



# GC2 EQUIPPER

*From union to communion: Making disciples with Jesus*

February 2010

Volume 5, Issue 2

[www.wcg.org/MinDev](http://www.wcg.org/MinDev)

The monthly ministry development newsletter of Grace Communion International

Dear minister of Jesus:

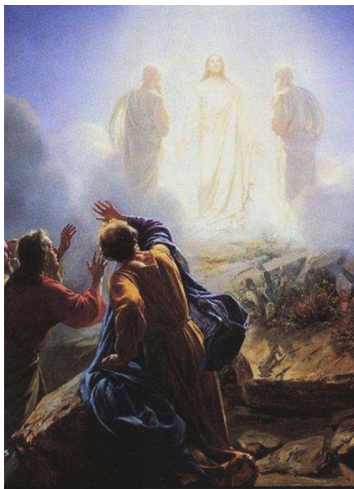
Last month, Dan Rogers introduced our GCI-USA mission motto: **From union to communion: Making disciples with Jesus**. It speaks to sharing what Jesus is doing, in the Spirit, to lead people on a *journey with God*. To learn more, see the updated Ministry Development website at [www.wcg.org/MinDev/](http://www.wcg.org/MinDev/).

Let's now note some upcoming opportunities to participate with Jesus in his ministry:

- **Transfiguration Sunday (February 14)**. This annual worship event helps us celebrate Jesus' identity as the glorified Son of Man (see picture) who shares his glory with us.
- **Black History Month (February)**. For resources, see the Feb. 2009 *GC2 equipper*, [www.infoplease.com/spot/bhm1.html](http://www.infoplease.com/spot/bhm1.html), & [www.blackandchristian.com/main.shtml](http://www.blackandchristian.com/main.shtml).
- **GCI 2010 International Conference (July 22-25)**. This once every three years gathering of GCI pastors, ministry leaders, members and friends from around the world will be in Orlando, FL. For information and registration go to <http://2010.gci.org/> or email [Church.Administration@gci.org](mailto:Church.Administration@gci.org).
- **Church-Next Training (April/September)**. This two-part conference from Church Multiplication Ministries (CMM), shares with pastors and ministry leaders key principles and processes for starting new churches. Part 1 will be on **April 8-10** in Tipp City, OH; part 2 will be on **September 9-11** in Staten Island, NY. For information and registration go to <http://cmm.wcg.org/> or email [Randy.Bloom@gci.org](mailto:Randy.Bloom@gci.org).
- **Journey with the Master celebration (June 11-13)**. This gathering for worship, fellowship, and vision is for older teens and young adults (and their mentors) who seek to serve God in ministry. It will be held at Berry College in Rome, GA. For more information, see <http://genmin.wcg.org/calendar.htm> or email [Greg.Williams@gci.org](mailto:Greg.Williams@gci.org).
- **Ministry Development seminars**. Throughout 2010, GCI-USA district networks will host Ministry Development Team seminars on various topics. For information and registration, contact your pastor or district pastoral leader.

On page two of this issue, Jonathan Stepp exhorts us to **Preach the Word of God!** Then on page three, the Ministry Development Team shares quotes from books that help us do that through **Expository Preaching**.

Have a blessed month in ministry with Jesus,  
Ted Johnston



The transfiguration of Jesus  
Luke 9:28-36

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Transfiguration Sunday  
Black History Month  
Training opportunities
- 2 Preach the Word of God!
- 3 Expository Preaching

**Note to GCI-USA senior pastors and pastoral care teams:** As we enter a new year, please make plans to fulfill your *annual* continuing education requirement. For details, go to [www.wcg.org/go/brochure](http://www.wcg.org/go/brochure).

Equipping for participation with Jesus in his Great Commandment – Great Commission (GC2) mission and ministry.

## Preach the Word of God! by Jonathan Stepp



*What is the Word of God that we are called to preach?*

First and foremost, **the Word of God is a person**. The Word is the second person of the Trinity who has become flesh and blood and lives now, fully God and fully human, as the man **Jesus Christ** (John 1:1, 14). As the Word in the flesh, Jesus preaches the reality that he is the union of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with humanity (Romans 5:18, Colossians 1:20).

To say that preaching is about Jesus seems elementary and self-evident. On the other hand we have heard countless sermons (some given by us!) that have had little or nothing to do with Jesus except in the most indirect way. The fallenness of our human nature means that we will always find new and creative ways to talk about ourselves, our human work, and our self-effort, and ignore the reality of Jesus, the one in whom we live, and move, and have our being (Acts 17:28).



Secondly, **the word of God is the word spoken about Jesus by the Church**—the apostles, the prophets, and even regular old pastors and ministry leaders like us (Romans 3:1-2, 10:8).

Thirdly, **the word of God is the Bible**, the written record of what the apostles and prophets spoke in their words about Jesus (2 Thessalonians 2:15).



The analogy of a window might be helpful in thinking about preaching the three-fold word of God. Consider what a window does. It allows those who are inside a building to see outside. It reveals and makes known that which would otherwise be hidden from us. In this seeing and knowing, however, the window itself is not the object to be studied. We don't pay much attention to them unless they need cleaning or repair.

In this analogy, the Bible is the window. What we see when we look through the window of the Bible is Jesus. We see that he is in the Father and the Father is in him. We also see that he is in us and we are in him (John 14:20). In seeing this reality—the reality of God the Father, Son, and Spirit, and humanity's inclusion in that life—we understand ourselves and our relationships with one another.

There are times in our preaching when we need to look at the Bible – its history, grammar, construction, etc. – just as there are times we have to clean the windows of our house. But the window itself is not the subject. The subject is that which can be seen through the window. This is why we don't preach the Bible, *we preach Jesus* (1 Corinthians 2:2).

Looking through the window of the Bible and seeing Jesus helps us to understand that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and that humanity is adopted through Jesus into this Triune Life as children of the Father. It is this knowledge of Jesus that we are called to preach and it is this knowledge of Jesus that enables us to know why we are here, how we should live, and how we are created to relate to each other.

So, the Bible is not an instruction book on how to live. Nor is it an instruction book on how to do ministry. It is a window to help us see Jesus. Jesus shows us how to live and how to do ministry. He does not do it by giving us a set of written instructions to be followed. He shows us what life is and how to live, and what ministry is and how to do it, by living with us in relationship and participating with us in life.

**Note:** This article is a brief excerpt from Jonathan Stepp's *Grace Communion Seminary* (GCS) class, *Practice of Ministry*. To learn more about the class, go to [www.gcs.ambassador.edu](http://www.gcs.ambassador.edu).

## Expository Preaching

Following are quotes from books on preaching recommended by the Ministry Development Team. These quotes advocate preaching *expository sermons* that give voice to the Holy Spirit who through **Holy Scripture** (the written *word*), speaks **the gospel** (the Apostolic *word*), to tell us about **Jesus Christ** (the living *Word*).



### ***Biblical Preaching*** by Haddon Robinson (Baker, 1980)

“Expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through him to his hearers” (p. 20).



### ***Christ-Centered Preaching*** by Bryan Chapell (Baker, 1994)

“God fully manifests the dynamic power of his Word in the New Testament where he identifies his Son as the divine *Logos*, or Word (John 1:1). By identifying his Son as his Word, God reveals that his message and his person are inseparable. The Word embodies him. This is not to say that the letters and the paper of the Bible are divine, but that the truths Scripture holds are God’s vehicle of his own spiritual activity” (p. 19).

“The fact that the power for spiritual change resides in God’s Word argues the case for *expository* preaching... Such preaching puts people in immediate contact with the power of the Word” (p. 22).

“We determine the meaning of a passage [of Holy Scripture] by seeing not only how words are used in the context of a book or its passages, but also how the passage functions in the entire scope of Scripture. An accurate interpretation requires us to ask, ‘How does this text disclose the meaning or need of the redemption [of humankind through Christ]?’ Failure to ask and to answer this question leads to preaching that is highly moralistic or legalistic because it focuses on the behavior a particular passage teaches without disclosing how the biblical writer was relating those behaviors to the work of the Savior” (p.73).



### ***Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*** by Sidney Greidanus (Eerdmans, 1999)

“The New Testament church preached the birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus of Nazareth as the fulfillment of God’s old covenant promises, his presence today in the Spirit, and his imminent return. In short, ‘preaching Christ’ meant preaching Christ incarnate in the context of the full sweep of redemptive history” (p. 4).

“Preaching Christ is not...merely mentioning the name of Jesus or Christ in the sermon. It is not [merely] identifying Christ with Yahweh in the Old Testament... It is not simply pointing to Christ from a distance or ‘drawing lines to Christ’ by way of typology... Preaching Christ is...preaching the gospel... To preach Christ is to proclaim some facet of the *person, work, or teaching* of Jesus of Nazareth so that people may believe him, trust him, love him, and obey him... We can define ‘preaching Christ’ as preaching sermons which authentically integrate the message of the text with the climax of God’s revelation in the person, work, and/or teaching of Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament” (p. 10).