of the Holy Spirit).

In verse 8 of Chapter 1 we see that promise of the Holy Spirit and His power (as displayed in the second chapter) and we see where to start.

*"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in **Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea** and **Samaria**, and to the **end of the earth**."*

We start in this order:

1. Domestically.
2. Locally.
3. Inter-locally.

So as this new year approaches let's start with prayer (as a church) to make us ready to serve as Christ did and do it as one body. For there are many members and one Body.