

RoadVision: Impel Gee Sprague, Lead Pastor February 15, 2009

I. Our vision is to be a church that challenges one another to grow in faith and serve others.

A. As we have been revisiting the vision at CrossRoad Church, it has been exciting to see our vision Restored.

B. So far we have talked about our vision that *Invites people to come as they are!*

C. *Inspires imperfect people to connect with a perfect God through a relationship with Jesus Christ.*

1. *Innovation is a part of what it takes to inspire imperfect people.*

D. *Today our theme is Impel: Our vision is to challenge one another to grow in faith and serve others.*

E. *Impel* means to urge or encourage while *compel* means to take action as a result of pressure or coercion; *impel* is very similar in meaning to *compel* but suggests even more strongly an inner drive to do something and often a greater urgency in the desire to act (from thesaurus.com)

1. *to drive or urge forward; press on; incite or constrain to action*

2. *to drive or cause to move onward; propel; impart motion to.*

F. Up until now, we have talked a lot about how we try to create an atmosphere or culture that is open to people who are far from God, or at least far from the church, and to draw them near.

G. That is what really drives us on Sunday morning.

H. We began last week describing the ways that we provide for people to connect in community.

I. This week, we are going to look at the importance of people growing in their faith.

J. *Break Through Prayer, Jim Cymbala* Book #51 Page 180 "... faith means the moral persuasion or conviction that leads the heart to rely on Christ.... It's about building up our confidence in God. Unless our faith in God grows, we have not helped anyone at the point of the attack."

K. *The Case for Faith, Lee Strobel* #50 Pg. 334 "I suggest they go where faith is. If you want to grow roses, you don't buy an acre at the North Pole. You go where roses grow well. If you're going to do faith, you probably don't want to join American Atheists, Inc. Get around people who you respect for their life, their mind, their character, and their faith, and learn from them. Watch their life."

II. (Eph 4:11-13 NRSV) The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, {12} to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, {13} until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

III. **Every member a minister**

A. The apostle Paul describes the way the Holy Spirit empowers people to grow and serve Jesus in the Church.

B. At CrossRoad, we have tried to build a healthy body by supporting and growing these areas.

C. Apostles tend to be people connected to the church, but they serve outside the walls.

1. We are blessed to have Diane and Ben Goldsmith a part of our church who have served for over 30 years with Campus Crusade for Christ. They are working diligently in serving our community through Worknet, Boxes of Love, Say Yes after school programs, and they are growing leaders and followers of Jesus Christ.

2. We have partnered with Len Showalter and many of our people have helped lead Evangelism Explosion Clinics all around the world.

D. It is hard to identify the Prophets in the church, but I see people doing a lot of outreach that is concerned with the justice issues and who see their faith affecting the way we treat the poor, the least of these..

1. Family Promise, whose founding director, Mindy Roberts, and new director, Mark Landschoot, are both members at CrossRoad.

2. This is an effective way to help homeless families get off the streets and to put their lives together.
3. A few of the families that we have hosted have become connected with our congregation after they find jobs and homes.

E. Evangelism is evident here through many of the events that we plan to open our doors to the unchurched.

1. We send out mailers regularly to new residents.
2. We open our doors through Fall Festival.
3. We see the WCA Leadership Summit as an opportunity to open our doors to leaders in the community.
4. Events like Fallen Angel, Boondocks, now Super Heros are designed for you to invite your unchurched or dechurched friends.
5. Series on finance, God in the Movies, are designed to invite people to hear the Good News in innovative ways.

F. Pastors

1. It is a strong gift of mine, that as the church has grown I have had to learn to delegate more of that.
2. We are blessed to have Pastor George Spencer leading and training people to develop their gifts in Pastor Care.

G. Teaching

1. Teaching is one of my strong gifts, but I have watched so many people become passionate about that gift because they want to see people grow in their faith.

H. The goal of these gifts is not to develop spiritual super stars but to equip the Body of Christ for ministry.

I. I am the Pastor, not the only minister. Every member is a minister!

J. I think there may be some people here who remember the Saturday training session we had before our first Sunday Service in April 1996.

1. People signed up to be greeters, ushers, hosts, nursery and children's workers.
2. As we gathered together, I asked them, "What are you?"
3. They would respond, "I am a Greeter!" "I am an Usher" "I'm a nursery worker"....
4. I would then respond, No you're not, you are a minister.
5. We are all called to be ministers, if you are a member at CrossRoad, you committed to serve.

IV. **Direction not Perfection**

A. *The Case for Faith, Lee Strobel #50 Pg. 337* "By the way, in the gospel of John, faith is never a noun, it's always a verb. Faith is action; it's never just mental assent. It's a direction of life. So when we begin to do faith, God begins to validate it. And the further we follow the journey, the more we know it's true."

B. Too often we see faith simply as a final destination. At CrossRoad you will hear us talk about the Journey quite often.

C. That has become a catch phrase among a lot of believers, but it has been a part of my belief and practice as a follower of Jesus Christ for a long time.

D. It is why the name CrossRoad is so important.

E. It's not roads, but a Road that leads us to the Cross of Jesus Christ.

F. When we intersect with Jesus, we then are called to carry the Cross of Jesus as one of his followers.

G. Journeys are exciting, they are unpredictable, they can become difficult, natural disasters can interrupt, there can even be delays and detours.

H. The direction is always towards the Cross of Jesus Christ.

V. **Practice Makes Progress**

A. Tiger Woods

B. *The Power of Full Engagement*, Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz #58 pg. 44 "Expanding capacity requires a willingness to endure short-term discomfort in the service of long-term reward."

C. *The Life You've Always Wanted*, John Ortberg #57 pg. 17 "But to grow spiritually means to live increasingly as Jesus would in our unique place---to perceive what Jesus would perceive if he looked through our eyes, to think what he would think, to feel what he would feel, and therefore to do what he would do."

D. {13} *until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.*

VI. **Paths not programs**

A. *Experiencing God Day-by-Day The Devotional and Journal* Henry T. Blackaby and Richard Blackaby #45 P. 236 Victory one step at a time--the process of becoming more like his son.

B. There has been a tendency in churches of my generation to organize people in classes where once they join a church, they tend to camp out there for the rest of their lives.

C. One person described his experience in that model, I went to the same Sunday School Class for 30 years and never graduated.

D. That is a very effective model, but we have tended towards offering people different paths that might help them as they journey.

E. Occasionally you may come visit a mountain with several different paths that take you to the top.

1. Some are more scenic.
2. Some are shorter sprints to the top.
3. Some are longer, but less intense.
4. Some are for beginners, some are for experts.

F. Basically, we try to offer a variety of paths that a person might use in order to grow as a follower of Jesus Christ.

G. MAP is the basic course that we want all people to take so they can get familiar with the types of Paths.

H. Foundations is a course that does just what its name applies, provides the foundation on which you can build your faith.

I. Ultimately, we would like to see all of our members in a small group, growing and serving.

VII. Ben Fleming Testimony

VIII. **Let's make it easy for people to love God!**

IX. (Eph 6:10-18 NRSV) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. {11} Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. {12} For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. {13} Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. {14} Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. {15} As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. {16} With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. {17} Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. {18} Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.

- A. This scripture describes sort of the areas where we hope to see people make progress as followers of Jesus Christ.
- B. Truth
- C. Righteousness
- D. Sharing what it means to know Jesus with others.
- E. Faith that overcomes what the evil one wants to shoot at us.
- F. Salvation
- G. The Presence of the Spirit
- X. Closing Prayer