

Title Leading Our Flock into Missions
Speaker Merl Beiler
Speaker's Residence Abbeville, SC
Date Thursday, April 5th, 2011
Venue United Bethel Mennonite Church, Plain City, OH
Program Beachy Amish Mennonite Ministers' Meeting 2012
Transcriber Cory Anderson (www.beachyam.org)
About this document: *This transcript may be distributed freely. The sermon was transcribed during the live presentation and then later edited for clarity. The material presented is not necessarily endorsed by the above organization(s) or transcriber(s). The content of this transcript is not guaranteed, though every effort was made for accuracy and clarity.*

It is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance. It's a sacred privilege for me to address you on this subject. I don't know what you are expecting, but this message must come from a broken vessel. A vessel repenting because of the tremendous, vast privilege and responsibility that is laid on us, the church, the leaders of the flock, to point others to the saving knowledge of Jesus, to lead our flock into missions. I felt as I looked at this subject for some months, perhaps it would have been better to have an experienced, seasoned pastor, and yet we go to the Word of God, and He has a message today. What is the greatest sin of the Beachy constituency? What is the greatest reason our God shepherd would say, "This shouldn't be." He has a message for his church. What does He say to me? He has spoken to me so clearly in this. I believe the greatest sin, my heart, has been, the lack of a God-given, Holy Spirit anointed passion love for lost souls. We can do our services in a formal good way, and everything can seem to be in order, yet, I repent before God and before you for a lack of that burden.

I invite you to open to Matthew 4. I want to read verses 18-20. *Reads verses.* This is at the beginning of his public ministry. Turn to Matthew 28, the Great Commission. Hear the mandate of the mission, what should be our mission statement, from Jesus Himself. *Reads verses.* Don't forget that! "I am with you always." He is with us to carry out the Great Commission. Now, Mark 16:14-16. *Reads verses.* He that believeth not shall be damned. Let the message of the Lord Jesus, let it echo in every fiber of our being. Abbeville, SC: usually in the springtime there is the tour of homes. This morning I have a tour of you, and it is not a nice tour. It's a tour of hell. If that place were just right here, and you had the awesome responsibility to come and someone that you would have ministered to and would have known closely, and you would stand right next to them as they are passed into outer darkness, and you would hear their scream and gnashing of teeth and sense the hopelessness of eternity separated from God, the wrath of God poured out, what would it do for me? For you? I believe with all my heart, the burden of this assembly is experience what God wants us to experience, hearing the cry of the lost, and sharing the greatest news on earth. Dear church, your pastors, your pastors' wives: do you believe Jesus is the only way, and that we have that sacred privilege? I believe the greatest sin of my heart is not being burdened as the heart of the Word Jesus would have me be burdened. I love the opportunity of these meetings. They are such a blessing, to be encouraged, to hear from God for you brethren, to hear His Spirit. What great revival would break out in our churches and in our communities, if we were totally sold out, 110%, if we were more focused on the Lord Jesus, who

our Anabaptist fathers focused on, rather than trying to imitate or duplicate their lives? The call at the beginning of His ministry at the time He was taken up, “Go,” the burden of my heart in this message, is to encourage each one of us. We have the glorious Gospel in our hands. We’re heaping it to ourselves, and failing to proclaim the message.

Leading our flock, as God calls us to lead. What was the lesson these men needed to know before they could lead? That was explained very well, we need to follow Him. This message of Jesus Christ to go is the privilege and responsibility of each one of us. What did this message of follow Me mean to the disciples at this time? What did it mean to them? What does it mean to us today? It is interesting in Matthew 16, when Jesus asked, “Who do men say I am?” Some Elijah, some John the Baptist, some Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Jesus asked, “Whom say, ye, that I am?” This morning, what does your life say? Not the Sunday morning preaching of the Word. What does your life say? Who does your life proclaim to be? When He asked that question, He said, “I am Christ, the Son of the Living God.” In our following, He calls us to follow Him in death. Verse Matthew 16:21. *Reads verse.* Then, they begin to rebuke Him. He invites us to follow Him to death, and until that death is experienced, we can do church all we want to, and plan committees all we want, a religious exercise, but what does God want to take place in this house today? Matthew 16:24. *Reads verse.* Not just an historical fact then, but how fresh is your communion with the One that invites you to die to self. Leading our flock. If there is any prayer that has been mine the most, the most repeated prayer of my heart, has been, Lord, God, show us. Guide us. Show us, how you would have the church inspire and set on fire. Share the message of Jesus Christ effectively, follow me to death, humility, and brokenness. Robert Morrison, one of the first missionaries to China, a Scottish pastor, going there for 27 years. As he got off the ship, the captain sneered, saying, “You think you’re going to impress China with your views?” Robert Morrison, said, “No, it’s God that is going to impress China.” Death to self, humility, brokenness, can hardly be over-emphasized, leading our flock into missions. We’re strong on preaching it. That’s good. I need to be just as strong in living, following closely and equipping others to share the good news. Following, leading, and seeking Him. The church is strengthened and motivated to share the Gospel as they see your team unified and sold out in doing the same. As a team we are able to reach further by working together, sharing the good news, speaking the truth in love and living it out in shoe leather, leading our flock. I believe the greatest lesson in the text read this morning is flowing from the springs of an intimate relationship with the Good Shepherd. Unless that is meaningful, vibrant, willing to lay aside everything, laying ourselves on the alter, I am my beloved and my beloved is mine. Are you living under the fear of man, and what man will say and do? I pray you will be released from the fear of man. We have the greatest message on earth. Without that intimacy of the Spirit, we toil all night and catch no fish. Fishermen catch fish. When was the last time you led a soul to Jesus Christ? What are you about? I want you to know, as I say, “You,” I’m repenting all the time, speaking to myself. Are you truly fishing, fishers of men, or are you just riding the boat? Most leaders are called to serve the local body, it’s a sacred privilege. So, we have fewer opportunities in going out at different mission stations as we had earlier, especially lead pastors. However it is our calling and commission in leading our flock, in vision, and equipping. Paul, in Romans 1:1, he is separated unto the Gospel. When we are separated unto the Gospel, set apart, then other decisions are not so hard to make.

Nehemiah 2:4-5, give some points of Nehemiah’s life. *Reads verses.* Point #1: He prayed and

fasted and you read that in verse 3-4 in chapter 1. Why isn't there more fire in the church to share Jesus Christ? Why isn't there more fire in my heart to share the tremendous message? Perhaps, I depend on programs and organizational skills. Point #2: He was committed to the task, because He was called by God. #3: He took risks for the Kingdom of God's sake, not His personal agenda, even of being ridiculed by his own people. #4: He was a leader, be delicate. #5: He received the facts, and He did it first hand, He went there personally. #6: Servant-leaders make more mistakes than someone that is hardly doing anything. How does that make you feel? Embrace it. #7: He moved forward, and when God spoke, He embraced the opportunity. If the person near you, in five minutes, would be in eternity, how would it change your conversation?

At this time, I have an important announcement. I have a new publication. I want to share. A large volume just right off the press. You weren't expecting a book report at this time. Imagine that this is a large volume just released, released by three of the most well known missions right here. The thing is, I didn't even ask your permission for those responsible for these missions. I have it here, a really nice volume. "The Seven Keys to Leading Your Flock into Missions" presented by AMA, MIC, and CAM. It's a nice volume, you can put it up there with your other big books, "Seven Keys for Leading Your Flock into Missions." Most of you will not have time to read all of the seven major points, and so, that is taken care of, you have CDs up front. When rushing from one place to another, you can pop a CD in and get all the volume. If you do actually have leisure time, there are DVDs in the back, and you can watch that. Let's look at key #1. Must be a big mistake! Key #1 is not here! Do you know what is here? There are details in this manual... I didn't even ask the rest of my team if I could do this. There are details of our ministers' meeting, some of the details are in here. There are some things I don't want you to see. The burden of my heart is this, what are we expending our energies on? Are we focusing on the problems, the negative things? This needs to be different, that needs to be different. I long that our heart would be turned to the Great Commission, the greatest mission of all. If our young people could feel the heat of passion, no cause too great, nothing I am not willing to give up, rather than sit in meetings that I have chaired, that are stuffy meetings that lack the Holy Spirit of God moving, and bringing conviction. Calling is one, and ministry is diverse.

Before moving on to missions, just a point on vision. We need a vision, and not only a vision, but a commitment to carry out the vision. Some remember well the way our 35th President changed something from being impossible to reality. It can be done in the realm of vision. In 1961, Kennedy proposed a big idea, and attached a deadline: our nation should commit to landing a man on the moon and return him safely to earth. I remember. Many scientists scoffed and ridiculed John F. Kennedy. There were preachers that would say it is not going to happen. The Lord didn't allow the Tower of Babel to continue, and He isn't going to allow this to happen. Ever since he had a vision, from it can't be done, to, if we could do it by the deadline, how would it look? JFK had a tremendous reminder and the people he inspired every night, and he would walk out on a clear night like last night and see the stars and moon, what's your vision? That was 1961 when JFK inspired our nation to do it. November 22, 1963, he was assassinated, and on July 20th, 1969, that Apollo 11 landed on the moon. Missions: the mission of every believer, the Great Commission. What would you say, church, is the greatest hindrance to us leading our flock into missions? I don't remember who said it, but I loved the saying, it was said of Paul, that wherever he went, either a revival broke out, or a riot. The fire of God was in his heart. What's the greatest need or hindrance? Proverbs 24:11. *Reads verse.* Romans 10:13. *Reads verse.* We

believe that, preach it, are we living it? We are responsible for how we motivate or stifle our congregations into living out the Great Commission.

About 35 years ago, a pastor was traveling through a place in South Africa, and he was tired, he had meetings at this place. An individual wanted to see him after the service, one who was living in sin, and wanted to try again. After the service, in taking down the tent, the pastor was to go to the home of the sister of the one who was seeking. He was too tired, and he went to the next city, to prepare for the services the next night. After a month or two he was coming through the place he had been at before. He was going to stop in to see the sister. As he knocked on the door, the lady came to the door; she was weeping and crying, "I don't know if I want to see you. My brother came and he was ready, and if he could talk to you, he was going to commit his life to Jesus. But he went home that night, in such an anguished spirit, he was in a drunken spirit, and he perished that night. I don't know if I want to see you pastor." Jesus said unto them, "My will is to do the will of Him that sent Me." John Piper described missions as back-breaking, ordained leaders... Jesus Christ is the only way to Heaven. Millions, millions, millions. Does it mean anything to us, that within the last 24 hours, 150,000 souls went to meet God? Will we equip the church to meet the lost, or will we have our religious activities, where we build walls, where we build walls to keep our people in rather than sending them our 2x2, or 7x7. May I ask you a question? If today there were two families from your congregation in Iran. We spoke to a young man who was stabbed for his faith and left for dead, and they left him that way. Someone had mercy on him and carried him to a hospital. His stabbed wound was a fraction of an inch from vital organs. If families from your church were in Iraq or Pakistan and their lives would be on the line for sharing the Gospel, would we pray any differently? Or would we cry out to God for our luke-warmness, having left our first love, not being broken before God. I want to make sure everything is taken care of right here. Are we too often like the merchant, so intent on keeping the store cleaned, that he failed to unlock the front door. The real reason for the store is to have customers. But he polished, he wanted to look good. Will we be real with each other as we lead our flock into missions?

There is a quote, from, "Cheap Grace" by Nathan Mast. He writes, "If we claim to be a full gospel church, there are 20 or more hours spent per hour in deer hunting than hunting souls. We have more injuries from people falling from deer stands than going into missions." We invite evangelistic speakers to come, I love to hear that and to go from community to community, and share with people who have heard the Gospel 1,000 times over. If we collectively, and many are doing that in foreign countries, what will we do? Who will we be, to reach the lost? Are we guilty of teaching the Gospel in Jesus Christ as a cultural way to live, rather than a gospel for all cultures? Has too much energy, and I run the risk of being misunderstood and being labeled as a conservative or liberal, you can just label me as a needy shepherd. We have invested too much time in doing this and don't do that, and I am glad we abstain from evil and all appearance of evil, and I believe if our focus was on Jesus Christ and sharing the OGOD News, and with you it is real, there is no cause too great. We would have less reason to say, "Hey, you know, should we be going to that football game, or do this, or that?" when their heart is sold out to the greatest news, and filled with a passion for the Lord Jesus. Are you more enthused about being servant of the Most High? I believe the greatest lack in my own heart, is a lack of being filled, as it says in Ephesians, "Be filled with the Spirit." A friend from one of the mission units, we have units coming here doing things like they do at home, in their own strength, and when they hit the wall,

it is more than they can handle. I feel overwhelmed how they could be contributing if they arrived ready to work, with the streams of life overflowing. Is this the reason we have such a difference between church and missions? Do we model what our missionaries are expected to carry out in the field? We have lots of good people, but how many are truly filled and overflowing with the Holy Spirit.

Here are some practical things as you consider leading your flock, leading the flock into missions. I want you, pastor friend, to bless your people in exploring ideas and ways to minister, and let them know it is just as a high calling to be on their way to work tomorrow morning, and sharing the Gospel with everyone they meet, as it is to be... wherever God has called to lead. There are a lot of ways, and I have a long list of things that could be looked at as ways to encourage, practical ways. I'll just name one or two. I challenge you to bless your youth in being involved in long and short term mission projects, where they personally share. I challenge you pastors to teach a missions class to your high school students on a regular basis, once a week. Equipped to send out. Jesus called us, to follow him, lift up your eyes to see what he says, feel the urgency he feels. May I ask you something personally? When was the last time you wept for a soul? Unless they decide to follow the Lord Jesus, is headed for Hell. Compare the time you've invested in prayer, seeking the face of God, compare that with the time you've sat in stuffy meetings, where the only things discussed were the problems of the time. Lift up your ideas, follow him, saving souls, souls that will otherwise be lost for eternity.