

THE MAIN THING: Vision Weekend 2013 Part 2 Dr. Henry Schorr

April 27-28, 2013

Many Christians want to give their lives to the Kingdom of God but, truth be told, they often live like they are giving their lives to the Kingdom of THEMSELVES and/or the Kingdom of this world. Jesus said we cannot serve two masters. If we attempt to do so, we will not only live frustrated lives, but we will miss God's best for us. Jesus calls us to make a choice - to decide which Kingdom we are going to give our lives to. Our foundation is in our daily dependence on the Spirit. In our one shining season, we keep our focus on extending the Kingdom of God, so that we may develop the freedom to live simply and give generously.

PURSUE RELATIONSHIP: *Connect and pray as a group*

In light of the finding that being part of a group is beneficial to health, even more beneficial than eliminating unhealthy habits, use this (ridiculous) simile as a pattern to develop a few of your own. *"It is better to eat twinkies with friends than to eat broccoli alone."*

PURSUE GOD: *Time that is devoted to the Word of God*

Observation and Reflection (Read Hebrews 10:19-25)

- What are the foundations for a spiritually dependent life? (Heb 10:19-21)
- What are the commands to a spiritually active community? (Heb 10:22-25)
- Is there a progression of thought?
- Relate Hebrews 10:19-25 to Pastor Henry's vision of a vibrant, missional, and generous church.

Application

- Share an example of your involvement in the gathered or scattered church.
- How might one's commitment to both the 'gathered' and 'scattered' church be fostered by culturing a life of generosity and simplicity? Ask the Spirit for guidance such that you can best customize your lifestyle to reflect simplicity and generosity in order to bring many to Christ.
- In response to the prompting of the Spirit, Reggie McNeal has developed the practice of asking his server in a restaurant, "How can I ask God to bless you?" Take time to listen for the prompting of the Spirit in your life. How can God use your unique gifts and passions to bless others? Share these with your group or family.

PURSUE SIMPLICITY: *Seek to live simply so that others may simply live.*

If, in the past week, you were able to create a special prayer time to sense the promptings of the Spirit, share your experiences with the group. Continue to spend time with God, and let God guide you in your examination of your life. Consider using a daily quiet time pattern such as the one described by Dr. Schorr:

- Spend time reading and reflecting on scripture
- Ask two questions: *What are you saying to me? What do you want me to do about it?*
- Pray for wisdom about whatever lies before you, decisions, opportunities, troubles, about blessing people that you will meet.

PURSUE MISSION:

- 'All we ever get is one shining season, and then it's over.' In view of our mortality and the high calling of Christ, what is holding you back from being an 'all in' follower of Christ? Locate scriptures this week that speak into that reason and ask God for the courage to overcome the Kingdom of ME to be all in the Kingdom of God. Find a prayer partner to support and encourage you.

THE WORD (NIV)

Luke 2:49,

⁴⁹And He said to them, How is it that you had to look for Me? Did you not see *and* know that it is necessary [as a duty] for Me to be in My Father's house *and* [occupied] about My Father's business? (Amplified Bible)

Matthew 28:19

¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

Hebrews 10:19-25

¹⁹Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Dr. Henry Schorr, Vision Weekend, Part 2
2013

April 27 & 28,

Centre Street Church is all about joining Jesus in His work of making disciples. He is stirring us to establish communities of fully devoted followers of Jesus, committed to seeing the beauty of God's kingdom become a living reality in our world. Having been through an era of Grounding and an era of Growth, Centre Street Church is entering a new era, one of Generosity. In this era of Generosity, God is pushing us to be not only a church that gathers together but also a church that scatters – to be the church out in the community and to introduce people to Jesus there. This is not a specific strategy for making disciples, but rather more like a movement in which God's people respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in their lives. It will be about giving our lives to making disciples the way Jesus did.

In the gospels, we see Jesus living a focused life. He pursued a close relationship with His heavenly Father and completely depended on God to do the task God had for Him (John 5:30, 36). Centre Street Church is committed to creating a culture of prayer like this, where people take time to be with God daily, know how to hear the leading of God through His Word and His whispers, and have the courage to obey Him. Jesus was also in relationship with others, both for support and to develop future leaders through whom His mission would continue. As we listen to God, He may give us a larger vision that requires others to come alongside us in realizing that. Current groups may find God nudging them to action in an area that is new for them. There are many things that we may be willing to do as part of a group, such as praying for our neighbours, going on prayer walks, serving in a soup kitchen or going on a missions trip that would be unlikely to happen were we to try it on our own. There are already many people and groups in our church that are responding to God in this way – listening to God on a moment by moment basis and intentionally ministering in the areas that they believe God is calling them to.

Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all nations. In Calgary, we have opportunity to reach out to other nations as immigrants come to our city. To this end, we are opening our New Canadian Friendship Centre in the NE to help immigrants with the challenges of living in a new country and to share Jesus with them. As well, Centre Street partners with a number of churches in other countries that share our ministry goals. These churches can minister in the unique culture and meet the unique needs that are around them. In this way, the existing churches can do effective ministry, while Centre Street provides needed finances or support.

This is the kind of impact we can have when we pool our financial resources. In this era of generosity, we believe that God is calling us to invest even more of our church's financial resources in missional endeavours. This has resulted in our 70-22 Global Missional Vision. We are believing God that by the year 2022, 70% of all our resources will be going to externally focused missional or “church scattered” ministry, and 30% of our resources will be going to internally focused, or “church gathered” ministry. If this can be a reality, we can't even guess at what God is going to do through this. And it can be a reality if each of us makes a decision to live simply so we can be more generous.

People who are living for God's kingdom understand that their value and worth does not come from the lifestyle they can support or the things they can buy. Pastor Henry challenged us to voluntarily put a cap on our lifestyle – to decide what we need to live as good stewards, and make the rest of our resources available to ministries committed to meeting the physical and spiritual needs of people globally and locally. This is our one shining hour. Let us live for the kingdom of God, knowing that our work done for the Lord is not in vain.