

Crazy for God

READ 2 Corinthians 5:11-15

I want to draw your attention to verse 13. If we are out of our mind as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.

The title of this sermon: Crazy for God

As some of you may know, and may do it ourselves, it has become a recent trend in the church for churches and individuals to seek a word to focus on as a new year begins

Well I have my word for 2020, and it is not only a word for me, but it will be my preaching focus for most of the year. As you may have guessed the word is crazy.

By the word crazy, I don't mean not being in a right mind or having a mental illness. As you can imagine, the times Jayda and I are in the car going places, we have a good time. There are often times where she will say, "Dad, you are crazy". My response is always, "I am normal, everyone else is crazy". So along those lines, by crazy, I mean different than normal, different than what is expected. God doesn't call us to be like the world. In the New Testament, it says we are a peculiar person.

Let me give you a little background on how I felt crazy way my word for 2020. For the last year of so, I have listened to different contemporary speakers on YouTube as I have done

office work. I used to listen to pastors like John Gray and Steven Furtick. Last fall, around the time that school started, I was on YouTube, there was a video entitled “Crazy Faith” by Michael Todd. Michael Todd is the lead pastor of Transformation Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The sermon really spoke, and God used it to encourage me in a new direction we are taking with sports camp. So I looked the next week, and there was another sermon. The church did a 20 week series on Crazy Faith. In October, I found out that Elevation Worship, Hillsong Worship, and Casting Crowns were doing a concert in Tulsa. I knew Jayda and I were free that weekend, so I decided we needed to go to the concert. In all honesty, it was a good excuse to try to be able to go to Transformation Church. With the time chance that weekend, we decided we needed to head home early Sunday morning, and not wait until lunch time to head home. In two days, we drove over a 1,000 miles. Jayda and I agree, that was a crazy weekend. When I watched the sermon from that Sunday, Michael didn’t even preach that Sunday.

Let’s advance to this year. As many of you know last year was the hardest year of my life. In the process of everything that happened, I became very lack in my spiritual disciplines. I would listen to Christian music and worship God on a regular basis, but regular times in the Bible and in prayer didn’t happen. I knew that this needed to change. So I decided that on January 1st, I would begin a daily devotion time, and encouraged Jayda to do the same. I know a lot of people encourage you to have your quiet time in the morning, but that has never really worked for me. So to start off the year, at around 9:30 Jayda went to her room and I went to the kitchen. There was no TV on, we just spent time with God. I also began journaling, which was

something that I had never done before. I also decided to read a chapter of a book each day in my quiet time. The book I read first was called Letters to the Church by Frances Chan. Somehow I looked in the back of the book, and saw Chan had written another book called Crazy Love. In that moment I felt God give me the word crazy for 2020.

I have to admit that as I tried to go sleep that night, it was almost like a child trying to sleep during the night on Christmas Eve. I got to thinking about the word crazy. As many of you know, I love acronyms, where each letter in a word stand for another word. So I began thinking about the acronym for CRAZY.

So Today, I want to give you an introduction to CRAZY

C stands for committed. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways submit to Him and He will make your paths straight. To be crazy, we hve to lean on God and let Him control our lives.

In terms of commitment, I also think about considering the cost and sacrifice. If you were going to build a new house or start a new business, you would want to make sure you knew what you were committing to. The same thing is true with our Christian walk. Commitment is something that is not really followed in our culture. We make marriage vows for better or for worse, but soon as we hit a rough patch in our marriage, we are ready to divorce. So many people change jobs, churches and friendships on a regular basis. I am reminded of the song “I have Decided to Follow Jesus”.

Commitment also brings the notion of devoted. Many people made resolutions at the beginning of the year to eat healthier or workout more, and most of those resolutions were broken by the end of the first week of the new year. Those who broke their resolutions weren't dedicated to it. I have heard that it takes like 3 weeks to make something a habit. It is hard to be devoted, our enemy wants to keep us from being devoted to being closer to God. So, let me ask you, are you committed?

R stands for relationship. There are two things that come to mind when I think about relationship. First is our relationship with God. Christianity is not about religion, it is more about a relationship with God. Let's think about our earthly relationships, whether that be in a family, or with friends; to cultivate and build a relationship with someone, it takes time, and it is a process. We have to invest in that relationship. How are you investing in your relationship with God? Look back at 2 Corinthians 5 in verse 14. For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all dies. Our relationship with God should compel us to certain actions. Our actions should come out of relationship and not as an obligation. What would it be like, if on Sunday mornings, we woke up thinking "I get to go spend an hour or so connecting with God" instead of "I have to go to church". Often times, the phrase is followed by, "I hope the pastor is not long-winded today", "what can we do for lunch, I don't want to miss the game on TV later".

Relationship also stands for the fact that we have to depend upon one another. It is hard to be crazy for God by yourself. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 says, therefore encourage one another and

build each other up”. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 says, Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. Are we committed to our brothers and sisters in Christ?

A stands for ambassador. An ambassador is a representative sent to a foreign country to represent the values and desires of their ruler. They live in a foreign country, they have learn the culture and customs of that country, but they have to represent the desires of the leader. They represent their home country. 2 Corinthians 5:20 says, “we are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us”. We must remember that the Bible says, this is not our home, we are just passing through. Too often we become too comfortable in our earthly lives, and we begin following the customs of this world. Instead of honoring the desires and requests of our leaders, we decide to give our own advice and opinions. Sometimes, those in the church live their lives in such a way, that they are a poor representative of God. What kind of ambassador of God are you?

Z stand for zeal. Psalm 69:9 says, “Zeal for your house consumes me”. That passage is used to describe Jesus in John 2:17. In John 2, Jesus and his disciples go to Jerusalem at the time of Passover. Jesus saw all the commerce that took place at the temple. Jesus was filled with righteous anger and took action, and told those involved in such practices that they were

turning the house of God into a market. Verse 17 says, His disciples remembered that it is written, zeal for your house will consume me. Zeal can be defined as: eager interest in the pursuit of something; enthusiasm, passion.

You know as humans, we can become angry about many things. My child still doesn't understand math. I can't believe that my spouse though I would like that for Christmas. I can't believe the coach called that play. These things matter to us, but in the end, they will all perish. What about the issues that matter to God? How about those living in bondage? How about the orphans? The widows? In modern days, those involved in sex trafficking? In terms of those who are living, without ever having heard the Gospel? Do we have zeal for those issues?

In our society, we can think of zeal in terms of the sporting teams we cheer for. We gladly wear their logos on our shirts and cars, and post their flags in our yards, but we don't put Christian bumper stickers on our car, or let people know we are Christians because we are afraid they will be offended and think about us differently. I think we should be more worried by offending God by hiding our light, then offending someone else by letting our light shine. We can get so excited when our teams do well. We jump up and down when they score or win a big game. We may prepare ourselves for one of their big contests. Yet, when it comes to God and attending church, we come in and we sit there and at times we struggle not to fall asleep. We know the cheers and fight songs our team and will recite them with enthusiasm and passion, but we come to church and barely sing or show enthusiasm for God. Why are we more passionate about a team that does nothing for us, for athletes who don't

know us, than we are about a God who made us, who knows all about us, and saved us from our sins? Is your zeal directed in the right direction?

Y stands for yield. We must yield our lives to the Holy Spirit. In John 14:16 Jesus says, “And I will ask the father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever – the spirit of truth”. Acts 1:8, Jesus told his disciples, “You will receive power, when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”. The Holy Spirit is sent to be our advocate, He comforts us, and reminds us of the teachings of God and Jesus. The Spirit gives us power and makes our witnessing efforts more effective. Yet often times, we don’t understand the Holy Spirit, and we don’t yield to the Spirit or we think we can do fine on our own. Are you yielding to the Holy Spirit and His power and direction?

As you have heard my talk about crazy, you realized that you can’t be crazy for God, because you do not know God or have a relationship with Him. Let me be honest, God loves you and me with a crazy love. John 3:16 tells us that God so loved the world that he sent his one and only son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting love. God’s love for you and me is so crazy, that Jesus took the beatings and took the nails in His hands and feet to cover each one of our sins with His blood. God’s love for you and me is crazy, that Jesus rose from the dead, giving us ultimate victory over death and the devil.

Now it is your time to respond to God. Romans 10:9-10 says, If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.