

Catalyze Cape May

I. INTRO

- A. God's plan has always been to fill places with His glory
- B. *Genesis 1:28 – "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." → fill the earth with image bearers*
- C. Filling the land or a city is covenantal language in the Bible. Instead, mankind filled the earth with unrighteousness
 - 1. *Genesis 6:11–13, "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence... For the earth is filled with violence through them."*
 - 2. *Ezekiel 9:9, "The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great. The land is full of blood, and the city full of injustice."*
 - 3. Across the OT, the pattern is this: Sin spreads → It fills land or city → God sends prophets to expose it → Judgment follows if there is no repentance
- D. The problem wasn't that the earth was being filled. The problem was what it was being filled with, but Jesus came to break the cycle.
 - 1. He wants to fill the world with the original design → Glory of God
 - 2. *Habakkuk 2:14, "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea."*
 - 3. *Isaiah 33:5, "The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness."*
- E. Jesus started this process. The Father sent him to bring glory into the world, and Jesus says, *"So I send you..."*
 - 1. To be a witness to the Son and the Father by the Spirit
 - 2. To be [spiritually] fruitful and multiply [disciples], filling the world with Jesus-image bearers!
- F. We see this unfolding in the book of Acts when Jesus says,
 - 1. *Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*
 - a) Jesus said to start filling the world, beginning at home!
 - 2. *Acts 5:28, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching..."*
 - a) And there you had it, their hometown was full of Jesus' teaching that leads to righteousness
 - 3. Like a full pot, we see what happens under pressure → *Acts 8:1, 4, "And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles... Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word."*
 - a) Notice a few things...
 - (1) They scattered under persecution
 - (2) Everyone left but the apostles

- (3) Those who scattered spread the word
 - (4) Who were they? Normal nameless people like us
- 4. Let's jump forward to Paul on his missionary journeys, now in Ephesus (Turkey). *Acts 19:8–10, "And [Paul] entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus. This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks."*
 - a) Asia filled... Now that would have been a few million people
 - b) Obviously, Paul didn't tell them all. Who did? Nameless people
- 5. Ordinary, nameless people filling the earth with the glory of God
 - a) Overflowing from home to region to world
- G. When we read Paul's writings and observe his works, we can learn principles for "HOW?" → How did Jerusalem get **filled** with the teachings of Christ? How did Paul fill Asia with the gospel? How did these things happen?
 - 1. And what can we do here in Cape May County so we can say, like Paul, in *Romans 15:23, "But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions..."* or *"But now I have finished my work in these regions..."*
- II. If you want to know how entire regions get filled with the gospel, Paul shows us three essentials → **People, Power, and Process**
 - A. *2 Timothy 2:1–2, "You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."*
 - B. When I teach these verses, I love to point out that there are multiple generations of explosive growth → this was Paul's strategy (ex: addition vs. multiplication)
 - C. **PEOPLE.** Nothing gets done without people
 - 1. God could have used angels to spread the gospel, he chose us
 - 2. God could have used donkeys, burning bushes exclusively, he chose us
 - 3. God uses people, made in the image of God, to be his glory vessels in the world. He uses broken pots with the Spirit of God within them to shine out
 - 4. God uses people. Not perfect people. Not awesome people. Redeemed, willing people
 - 5. You will enjoy the process EVEN more if you are healthy. Healthy People.
 - 6. Healthy people know who God is, know who they are, and know there's a mission to fulfill on this planet
 - 7. Healthy people feast on the Word of God and drink deeply of the Living Water, His Spirit. Healthy people keep short accounts on sin and strive to love their neighbor in community.
 - 8. Just as you wouldn't entrust your daughter to a scoundrel, and you want her to find a healthy husband, Paul tells Timothy to find healthy (faithful) people to whom he can entrust the gospel
 - 9. **In 2026, get spiritually healthy. Be a person worth multiplying.**

- D. **POWER.** People and processes mean nothing without the power of God at work.
1. Paul tells Timothy he needs the STRENGTH of God's grace, the power of God, the Holy Spirit's dynamite power to work in him and through people
 2. Psalm 127 → Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain...
 3. The power of God is the one thing we have no control over.
 - a) We can't force God to move. We can't make him act. We can't twist his arm. We can't make the wind blow
 - b) What we can do is be healthy and prepared. We can be ready. We can be dressed for action with our wicks trimmed and our lamps full of oil
 4. Sailboat analogy → **In 2026, pray for the Holy Spirit to come upon us in POWER!**
- E. **PROCESS.** It doesn't matter how fierce the wind is; the concrete ship won't blow
1. Most of the methods you've observed in the American church look like this → WaWa
 2. Paul is describing, and the NT pictures this → Coca Cola
 - a) Only two countries without Coca-Cola: North Korea and Cuba
 3. Paul's strategy is for Timothy to invest in faithful people who will invest in faithful people, trusting that God's power will fall upon those obedient, willing people and use them immeasurably more than they could think
 4. **In 2026, disciple the few to reach the many.**
- F. Summary: Obedient, willing people... filled with the Spirit of God... using multiplicative principles... this is how God is Moving in tough as nails places on planet earth
- III. You may be saying, "How Rev?" Well, you can't make it happen, but practically speaking, it's as easy as ABC
- A. **Know And Live Out Your Identity In Christ.** Much of the Christian life is reprogramming your mind and heart to know and believe what God says about who you are in Christ.
1. In Christ, you are a new creation; the old has passed away, and the new has come.
 2. In Christ, you are a child of God, designed for a relationship with him.
 3. In Christ, you are a brother or sister to other believers. You have a new family.
 4. In Christ, God sends you out with a mission and great purpose – to reflect his love and truth to the world.
 5. Discipleship begins with who God is and who you are in Christ.
- B. **Abide.** Stay close to Jesus. Keep your eyes fixed on the author and perfecter of your faith.
1. Spend time with him, sitting in his presence, listening to his voice, reading the Word, crying out to him in prayer, journaling the meditations of your heart, and pursuing his presence.

2. God will transform you into the healthy disciple (and disciple-maker) he wants you to be as you dwell closely with him and obey what he reveals.
- C. **Build Relationships.** You are meant to cultivate relationships.
 1. Each friend, co-worker, and neighbor deserves to hear about and experience God's love.
 2. Every person you know has a distinct social network that needs to be invaded with the gospel
 3. Everyone you know is either a believer who needs to be sharpened or someone who is lost who needs to meet the Good Shepherd
 4. Engage with others sincerely and meaningfully. Everyone longs for genuine connection, even if they aren't aware of how to seek it.
 5. Ask thoughtful questions, spend time together, and enjoy each other's company. Leverage your relationships to show the love of God.
- D. **Connect Your Conversations to Christ.** When others share their thoughts with you, link those conversations to God's teachings.
 1. There's no need to be forceful or confrontational. People are genuinely interested in your perspective, and if you are grounded (ABIDING), your thoughts should reflect the Word of God.
 2. When someone expresses a complaint, respond with love and truth.
 3. If asked for your opinion, convey what you know to be true.
 4. Relate your daily discussions to the profound truths of God that shape everyday life, using words seasoned with grace.
- E. **Discover God in His Word.** When conversations progress, bring people to the Word. Show them how to read it and discover God's truth as revealed in Scripture using the Discovery Bible Study (grab a rack card)
 1. Encourage them to experience God's truth firsthand, allowing His Word and Spirit to communicate with them.
 2. Form a new group of friends and encourage them to invite others
 - a) We need groups of lost people encountering Jesus
 - b) We need groups of believers sharpening one another
 3. Consider yourself a guide, simply showing someone else how to read so they can discover God for themselves.
- F. **Equip Others to Do the Same.** As you live and model this lifestyle, you will naturally show others what it means to be a disciple who makes disciples.
 1. When they are ready, show them each of these steps with greater clarity so they can equip others.
 2. When they have questions, help them find the answers in the Word—journey together as you both become more like Jesus.
 3. Come alongside others to help them be a faithful person, filled with the power of God, using multiplicative processes

IV. Catalyze Cape May

- A. That's the Word I keep coming back to → CATALYZE
- B. Defined: cause or accelerate (a reaction) by acting as a catalyst.
- C. I want us to be a church of catalysts who cause gospel reactions

- D. I want our thoughts, actions, prayers, and lives to act as accelerants to reach the world for Jesus
- E. We are commanded to go to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth
- F. Cape May County needs to be saturated with the gospel of Jesus Christ, and we need to be the catalysts who accelerate it so that one day someone says, “you have filled Cape May County with your teaching...”
- G. How do we get there? I have some action steps:
 - 1. **Download** this packet. It's on our website or you can scan this QR Code
 - a) It helps you come up with a gameplan for each of the things we talked about today
 - b) I want you to download it, print it, and fill it out
 - c) If you do that you will have a plan for abiding, you will have a plan for praying for the lost, you will be able to identify who you will sharpen this year, and you'll feel more prepared
 - 2. We want to start praying for **100 new Discovery Bible Studies** this year
 - a) 100 groups of seekers and newer believers learning to discover who God is as revealed in his Word
 - b) By God's grace, many of the people in those groups will find Jesus, be baptized, and begin discipling others
 - 3. We want to **prayer walk** or prayer drive over every street in this county (explain)
 - 4. Super overwhelmed? Don't be – we will take a few weeks to review the basics.
- H. I believe if we all did this, we would see an accelerated gospel movement
 - 1. And if we can't do it here, we have no business doing it anywhere else
 - 2. So let's CATALYZE CAPE MAY in 2026