

# Your World Needs You

Part 1: “Deliver to your Neighbors what I’ve has delivered to you”

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AGATHOS CHURCH  
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Full Text (for reading on your own)

## *Two Words about Agathos*

Lori said “I have been in a lot of churches (over the past 30+ years) and I have never known a body of believers that is so God-seeking. Truly God-seeking people. I am just blessed to be in this church.”

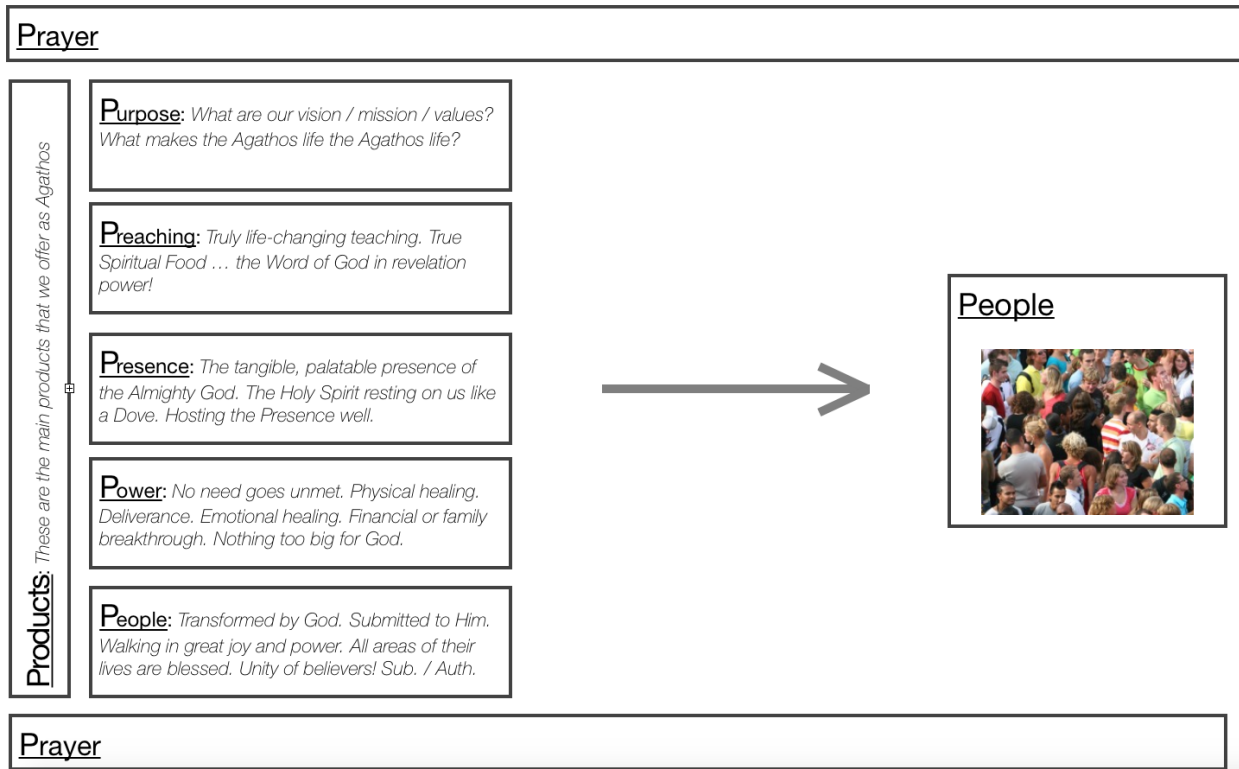
I am turning up the heat with this sermon, but I am so cautious to communicate the heart of the Lord in addition to the content. There is the content you say and there is also the heart you say it with. “Speak the truth IN LOVE.” It’s really important to get the heart right as well as the message. I have the message, I have the heart, but I am also frail and I might not communicate it perfectly, so I think it is really precious that the Lord gave me a word for Agathos to share on the front end of this message. This is a word for Agathos about what the Lord thinks of us - use this to really help frame in your own thinking exactly what the Lord thinks of us. Hear this message through the lens of the word the Lord shared with me.

During prayer, Peter saw and heard the Lord Jesus was speaking to our congregation and recorded what He said: *“I love you! You are a precious body to Me because of your purity and wealth of knowledge about who I am. I am calling you to go out - to reach out ... to deliver to your neighbors what I’ve delivered to you. You do not need to be afraid. The World is ready and waiting for you. I am with you. As I look over this congregation, I see leaders and I see influencers. I see those who will stop the advancement of evil. I see those who will set captives free and mark a standard for Godly Christian character. You are called! You have a purpose! I have not forgotten about you - my secret weapon and hidden gem.”*

God does not just say stuff. God talks to churches. He talked with churches at the beginning of Revelation. He could have told us that we were lukewarm and have forgotten our first love! He didn’t! He said we are a precious body to Him because of your purity and wealth of knowledge about who He is!” We are a gem that is coming out of hiding - ready to be displayed for the splendor of the Lord!

*God wants Agathos to Prosper*

A month ago, in a different prayer time, the Lord told me “I want Agathos to prosper.” He immediately followed up with a question for me “do you want Agathos to prosper?” I responded “yes.” Then I asked Him “how?” I started having an idea of a document, which I then went to my computer to type up. In a short amount of time a draft of the document below came together:



Initially, the document came together so well (and was all P's) that I thought “I wonder if I just came up with it in the flesh - alliterating things for the heck of it.” Then it dawned on me! Ten minutes ago I had asked God “show me how Agathos can prosper!” I realized “that’s why that document came together so fast! It was God’s answer to my prayer about ‘how.’

He told me that prayer is our covering. Prayer is also our foundation. He told me that like a business, we have products to offer people. What makes a business successful? When you have a product that solves a problem for people, and you get that product in front of people, you have profit - you prosper as a business!

He said “do you want Agathos to prosper?” He is saying “you have to realize that you have products and they need to get in front of people and the whole things is covered in prayer and founded in prayer.”

Notice the products that we have here at Agathos! We have a purpose for your life. Think about all the people in the world that are wondering “what’s the purpose for my life? Why was I made.” It’s awesome to know what you are here for!

We have anointed preaching and teaching (we mostly teach here, but P's were needed! "Powerful teaching!") I have often had people comment "this is great! You guys teach meat!" Transformative meat! Life-changing meat from the Word! Not just milk. Not watered-down stuff. Not just platitudes, but life-changing truth! That's a product that Agathos has to offer the world!

Another product we have is the true presence of God! The presence of God during worship here is amazing! Derrick and Erin have been so faithful and as a body we are continuing to learn and grow together as we worship in the presence of God! One of our cleaning people told me once that when they came into our sanctuary during the week they could feel God's presence! Jesus said "my house will be a house of prayer." The prayer that you do at a place establishes an identity of a place. There is a presence that rest here because of what we do here! We truly can offer people an encounter with the presence of God at Agathos!

Another product that we offer is the power of God! The miraculous financial testimonies at Agathos are amazing! We had a prayer time just the other night and with just 5 of us in the room, I am convinced that we could have made a documentary out of just the financial testimonies that were coming out of the 5 of us talking - and I am not talking about finding a penny on the ground! I am talking about major financial blessings! Getting paid 4x as much as you thought you should get paid for something. Getting a bonus 3x bigger than expected - in answer to specific prayer! Having your finances nearly double in 12 months - just as you prayed. This is the power of God. These testimonies were by faith! Miracles by faith!

People get healed at Agathos consistently by the power of God when we pray for physical ailments. When we go out and minister healing to others outside our church, our people often see people get healed. It is not abnormal - it's actually kind of normal! It is part of what we do! We always want our success rate to go up, but a lot of people that we pray for get healed! For instance, last week, Debra went to visit a friend of a friend at the hospital. The lady she went to visit had not eaten or drank in 2 weeks! Debra went to pray for her and she is at home now! The lady is not totally healed yet, but she is eating, drinking, and at home. She went from not eating and drinking to being home 2 days after Debra prayed for her! We prayed for Darius' shoulder for 20 seconds two weeks ago. Healed. It is almost clinical. You have to pinch yourself to remember just how miraculous this is because it's becoming somewhat normal! Praise God!

Bill Johnson says you know you have a transformed mind when the impossible is the first thought you have. "So and so just died?!? It's not their time! Where are they? In the name of Jesus ... !" That should be our first thought - and we are getting there as body! And it is not just a few of us that are seeing this stuff. I am hearing testimonies from throughout the body from different people. Wow! Agathos offers the power of God!

The final product we offer is you! The people of Agathos are unbelievable! There is not in-fighting. There is not that nasty, insidious lack of submission to authority. We have a visiting international minister come to one of our board meetings (he has been part of many of these in multiple nations) and say “I don’t think I’ve been part of a church board meeting like that.” The unity that exists here is beautiful! Jesus said “they will know you are Christians by your love for each other.”

By the way, do not allow a spirit of division about the body of Christ to creep into your thinking because of the election. That’s a work of the devil in this season. The Lord has told me to say that to you. The country is swimming in division right now. Don’t allow any of that spirit to exist with you and your brothers. If it has, don’t feel bad for a second, just change your mind! It is almost impossible to not have some of that come on you in this season. Just don’t let it nest in your hair! If you’ve let it nest in you hair, then cut your hair!

Jesus will know you cut your hair! He keeps track of all the hairs on your head. He said “don’t be worried about going out to witness ... I’ll even keep track of all of your hairs!” He is saying that even your hair, which is totally renewable is protected by Him! He so cares for you! You are not in danger!

### *God’s Will is for Agathos to Grow!*

Everything about our church is beautiful! There is only one thing the Lord is wanting to add right now. He shared it with me prophetically and what He said matched what I had in my heart to share as well. It’s not that we’ve been doing something wrong. It’s just an add. We had 3rd gear, and now it’s time for 4th and 5th.

Healthy churches grow. There can be different seasons. We are now a people prepared and just like Jesus said “*I am calling you to go out - to reach out ... to deliver to your neighbors what I’ve delivered to you.*” This is the transition; this is the new gear! You have probably already picked this up from me a little bit because I just taught a series called “*Commissioned!*” This series is called “*Your World Needs You!*”

Let’s look at some scriptures from Acts about church growth:

*Acts 2:41-42 “Then those who gladly received his (Peter’s) word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”*

*Acts 2:46-47 “So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”*

Acts 4:1-4 *“Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.”*

Acts 5:12-16 *“And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon’s Porch. Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.”*

Acts 9:31 *“Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.”*

Acts 6:1 *“Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.”*

Acts 6:7 *“Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”*

There are many things we can learn from these verses. Let’s dig a little bit into the story from Acts 5. In the start of that chapter, we read about Ananias and Sophira who were not believers but had somehow “infiltrated the ranks” of the believers and laid before the apostles feet what was supposedly the whole sum of money they had received in the sale of some land. They actually only gave some portion of the sum of money, while claiming that it was the whole portion. Peter says to Ananias “why are you lying to the Holy Spirit? You are about to breathe your last.” Ananias is dead. His wife, Sophira comes in and Peter gives her a chance to tell the truth: “did you sell the property for such and such amount?” “Yes that’s the right amount!” Peter responds “the feet of the people who just buried your husband are at the door; they are going to bury you too.” Dead.

Now, looks what it then says in Acts 5:13 *“Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.”* Imagine the scene! This is not a “seeker-sensitive” church in Jerusalem! This is important! I want to be all about what the Word says and nothing about what the world says! I want to be all about the Word and not about the world! Amen! This is not a seeker-sensitive church. I am not saying to be insensitive because God is gentle, kind, et cetera! We should be considerate of the people we are talking to! I am not saying to go out of our way to be insensitive, but when you castrate God in order to try to make Him palatable for people that don’t have a heart for Him, you are actually going against the will of God!

*“None of the rest dared join them.”* No kidding they didn’t dare to join them! The last two that went in there ended up dead! The word would have spread! “You won’t believe what happened! They lied and Peter knew that they lied by a word of knowledge and said ‘you’re going to die’ and then when she came back she said the same price, she lied and she died!” Put that on Facebook as an advertisement! So in verse 13, you see exactly what you would expect *“the people esteemed them highly.”* They thought “Oh my God - that’s amazing ... I’m NEVER going there! I don’t want to die!”

Look at the next verse (14). This is God. We just read verse 13. There is no transition between verse 13 and verse 14: *“and believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women.”* Thousands! Huh?!? God does not need us to be politically correct in order to multiply the kingdom!

In Acts 6:1 we see that the number of disciples was multiplying! Remember in Acts 2 (in the house churches) there was the time when those who were being saved were added day-by-day (daily). That was addition. Acts 6:1 is multiplication. I figure that some of you have probably thought “can the house church structure possibly hinder church growth?” It didn’t for them! They were in the temple and meeting house to house. Those who were being saved were added to them daily! No issue with house church in terms of church growth. It is the model they had in Acts 2 and their churches grew!

Now in Acts 6:1 we see that the church was growing so quickly that it became a logistical issue: *“when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.”* Not a problem! They got the deacons in place and then we see Acts 6:7 *“Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”*

In Acts 2, originally at Pentecost, we see that people not having the same language doesn’t hold churches back from growing! In Acts 2, we see that house churches, as a structure, doesn’t hold churches back from growing! We see in Acts 4 that being persecuted by others doesn’t keep the church from growing! We see in Acts 5 that being absolutely as far as possible from politically correct or seeker sensitive as possible does not keep the church from growing! Are you starting to see a pattern?!? We even see quick church growth and some contention within the church about some logistical issues not keep the church from growing either! They fixed it, they addressed it, and they grew all the more! God’s will is for His church to grow!

God’s will is for Agathos to grow!

When you bring those scriptures to the forefront of our thinking it keeps us from thinking “maybe God is just doing something different here ...” He can do something different AND His will is for the church to grow!

Some people might say “His will is for the kingdom to grow overall ... who knows about individual churches!” If you had an investment portfolio and your will was for your investment portfolio to grow, which of your individual investments would you want to grow?

All of them!

Perhaps it is possible that you were part of a lukewarm church or something and God’s backing was not on it as much, but that is NOT what God just said about Agathos! Our church is a gem; we’re a secret weapon and He wants us out there on display for His splendor!”

Everything that God does is healthy and it increases. People grow. Animals grow. “Be fruitful and multiply” He told Adam and Eve. “Go into all the earth ...” is the spiritual version of the physical commission He gave to Adam and Eve. Isaiah 9 says that *“of the increase of Jesus’ government and of peace there shall be no end.”* When Jesus is involved with it, it is never supposed to stop increasing.

### *What Causes Churches to Grow?*

Every ministry has two components: a message and an audience. Your message could be “God wants you to be healed” and then you pray for someone. Message and audience make a ministry. For businesses, it is product and people (customers).

God is in the business of ministering to people in practical ways. Look at Jesus’ declaration of His mission statement in Luke 4:18-19: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”* Did Jesus have a problem knowing His mission statement? Did He have any lack of clarity about His vision?!? Jesus knew what He was after in His ministry!

Sometimes people get squeamish about making profit in business. Now, if you are in business, you are not squeamish about it! Bear with me for a minute while I attack a mindset that is not Godly that could hinder you the rest of your life (in your career and in ministering). People say “I don’t want to be profit driven. It is selfish to be focused on profit.” Look, if you are an unprofitable business, you don’t exist! Every business should have a goal to be profitable. People tell me that if that is not the goal of a business, then they should not be in business!

So, every business should have a goal to be profitable. Their mission is what they do day-to-day to bring that goal to pass. If your goal is to be profitable, do you know what your mission is going to be? To serve people really well - in whatever area you are in! You will be electrician, pizza place, drum shop, or consultant for education. You are going to serve people really well - that’s your day-to-day mission. So your personal desire for profit is driving you to serve people! We need to have an increase, profit mindset.

Now, let me translate that to the Gospel. If you are not thinking “profit”/increase about leading people to the Lord, seeing people healed, about seeing the demon-oppressed set free, seeing people disciplined. If you don’t have a profit orientation - a prosperity orientation - about the things of the kingdom it will hinder you actually serving the people. We want to have an increase-orientation about the kingdom. Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end!

Let’s look at Luke 19:11-27. The master delivered a mina to each of His 10 servants. He said to them *“Do business till I come.”* Do business! God wants you to be profitably employed in the work of your hands! *“Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’”*

Then we read about the last servant! Oh no. *“Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’”* Jesus says “you are lying through your teeth! The reason you gave for not doing business with my mina is a total joke. That is not what’s going on! You were not afraid of Me - had you been afraid of Me you would have put my money in the bank!” The master tells the wicked servant “I am not even going to bother arguing with you about the false claim that you just made, we will just use your own false words to condemn you.”

*“And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.’ (But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) Whoops; Jesus doesn’t agree with Socialism! ‘For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.’”*

The servant who came back with one mina in the handkerchief was not afraid. That was not the problem. He said *“I feared you, because you are an austere man.”* The master says “I will judge you by your own words - that’s not the issue.” The master is saying “BS! It wasn’t because you were afraid of me that this is what you did! If you were afraid of me you would have at least done this ...” The issue was that the servant was disobedient.

The one mina servant was deliberately disobedient. God had told him “do business till I come.” Did the servant listen to his master’s orders and do business? NONE! He was disobedient with the mina that he had been given. That is why the Lord called him wicked. The Lord did not call him “fearful servant” or “anxious servant” or “unequipped servant.” He had a mina to do business with! He was



not unequipped. He said to the wicked servant “you weren’t fearful, you weren’t anxious, you weren’t unequipped. You were disobedient.”

I understand that when Donald Trump was campaigning that he met with about 1000 American pastors and told them “you guys are part of the problem. When did you go soft? When did you stop speaking up? This country needs to hear from you.” (Paraphrase). Following that he said “I am going to repeal the Johnson Amendment” which tries to silence 501 c(3) from political speech. One pastor who was there wanted to clap but did not and then an amazing thing happened - the whole room was silent. Is it possible that we are hiding behind fear. “If that Johnson Amendment was removed then we could really speak from the pulpit!” You then hear that the Johnson Amendment is going to be removed and you gasp “I might have to speak!”

This servant may have even convinced himself that his inactivity was due to his master being a tough man. He may have believed his own lie, but his master said “no sir, that’s not what the scenario was!” Proverbs 26:13 says “*the sluggard says ‘there’s a lion in the street.’*” The bible says that’s the word of a sluggard.

If we will do business with the mina that we have, we will be profitable. We will prosper! God has given us a mina in this body. He has given us our purity and knowledge of Him as a gift. Remember, this message is NOT a rebuke, just a gear the Lord is wanting us to shift into. Remember the word from the beginning - that’s the heart! I warned you I was going to turn up the heat. The Lord is wanting to get this new gear in place for us - where we become very serious and very intentional about being profitable for the kingdom with the mina that we have been given. “Do business till I come!”

We need to get in business with the mina that we’ve been given! Many of us are already in business on some level. But, as a church, we are supposed to grow in numbers. Look at Acts. Our church has not been growing in numbers so we are missing something. We are missing something.

Bill Johnson says people are concerned about seeking an experience with the Lord. People are afraid you can become deceived if you do that. Bill says “you are right, you can become deceived by seeking a particular experience with the Lord.” And then Bill says something very important “however, if you don’t have an experience with the Lord, you are deceived.” If you have the experience, you could be deceived. If you don’t have the experience, you are deceived. You could know everything about praying for people for healing but if you don’t see anyone healed somehow you are deceived. Perhaps you are not deceived about the theology of healing, but maybe about the theology of putting your feet on the ground and going out there and doing it!

*What Causes Churches to Grow?*

So, if a church did not have a powerful, life-changing message ... if a church did not have a product that was amazing, you could see how it might not grow. But if a church has a tremendous product, a life changing message that it's members have experienced! Everyone in our body doesn't just know about the goodness of God, we've experienced the goodness of God! If we know and have experienced that God is completely GOOD and we are willing to carry this message to others that "you too can experience His Goodness", then the only hinderance to that message taking off is it getting in front of PEOPLE!

Remember the diagram? On the right side is people! We need to get out and reach out to those people (just like Jesus said) with the comfort that we've been shown - the message that we've been shown - and get that in front of people!

Pastor Brad had a great friend - a great man of God who loved the Lord, loved the Word and was in the Word all the time. One time, very candidly, Brad's friend asked him "Brad, why do I not see the miracles you do?" In realizing how genuine the question was, Brad quickly reflected with the Lord in his heart saying "God I don't want to just give him a trite answer; I want to give him the real reason, but I don't know what it is because I've never thought about my friend not seeing miracles." In that instant Brad received a vision across his mind's eye of many miracles he had seen happen and every single miracle was out in the streets. Brad realized none of them had happened on his couch. None of them had happened during his quiet time. They had all happened out on the streets. That's what he told that man - who is now a pastor.

Here is my plan for this series: I am planning to have a specific, substantive reach out event or initiative. It may be a one-time event, it may be a continuing thing. The second thing I plan to do in this series is to equip you to be ready for that outreach in specific ways.

If you didn't have the goods, I would not be asking you to get out on the field. I am telling you that I do not need to speak with faith to tell you that you are ready! Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the assurance of things not yet seen. I see it in you now! I don't need a hope here. There is no hope necessary; you've got the goods. We just need to get them in front of people. Let me say it plain and clear: your world needs you! And Romans 8:19 says it perfectly: "*For the all of Columbus waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God at Agathos.*"

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### Text Summary (for reading as a group)

Hear this message through the lens of the word the Lord shared with Peter. During prayer, he saw and heard the Lord Jesus was speaking to our congregation and recorded what He said: "*I love you! You are a precious body to Me because of your purity and wealth of knowledge about who I am. I am calling you to go out - to reach out ... to deliver to your neighbors what I've delivered to you. You do not need to be afraid. The World*

*is ready and waiting for you. I am with you. As I look over this congregation, I see leaders and I see influencers. I see those who will stop the advancement of evil. I see those who will set captives free and mark a standard for Godly Christian character. You are called! You have a purpose! I have not forgotten about you - my secret weapon and hidden gem."*

God does not just say stuff. God talks to churches. He talked with churches at the beginning of Revelation. He could have told us that we were lukewarm and have forgotten our first love! He didn't! He said we are a precious body to Him because of your purity and wealth of knowledge about who He is!" We are a gem that is coming out of hiding - ready to be displayed for the splendor of the Lord!

A month ago, in a different prayer time, the Lord told Peter, "I want Agathos to prosper." He immediately followed up with a question for him of, "Do you want Agathos to prosper?" Peter responded "yes" then asked Him "how?"

He told Peter that prayer is our covering. Prayer is also our foundation. He also said that like a business, we have products to offer people. What makes a business successful? When you have a product that solves a problem for people and you get that product in front of people, you have profit - you prosper as a business! God was saying to Peter: If you want Agathos to prosper, then you have to realize that you have products and they need to get in front of people and the whole thing is covered in prayer and founded in prayer.

Notice the products we have here at Agathos: We have a purpose for your life. Think about all the people in the world that are wondering about their purpose and why they are here. It's awesome to know what you are here for!

We have anointed preaching and teaching. Transformative, life-changing meat from the Word! Not just milk. Not watered-down stuff. Not just platitudes, but life-changing truth!

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We have the power of God! As an example, look no further than the miraculous financial testimonies we have at Agathos! Getting paid 4x as much as you thought you should; receiving a bonus 3x bigger than expected (in answer to specific prayer!); and having your finances nearly double in 12 months - just as you prayed! This is the power of God. These testimonies were by faith! Miracles by faith!

People also get healed at Agathos consistently by the power of God when we pray for physical ailments. When we go out and minister healing to others outside our church, our people often see people get healed. It is not abnormal - it's actually kind of normal for us and is part of what we do! Praise God!

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Everything about our church is beautiful! There is only one thing the Lord is wanting to add right now. It's not that we've been doing something wrong. It's just an add. We had 3rd gear, and now it's time for 4th and 5th. Healthy churches grow. Just like the word Peter received said, *"I am calling you to go out - to reach out ... to deliver to your neighbors what I've delivered to you."* This is the transition; this is the new gear! This is why we recently finished the series, *"Commissioned!"*

Let's look at scriptures phrases from Acts 5 about church growth: *"That day about three thousand souls were added to them ... And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. ... However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand. ... And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, ... when the number of the disciples was multiplying ... Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem ... And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied."*

Let's dig a little bit into the story from Acts 5. In the start of that chapter, we read about Ananias and Sophira who were not believers but had somehow "infiltrated the ranks" of the believers and laid before the apostles feet what was supposedly the whole sum of money they had received in the sale of some land. They actually only gave a portion of the sum of money while claiming that it was all the proceeds from the sale. Peter calls Ananias out and all of the sudden Ananias drops dead. His wife, Sophira, then comes in and also lies to Peter and she drops dead.

Wow. Look what happens next in Acts 5:13, *"Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly."* Imagine the scene! This is not a "seeker-sensitive" church in Jerusalem! This is important! We want to be all about what the Word says and nothing about what the world says! This is not a seeker-sensitive church. I am not saying to be insensitive because God is gentle, kind and on. We should be considerate of the people we are talking to but when you try to water-down God in order to try to make Him palatable for people that don't have a heart for Him, you are going against the will of God!

*“None of the rest dared join them.”* No kidding they didn’t dare to join them! The last two that went in there ended up dead! The word would have spread! “You won’t believe what happened! They lied and Peter knew that they lied by a word of knowledge and said ‘you’re going to die’ and then when she came back she said the same price — she lied and she died!” Put that on Facebook as an advertisement! So in verse 13, you see exactly what you would expect *“the people esteemed them highly.”* They thought “Oh my God - that’s amazing ... I’m NEVER going there! I don’t want to die!”

Look at the next verse (14). There is no transition between verse 13 and verse 14: *“and believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women.”* God does not need us to be politically correct in order to multiply the kingdom!

Also notice in Acts 2 (in the house churches) there was the time when those who were being saved were added day-by-day (daily). That was addition. Acts 6:1 is multiplication. Some of us have probably thought “can the house church structure possibly hinder church growth?” It didn’t for them! They were in the temple and meeting house-to-house. Those who were being saved were added to them daily! No issue with house church in terms of church growth. It is the model they had in Acts 2 and their churches grew!

In Acts 2, originally at Pentecost, we see that people not having the same language doesn’t hold churches back from growing either. We see in Acts 4 that being persecuted by others doesn’t keep the church from growing! We see in Acts 5 that being absolutely as far as possible from politically correct or seeker-sensitive does not keep the church from growing! Are you starting to see a pattern?!? We even see quick church growth and some contention within the church about some logistical issues not keep the church from growing either! They fixed it, they addressed it, and they grew all the more! God’s will is for His church to grow! God’s will is for Agathos to grow!

Consider this: If you had an investment portfolio and your will was for your investment portfolio to grow, which of your individual investments would you want to grow? All of them! Our church is a gem; we’re a secret weapon and He wants us out there on display for His splendor!”

Everything that God does is healthy and it increases. People grow. Animals grow. “Be fruitful and multiply” He told Adam and Eve. “Go into all the earth ...” is the spiritual version of the physical commission He gave to Adam and Eve. Isaiah 9 says that *“of the increase of Jesus’ government and of peace there shall be no end.”* When Jesus is involved with it, it is never supposed to stop increasing.

Every ministry has two components: a message and an audience. Your message could be “God wants you to be healed” and then you pray for someone. Message and audience make a ministry. For businesses, it is product and people (customers). God is in the business of ministering to people in practical ways. Look at Jesus’ declaration of His mission statement in Luke 4:18-19: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the*

*brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*” Did Jesus have a problem knowing His mission statement? Did He have any lack of clarity about His vision?!? Jesus knew what He was after in His ministry!

We need to have an increase-profit mindset. Let’s translate that to the Gospel. If you don’t have a profit orientation - a prosperity orientation - about the things of the kingdom (healing, discipleship, etc.) it will hinder you actually serving people.

In Luke 19:11-27, the master delivered a mina to each of His 10 servants. He said to them “*Do business till I come.*” The first two servants recorded here were faithful and profitable, but then we read about the last servant! Oh no.

*This* servant came back with one mina in the handkerchief claiming he was afraid his master, but he was not afraid. That was not the problem. The master said “It wasn’t because you were afraid of me that this is what you did! If you were afraid of me you would have at least done this ...” The issue was that the servant was disobedient.

The one mina servant was deliberately disobedient. God had told him “do business till I come.” Did the servant listen to his master’s orders and do business? No, instead He was disobedient with the mina that he had been given. That is why the Lord called him wicked. He said to the wicked servant “you weren’t fearful, you weren’t anxious, you weren’t unequipped. You were disobedient.”

This servant may have even convinced himself that his inactivity was due to his master being a tough man. He may have believed his own lie. Proverbs 26:13 says “*the sluggard says ‘there’s a lion in the street.’*”

If we will do business with the mina that we have, we will be profitable. We will prosper! God has given us a mina in this body. He has given us our purity and knowledge of Him as a gift. Remember, this message is NOT a rebuke, just a gear the Lord is wanting us to shift into. Remember the word from the beginning - that’s the heart! We need to get in business with the mina that we’ve been given! Many of us are already in business on some level. But, as a church, we are supposed to grow in numbers. Look at Acts. Our church has not been growing in numbers so we are missing something.

If a church did not have a powerful, life-changing message ... if a church did not have a product that was amazing, you could see how it might not grow. But if a church has a tremendous product, a life changing message that it’s members have experienced - if we know and have experienced that God is completely GOOD and we are willing to carry this message to others that “you too can experience His Goodness”, then the only hinderance to that message taking off is it getting in front of PEOPLE!

We need to get out and reach out to those people (just like Jesus said) with the comfort that we've been shown - the message that we've been shown - and get that in front of people!

One time, Pastor Brad received a vision of many miracles he had seen happen and every single miracle was out in the streets. Brad realized none of them had happened on his couch. None of them had happened during his quiet time. They had all happened out on the streets.

Here is the plan for this new series we've started today: we are planning to have a specific, substantive reach out event or initiative. It may be a one-time event, it may be a continuing thing. This series will equip you to be ready for that outreach in specific ways.

If you didn't have the goods, God wouldn't have commanded us to go and make disciples. You've got the goods. We just need to get them in front of people. Please hear this: the world needs you! And Romans 8:19 says it perfectly, "*For all of creation [Columbus] waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God [at Agathos].*"

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### Points to Ponder . . .

- How did the word Jesus spoke over our body encourage you?
- Prosperity, profit, products, etc.... why is it so important to think like that?
- What do we see about church growth in Acts?
- What did Jesus point out in the story about the minas?
- What's the one greatest hinderance to church growth (if the "product" is good)?