

Fanning it into Flame
Sunday, September 12, 2010
Brewster's Best Kept Secret
...and that should not be!

The title of this message came from a cute comment at our Connect Group regarding our church. They said, "We should call our church, 'Brewster's Best Kept Secret.'" We all laughed as we thought of the powerful presence of the Lord we experience during our services, the love we have for one another, and the freedom we enjoy together. Our church is one that makes people feel welcome regardless of their outward appearance or even philosophical and/or spiritual differences. Our music is lively and worshipful. The messages are filled with hope and a sense of humor and the general tenor of the atmosphere is relational. The fact that we are about 70 strong on a good day reveals the truth about our newly coined phrase. I added: **...and that should not be.**

With all we have going for us and vision and mission statements that tell a lot respectively: ***To be a church after God's own heart and To be a relevant church culture that transforms our community and beyond***, we should be well known. What's the problem? I believe we have grown to love one another so much and the Lord so much that we so look forward to getting together that it has become somewhat of an end in itself. There is nothing wrong with the first part of that at all. It's the second part that needs to be addressed. Jesus commanded us in **Matthew 28:18-20 ...**"*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*"(NIV) The disciples were to go and make disciples. That means learners. What they learned they were to pass along to others. God's plan was to affect all of mankind with his contagious love. Freely we have received and freely we are to give. Many today feel that it is the job of the "paid professional" clergy to do that job, but that is not what the Lord said. It is incumbent upon all of us to share the love of Christ.

Some of us hide behind our cultural heritage or personalities and say, "Leave that for the romantic cultures or the outgoing personalities. I'm a shy person." The Apostle Paul rips those excuses away in **2 Corinthians 5:17** where he tells us: *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!* (NIV) This word for new creation actually means a new species. We are not a cleaned up version of the old, but a new creation in Christ. We are no longer to be ruled by our old nature. Rather we are to walk in the newness of our union to Christ, who is our life. The old is past! The excuses are gone. Jesus tells us the remarkable words in John's gospel and chapter 14 verse 12: *I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.* (NIV) These are very strong words and incredible concepts that we cannot avoid.

Jesus came to set the captives free. Have you been set free or are you walking in fear of what people think? If we are more afraid of what people will think of us if we openly profess our faith in Christ than we are of what God thinks of us when we hold back from proclaiming the greatest news the world has ever heard, then we have a problem. It is high time that Brewster and the surrounding regions hear of what is happening in our church. It is time that we take our faith for a test drive and see what this thing can do.

Fear, take a back seat... I'm on a mission and I won't stop until everybody has heard!