

The Life Story! Part 3

So Far... Taken a look at our rich history... The Pioneer's and precepts paving the way! Took a look at our denominational background and connections...

Today we will look at our Passions and Pathways! What we are willing to stand for and how we are going to get there!

The Passion and Pathway! Pathos: the things we have abiding passion for, an experience, desire that arouses our emotions... **For God's love, Jesus sacrifice, Spirit's assignment to love and dwell in us!** "Tear ourselves apart" to fulfill His will, desires, mission on the earth! Willing to be remade, conformed into the image of His Dear Son! We have been set free to pursue His design for our lives! **For people's salvation: nothing happens without it!** We can get people to heaven sick, troubled, broke, broken... But we can't get them there without salvation! Salvation is the main thing! Then restoration/building 2% people! **For safe growing environments, for real world people! For transgenerational ministry! For the Body of Christ – wherever it is!**

Ethos: the fundamental values of our culture and how we live and accomplish them! We work very hard to make preferred values our *actual* values... Having good intentions, being well thought of is not the same as being effective! The church is a service organization and there is no serving going on without the proper number of staff/volunteers with same desires!

Shoulder-to-shoulder ministry team! Earliest View... From the time I was saved and realized I would be a minister... Had a "shoulder-to-shoulder" concept of ministry! I wanted to experience what I thought I saw in scripture! Men/women vetted and released to do what God desired of them... Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers... United with others doing the same!

Earliest View... None of the ministries I was part of functioned that way... God's anointed concept! "No body can have two heads" idea! Corporate American business principle in the church! When we started Life, first words, "Don't build it on the corporate American model!" OKAY! But still didn't get it! It's not that we don't have order, we just have God's order!

God's order for the Church...

For responsibility: "He gave gifts unto men... Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers..."

E4.11 But we are "Sheep with bells!" Don't Lord it over... Don't demand respect/titles they can't command... Don't take the higher places... Don't expect to be served... lay down their lives for the sheep! (no separators). Have the double judgment of their own lives and the lives entrusted in the church... For responsibility: "He gave gifts unto men... apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers..." **E4.11** To serve and build up the body.

For extended service: added those who are diakonos/servants... **A6, 1T3.8-13**, presbuteros/older, episkopos/ overseeing servants **1T3.1-7, Titus 1.5-9** And in ministry to the world: "Neither Jew or Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female – for you are all one in Christ!" **Gal 3.28 Col3.11**

Servant Leader model of leadership! The Jesus Model! "Just as the Son of God came to serve and not be served and to give His life as a ransom for many..." **Mt20.28** "If I Your Master have done these things, so should you, I have given you an example to follow, the servant is not greater than his Lord!" **J13** "In My kingdom it will not be so..." Not really that hard to figure out that the American Corporate leader model doesn't fit!

The Jesus Model! Eastern Servant Role: "Watch my eyes, my hands and listen to my voice!" What that means is that we provide service where He says... and not... It means that we don't struggle with the traditions of men... because we don't create anything based on expectations... We support ministries

when God gives the vision and the person... Joseph principle: "Who better than the one God has given the vision to?" And we never do life support!

Two Generation Ministry! Assurance! Two-gen down ministry insures/ ensures/assures the future! Churches that are not reaching forward are dying out! Instead of "re-generating" they force re-creation ("Seconds")... Recreate generational errors too! Not growing the next crop guarantees starvation! Too many church groups just keep tightening their belts rather than change!!

The Kingdom of God "REACHES!" And we want our kids to know exactly that – called to *reach!* Never arriving, never satisfied, always hungry for more of God and people... *We pave the road, pay the way, serve others and die saving!* EVERYONE IS A MISSION-AIRE! A member of the mission team!

Care! We care! People come to church because they are wanting a touch from God... If not they would watch TV at home! For us not to see, love, care and intersect would be wrong! Number One visitor response: Someone cared/noticed/prayed/greeted! (wasn't always so!) People may come and hate the way we do it – but know we care! First impressions are lasting!

Worship! Time together! We spend time "soaking" in worship! Not in a hurry to get anywhere else... Not a warm up/nor a sedative... His presence brings all the answers we need! Must allow time for people to feel His presence... Peel back the layers to let the words find their mark in our hearts! Creates an atmosphere for people to taste freedom!

Ministry Environment! The Alpha Model! One of our core values is creating environments for growth in God! Sunday morning: model of *teaching!* Mid-week: model of *community!* Gathered together, with food... Free food/budget item/CODB! And kids need theirs too! In protected environment... Just being on-site curbs the dangers! Developing relationships/friendships

Verity! Living the Life! The truth that we speak... we live out... and it can't be any other way! Leaders are not only – *not* exempt... They should be first (arche/protos) to live the way! The truth we teach, we get in a very different way! We just wait on the Lord until we know what's on His mind and then we share! We are not authors but recorders, not composers but musicians!

Money! Money, money, money, money! We build barns to worship in so that we can spend the most on mission! Mission to seek and save what is lost! Mission to bring kids into the kingdom! Mission includes missionary staff!

The Lord will never ask us how much money we saved, but how many people did we save with the money we were given!

Believe in complete accountability! Report monthly to the Church Council and Foursquare! Report annually to the congregation on a Sunday morning service! Family business should be discussed when the most family are gathered! Family support the family business with our tithes and offerings! "When we faithfully handle what is least we will be given more, true, riches!" **Lk 15**

Special Forces Soldiers, Broadcast Farmers, Iron Man Runner's, Tournament Wrestlers, Meatball Surgeons! 2% People! People come here all the time searching for more! In about six months many decide this is too much more! Absolutely fine with us! **Exit doors are exactly the same size as our entry doors!** But we are "pressing toward the mark (goal) for the prize (wreath) of the *high-calling* (ano-klesis) of God in Christ!" **P3.14** Many of the people who leave come back or call back later...

2% People! Come into the kingdom to die (to themselves) to live for Christ! Set their affections on things above! **View life as opportunity to reach for the image of Christ to see how much like Him we can become!** Conformed into the image of His Son! See how much like Him we have become! **View life**

as a tour of duty to reach the lost and death as the presentation of a living sacrifice! Please Him who chose us as a soldier! Reasonable service!

80% is "finished!" Forward March! More than just a building/project reality for us... It's a forward way of living concept! Always growing, expanding, moving and never arriving! Most often, quickly. Sometimes slow enough to finish up unfinished projects! But never resting on yesterday... always on to tomorrow!

Forward March! When it comes to buildings... Build contemporary, safe, clean, age appropriate, regularly maintained/ upgraded buildings... Knowing we are not in competition with other churches but the world! Up against daycares/schools for kids! Up against clubs/arcades for youth! Up against restaurants for dining! Up against hotels and coffee houses for adults!

Brings us to NOW! Room is filled with Ministers, Counselors, Worship Leaders, Creators of Leaders, Administrators, Servants... Gifts, talents, abilities, resources are all here, now... But you have to be willing to give them... No one starts at the top... "Wait until they discover who I am!" That's why Jesus passed by the religious Pharisees to get to the recovered sinners!

The greatest of all are the servants of all, first, foremost and forever!

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But you have to be willing to give them... Have to be willing to step out of the shadows and plug in... Have to be willing to join a special force of people who will not hold back!

This is our Church and if you want it to be your church... you will become part of the Life Story!