

The Fifth Gospel: What Are People Reading in Us?

June 16, 2026

Last night, our focus scripture was 2 Corinthians 3:2-3:

“You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. You show that you are a letter from Christ... written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God.”

As we reflected on this passage, a simple but powerful question emerged:

What are people reading when they read my life?

Most people know there are four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These books tell us the story of Jesus. But every believer is writing what some have called a “fifth gospel” every day through the way we live, speak, respond, and treat others.

Long before people hear a sermon from us, they watch us.

They watch how we handle disappointment.

They watch how we respond to conflict.

They watch how we treat people who can do nothing for us.

They watch how we act when life becomes difficult.

The reality is that some people may never attend church. They may never open a Bible. But they are reading our lives every day.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:16:

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Notice that Jesus said they would see our lives. Our actions often speak louder than our words.

During the service, we listened to the song “The Fifth Gospel.” One line that stood out was the reminder that faith is more than Sunday words. Authentic faith shows

up on Monday morning, Wednesday afternoon, and in every ordinary moment of life.

People are not looking for perfect Christians.

They are looking for genuine ones.

The message also reminded us that we are called to reflect Christ. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, believers are called to reflect the Son. We do not produce the light ourselves. We simply spend time with Jesus and allow His character to shine through us.

One of the most encouraging truths from the evening was that God can shine through our weaknesses.

Many people believe they have to have everything together before God can use them. Scripture teaches the opposite. God often does His greatest work through ordinary people who are willing to trust Him.

Our struggles, our scars, and even our past mistakes do not disqualify us from reflecting Christ. In many cases, they become part of our testimony.

The service also reminded us that we were created in the image of God. While sin has distorted that image, Christ is continually restoring it. God's goal is not simply to get us to heaven one day. His desire is to shape us into the likeness of Jesus right now.

Galatians 2:20 says:

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

Christianity is not simply trying harder to be good. It is allowing Christ to live through us.

That is what people should encounter when they meet us.

Not perfection.
Not religious performance.
But the presence of Christ.

As we closed the service, we were challenged to ask ourselves some honest questions:

Do people see grace in me?
Do they see forgiveness?
Do they see compassion?
Do they see humility?
Do they see integrity?
Do they see Jesus?

The fifth gospel is being written every day—not with ink, but with our choices, our character, our words, and our love.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John tell the story of Jesus.

Our responsibility is to live it.

— Pastor Cindy H. Carr
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Featured Song:

“The Fifth Gospel” by David Meece

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=The+Fifth+Gospel+David+Meece