

January 10, 2015 – “Will They See Christ?” based on Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Americans are fascinated with being the best – number 1. So are churches, the most exciting church, church with the highest attendance, etc.

- Usually arrive on back of a superstar – a Robert Schuller, Joel Osteen, or Jerry Falwell. Do they sometimes block people from seeing Christ?
- John the Baptist was impressive – “People filled with expectation” – was he the Messiah? But, he knew God’s plan, that he was not the Christ, not even worthy to untie his shoes.
- Thin line between being a church that thrives and one that ‘shows forth Christ’

Mission of Church is to show Christ. What are clues to those churches that ‘block’ the message?

- Soft peddle the truth to gain acceptance. Preach easy things, steer clear of sacrifice, say what people want to hear.
- Make worship popular instead of meaningful. Be a performance, a good show, eliminate anything that might be conceived of as boring or tedious.
- Focus on only the ‘good people’, those for which everything is going well. Forget the least, the lost, and the last. Make church a social club instead of a hospital for sinners.

We are not number 1, Jesus is. Can’t become more concerned with building or emotion or catering to the good people at the expense of not showing the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Need to get out of way and acknowledge that we are ministers of God’s love in Jesus Christ. Beginning of New Year is a good time to take stock and commit to our mission, that of living our faith. Amen.