**SLIDE 1 Forgiving Sin, Iniquity, and Transgressions**

Series: God Selfie

Date: September 21/22, 2019

Wynne Lankford

**Bumper:**

**SLIDE 2 Welcome to Southside!** Selfie Challenge #southsidechurchselfie

We are glad you’re here, we are continuing our study in Exodus 34 where God gave a portrait of Himself to the world.

We call it God’s selfie!

I have to admit, I’m obsessed!

**SLIDE 3** Since the birth of my grandson Ryan, I am obsessed with pictures of this little guy!

We have pictures of him everywhere!

**SLIDE 4** His picture is in my office, on my computer screen, it becomes a regular post to my social media, and Ryan has been a regularly feature as my profile pic.

Ryan is everywhere!

**VIDEO (sermon-ryan-apple-tv)** We even have a shared cloud folder, where we can receive daily pictures and this folder selected on my apple TV as the scrolling screensaver.

We will often just watch in amazement, this digital slide show of Ryan float across our big screen TV!

It doesn’t take much prompting for me to want to show off the latest Ryan cutie pics to anyone I’m talking to.

In fact, if I had it my way I would share Ryan’s picture with the world!

How many of you can relate to this feeling? You have a picture you want to share with the world?

This brings me to the question for today. If you had a picture of God, would you be as passionate about sharing it with the world?

The good news we have been sharing in this sermon series is that God has given us a picture of Himself!

This selfie was captured in an encounter with Moses and God wanted Moses and all future generations to share His picture with the world.

This is why God chose the nation of Israel in the first place?

God desired to give a portrait to the whole world and what better than a people who could display who He was to all of creation!

God raised up a people, and chose them to be the ones who would carry His portrait to the world.

When God freed the nation of Israel from Egypt and they made their way to the mountain to worship God, He let them in on His intention for them!

**SLIDE 5-6 *Exodus 19:5-6 (NIV) 5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."***

Think about this, God was saying clearly. I want you to be the ones to share ME with the world!

**SLIDE 7** God is calling you to become **ministers and missionaries who will show His picture and reveal His character to the world!**

This message was given to Moses before he came to the top of the mountain, before the people forgot why they had come to this place.

Before they rebelled against God and built a golden calf to worship. Before they had received the first tablets containing the Ten Commandments.

This was God’s vision for His people all along.

To become a nation of priests – **ministers and missionaries who would prove He exists in the world!**

We have been basking in this story over the past three weeks, we have been reminded that God was broken hearted by the people’s rebellion.

God declared He would not go with them to the Promised Land once they disobeyed.

It was only after Moses begged God not to let them leave this place without His presence.

The people humbled themselves in repentance and God forgave them of their sin and agreed to allow His presence to remain with them.

It is in the wake of that repentance that Moses went back up the mountain to experience God’s glory and self-revelation!

God wanted Moses to know who He really was and He wanted His selfie declared to the world.

I believe God gave Moses His selfie to bring an exclamation point to who God is in forgiveness!

It is in verse 7 of Exodus 34 we see this part of God’s selfie!

***Exodus 34:7 (NIV) 7maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.***

There, framed in the middle of His picture, is the heart of God toward His people!

**SLIDE 8** God wanted the world to see **He is a GOD of forgiveness!**

He wants to forgive us in three ways: Our wickedness, rebellion and sin.

Wickedness means perversity, depravity, or iniquity.

This goes beyond our actions and gets to the condition of our heart. That inward condition pulls us in the opposite direction of God!

God wants to forgive the root of our sin, dealing with the condition of our heart!

Not only that, but he wants to forgive our…

Rebellion. Rebellion is an attitude of defiance. It is an “**I don’t want your way spirit leading to a I want to do it my way action.”**

Rebellion refers to our heart of resistance to God.

God wants to forgive the condition of our heart, along with the rebellion and finally he wants to forgive our intentional acts of disobedience.

Sin is the simple act of disobedience. It is sins that pollute our soul.

**SLIDE 9** God wants to forgive it all. From the condition, to the attitude and actions, God wants to forgive it all!

God want to forgive ALL who are legitimately turning from their sins. God wants to forgive restore and renew those who humble themselves in His presence.

This forgiveness was being made available initially through the Tabernacle system that was detailed by God on the mountaintop.

Sinners were to bring a sacrifice to the tabernacle and give it to the priest who would offer the sacrifice to God as they confessed their sin before God.

God not only gave us this clear picture of Himself and process to find forgiveness; He also gave them a promise!

God gave them a promise of a better sacrifice offered by a better priest that would arrive through their descendants.

This promised Messiah would be the fulfillment of the PERFECT SACRIFICE for the sins of ALL people and the PERFECT PRIEST who would perform the offering.

**SLIDE 10** Jesus is the fulfilment of that promise!

The entire aim God had from the beginning was to produce a people who would become a Kingdom of Priests, and a holy nation.

Who usher into the world THE ONE who would become our High Priest!

And not just a high priest who performs in a sacrificial system, NO!

We have a High Priest who has become the sacrifice - So we might be able through repentance to find forgiveness from our sin!

When Jesus died on the Cross and rose from the dead, He became the sacrifice that could forgive our wickedness, rebellion, and sin in our lives.

Not only was He the High Priest who made the sacrifice He was the sacrifice!

Then Jesus through resurrection power ascended to the right hand of God interceding on our behalf!

But not before declaring His authority and extending His call for us to become a Holy Priesthood that would carry His portrait proudly to the world!

Jesus, called us to become a New Kingdom of priests who would become:

**SLIDE 11 *We are ministers and missionaries called to take His portrait of forgiveness to the whole world.***

This is why Apostle Peter made this appeal to all who would hear!

**SLIDE 12 *1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)9 …. you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.***

Today we are a part of a movement of God through Christ Jesus - **called to share with the world that God wants to forgive them and free them from sin!**

We are invited to become a part of this new holy nation a Body of Christ, taking on the role of royal priest sharing God’s picture of forgiveness to the world.

With the same enthusiasm I have in sharing little Ryan with the world.

**I am so glad to be a part of a Body of Christ that really gets that!**

We are a part of the Body of Christ that has been sharing this picture of forgiveness with the world for over the past 2000 years.

In fact, this weekend we are celebrating a milestone in the history of Southside Church.

This weekend we celebrate several anniversaries.

Today we celebrate 20 years at this Courthouse Road location.

On this day, in 1999, we left the 7 acres at our Cogbill Road building and relocated to this building on Courthouse Road setting on 41 acres.

Then 11 years ago today, we launched our Enon/Chester congregation, and 8 years today we began our celebrate recovery service.

These are huge milestones that deserve to be celebrated.

**SLIDE 13** This is one of the reasons we are gathering (Sunday night) tonight to celebrate with music, worship and ice-cream!

But you and I are not only celebrating these milestones, we are celebrating a legacy of the ministers and missionaries that goes back 65 years.

I’m grateful to build on the foundation of people who get it!

I want us to think about this legacy of 65 years in 20-years segments. You could say we are 3 score and 5 years old.

Our history is filled with hundreds of leaders who understood what it meant to take the picture of forgiveness to the world!

Our founding leaders launched and led this church to become a portrait bearing church that is passionate about getting God’s picture of forgiveness into the world!

During the first 20 years of Southside Church we see leadership that planted the DNA of taking the message of forgiveness to those around them.

In fact Southside church was born in the heart of leaders who had a passion to begin a holiness church on the Southside of Richmond.

In 1953, , **Rev. Paul Holt**, , **Rev. Harold Mills**, and the Virginia District Superintended, **Rev. V. W. Litterell**, all felt the tug of the Holy Spirit to plant a new church on the Southside of Richmond.

They rented a **vacant barbershop** on Jeff Davis highway and **Pastor Harold Mills** began a Sunday afternoon bible study.

These pioneer leaders believed Jesus was calling them to be ***ministers and missionaries and take His portrait of forgiveness to their world.***

Visionary leaders and pioneer followers like Jean Vaughan, Mae West, George and Annie Jones, Larkin and Gladys Burch, and Charlie Lambert.

They all accepted the call to become ***ministers and missionaries taking the portrait of forgiveness to their world!***

In 1954, the founding leaders helped Southside Church call a new pastor V. J. Shetler, who led them to become **sacrificial supporters of the vision** leading them to purchase property on Concord Avenue.

Amazingly, George and Annie Lee Jones, sold their home in 1955 in order to pay off the land and provide money down for the first building.

You talk about sacrifice!

With the land paid for and a small amount of money on hand, they began to seek financing to build a building.

Every bank in the area turned them down so they went to prayer. They prayed for a miracle.

Annie Lee Jones received a call from her brother the co-owner of Pleasants hardware who offered them an interest free loan of $5,000.00.

He was moved by the sacrificial obedience of his sister, he wanted to get in on what God was doing.

They built the first building went to repay the loan and Annie Lee Jones’ brother refused to accept payment.

Three pastors would Shepard our congregation through those early years. **Rev. V.J. Shetler**, **Rev. Warren O. Holloway** and **Rev. Sam Pickenpaugh**.

Each of these pastors continued the expansion of the buildings and led with passion in sharing the portrait of forgiveness.

As a result, the church continued to grow.

Committed laymen, like **Ted and Evelyn Weir**, **Jackie Gardner**, **Vida Spencer**, and **Helen Hess**, to name a few, became the bedrock of passion to reach people.

Faith deepened the people and increased the territory, leading to the next twenty-year score of leadership.

In 1969 Rev. Charles Thompson arrived on the scene.

The commitment to be ministers and missionaries continued to grow, stemming from the pioneering spirit embedded deeply in our DNA.

Rev. Thompson helped the people understand the need for continued passion to share the portrait of forgiveness with the world.

They came to the conclusion they needed to relocate and called the church to prayer.

Through prayer and passion, the church continued to press forward sharing the portrait of God’s forgiveness through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

They voted to sell the Concord Ave property and moved into a school for two years while they worked to relocate to a property on the corner of Cogbill Road and Chippenham Parkway.

There was a legal blockage keeping them from building a church on the land.

**SLIDE 14**They were called to prayer. Times of prayer brought times of miracles. Obstacles were overcome through prayer, obedience, and sacrifice!

All because their burning passion to be **ministers and missionaries who took the picture of God’s forgiveness to the world!**

They built the church in 1970 and grew until, in 1983, they expanded the building by doubled the size as they continued to be –

**Ministers and missionaries sharing the portrait of God’s forgiveness with the world.**

In 1986 Rev Charles Thompson was elected to be the new District Superintendent of the state of Virginia.

This led to a new score of leadership through a new pastor.

Rev. Jerome Hancock became the next pastor in 1987 and a new generation of people continued with passion to share the portrait of forgiveness with the world.

Southside Church continued to grow requiring another relocation.

That leads us to our 20-year celebration today!

There is not enough time for me to share with you all the miracles God performed during this part of our church history.

If you come tonight, you will hear many of them - like the miracle call that led to Pastor Hancock becoming the pastor in 1987 and the miracle call that led to me to arrive on the scene in 2002.

All of the miracles have happened over the past 20 + years because of God’s promise and a willing people that respond to God’s call!

We are here because many people get it!

We are blessed to have many of the leaders who sacrifices to get us here over 20 + years ago, that has led us to this moment.

Tonight we want to Celebrate the investment made but more importantly, we do not want to miss this moment.

God did not give His selfie on the mountaintop for Moses to hang on his wall for him to enjoy with his afternoon tea!

**SLIDE 15** NO, God gave the portrait to Moses and illuminated his face with His glory so others could see and know WHO GOD really is!

Jesus did not give His life and give His authority to us so we can simply enjoy His presence.

**SLIDE 16** No, Jesus gave His life to offer us forgiveness and once we receive it, He is calling us to share it with the world.

We are called to be ministers and missionaries who take God’s picture of forgiveness to our world!

God’s gift to the world is revealed in His self-portrait – it is a gift we freely receive in order to give away!

2014 marked the 60th year of Southside Church and that was the year that I was called by you to be your lead Pastor.

We are 5 years into the 4th scores of the life of Southside Church and my prayer is that we never forget our heritage and that we will be people in our generation WHO GET IT!

Will we be like those who have gone before us, and do whatever is necessary to take the portrait of God’s forgiveness and deliver it to our world!

Gather at the alter with your phones!

**Pray**

Take the picture of Jesus as a reminder to share His forgiveness with the world!

**Revelation 3:20 (NKJV) 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.**