

ALL IN:
Discipleship through His Word
Acts 2:42-47

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ONE Day and Launch of Capital Campaign

Introduction: Back in 2006, which seems like yesterday, but the calendar tells us that it was 7 years ago, I shared with you a vision for our church from Psalm 71. Because it came from Psalm 71, we have used the phrase, Vision 71, to summarize our thoughts about our ministry. Seven years ago, I envisioned that this text would guide us in not only taking on the challenge to improve our physical plant by building an addition to minister to Preschool, Children, and Youth, but also provide the outline for the ministry that would happen in that space. I commend you and thank you for following with me in that vision. This morning, I want to use our time to review that vision and ask you to think about an additional challenge. Please understand, this is not changing the vision, this is updating the vision. In some respects, it is even more basic than the Vision 71 strategy.

Reviewing Vision 71

Thankfully, God is continuing to add to His church. As a result, we constantly have new people. New members and interested members need to hear that guiding vision. So, let's review that for just a moment and understand again together that here are four core values that ought to guide our work.

1. Our church continues to preach **The Same Gospel.**

The Gospel is the same. As you have heard many times before and will continue to hear, the Gospel never changes. Our methods must change with every generation and in every culture in order to effectively reach those generations and cultures, but our message must never change. That basic message is that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. "There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved," said the Apostle Peter after having been arrested for preaching this message about Jesus. (Acts 4:12) We must have that same conviction. We must put action to that conviction.

2. We must preach this same Gospel to **The Next Generation.**

We believe that it is the command of God to every generation to reach the next generation. We cannot do anything about the generation that is already past or the generations beyond our lifetime, but we must do all that we can do to reach the next generation of our time. As many have said, "We are only one generation away from extinction." If we care, if there is compassion, we will go above and beyond so that the next generation gets it. We will continue to put an emphasis on reaching the next generation. I make no apology for that. It is the command of God.

3. We must ultimately preach this same Gospel to **All the Nations**.

There is something else about reaching the next generation. They may be our best hope for reaching the nations. If we believe that God has called us to be a part of reaching the nations, we must understand that we have to lead the next generation to have a burden for the nations.

4. We must do all of this **All for God's glory!**

We must never forget that the reason that we do all of this is for God's glory!

These four core values, I pray, will continue to guide our decisions and our ministry. Today, I come to remind of us how we are to do that as a church. What will be the means to do this as a church? How did the first church after Jesus' resurrection and ascension do this? We find our answer in Acts 2. Here's what they did!

Text: And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to the prayers.

⁴³ Then fear came over everyone, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. ⁴⁵ They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as anyone had a need. ⁴⁶ Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple complex, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with a joyful and humble attitude, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to them those who were being saved.

Overview of Acts 2:42-47

These described in Acts 2 were authentic believers in Jesus Christ. They believed, and as a result of their belief, they were baptized. After being baptized, they banded themselves together as the church.

The Commitments of this Church:

As a church they committed themselves to these things:

Discipleship (becoming fully devoted followers of Jesus), fellowship (doing life together), prayer, worship, and stewardship.

The reason that I want us to take a hard look at this passage is because these are the very things that will happen in the new building that we will build. There will be a Fellowship Hall that will seat double the capacity that our existing Fellowship Hall seats. This will be a place of teaching with up to 18 Adult Education rooms being available. This space will also have connecting corridors that are a vibrant place of fellowship. This space will also house a new prayer room for our church's prayer ministry.

The Results: As a result of doing these things together, the LORD continued to prove Himself to them so that there was a sense of awe about them, they experienced miracles together, they had favor with one another, and every day people were being saved.

We will talk about all five of these commitments over the course of the next Sundays, but today we focus on the teaching of the Word of God.

Zeroing in on Discipleship through His Word

Our church must be built upon the foundation of the Word of God. The Bible will be the rock on which we stand. We will be known as a church of the Bible. We will be unashamed in saying that we believe the Bible. We will be unashamed about saying that we believe the Bible is true. The Bible will be our foundation.

5 Attitudes that Must Characterize our Pursuit of the Study of God's Word:

1. **Devotion**—Notice that they were “devoted” to the Apostles teaching.
2. **Intention**—Notice that they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple complex.
3. **Application**—The emphasis was not just information, but application.
4. **Submission**—There was a sense of authority from the teaching.
5. **Expectation**—There was the by-product of the LORD adding to their number every day.

I've been reading as of late the biography of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, by Eric Metaxas. If you are not familiar with Bonhoeffer, he was a Christian pastor and theologian that stood against Hitler. Eventually, Bonhoeffer would be executed for his involvement in efforts to overthrow Hitler's regime.

Metaxas writes about Bonhoeffer's early career as a lecturer on theology.

“Bonhoeffer's interest was not only in teaching them as a university lecturer. He wished to “disciple” them in the true life of the Christian. This ran the gamut, from understanding current events through a biblical lens to reading the Bible not just a theology student but as a disciple of Jesus Christ. This approach was unique among German university theologians of that era.”

One of his students remembered, “He said when you read the Bible, you must think that here and now God is speaking with me.” Yet another student said, “He taught us that the Bible goes directly into your life, to where your problems are.” (All quotes from Metaxas, *Bonhoeffer*, pp. 128-29)

It's this kind of view of the Bible that must guide our lives. It's this kind of view of the Bible that must guide our ministry.

It's why God said to Joshua, as is recorded in Joshua 1:8, “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” (Joshua 1:8)

Of all of the quotes from Bonhoeffer's writings that I've come across so far, I am particularly drawn to this one. Bonhoeffer, in speaking about some of the theologically liberal churches of America that he had visited, said, "There's no sense to expect the fruits where the Word really is no longer being preached."