

2015/1016 Review and Vision

Steve Berger January 17, 2016

Why we do what we do

Before the holidays, Pastor Steve preached the sermon series “Occupy,” which outlined why we do what we do. It is important... watch it.

- **Luke 19:11-13 — make a difference**

Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'"

- do business- occupy, buy, sell, trade, increase, expand, take new territory — in other words, don't just sit around looking up, waiting for Jesus to come back — make a difference while you're here! This is one of many things that motivates us!

- **Luke 14: 16-18 — no excuses**

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses..."

- see land, test oxen — earthly business and excuses that keep us from kingdom business have to be re-prioritized! No-excuses-living is Kingdom living!

- **Mark 4:18-19 — no distractions**

Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

- distractions, deceptions, desires for stuff chokes the word, becomes unfruitful, NO!

We must be about occupying until Jesus comes, not just sitting, staring into heaven, not making excuses, not being overcome by worldliness.

Hearing “Well done good and faithful servant” has to mean more to us than any earthly treasure or reward.

This mindset and lifestyle have gotten Grace Chapel where we are, and this must continue if we are going to fulfill our next mission.

Equipping to be Passionate Servants of Jesus Christ!

In this next section is information about numbers from 2015 — but it ISN'T about noses and nickels, it is about PEOPLE we are equipping to be Passionate Servants of Jesus Christ.

Numbers

- a) 5,600 individuals participated over last 3 months
- b) kids — birth—5th grade, 600 a week, (plus or minus slightly)
- c) jr./sr. high students largest ever in each class — last Weds. 90 in each class!
- d) STEPS classes — adult discipleship, right now largest attendance ever
- e) Women's and Men's Ministry — great numbers, hundreds involved, digging deep
- f) Life Groups — over 100 in homes, workplaces, restaurants to pray, study etc.
- g) Missions — Israel, India, Sudan, Mexico, DR, Persecuted Christian Refugees
- h) GCA — discipling next generation, 6 years in, 525 students every day, pre k—12th grade, first graduating class this year, next year over 600 students!

As the church grows and gets larger, it has to get smaller — get involved in one or more small groups and find others to do life with!

Finances

- a) 2015 — income of \$7.15 mil in tithes and offerings, 7% increase from previous year!
- b) Missions, support ministries, benevolence — we give \$1.4 mil, 20% of budget!
- c) Admin costs — 30% of budget, 1/2 of what many churches spend!
- d) Debt — prior to purchase \$4.3 mil, but have been tripling payments monthly!

Purchase

- a) Aug 2015, closed on 107 acres, 15k sq. ft. house adjoining church property, secures our future expansion, 175 acre campus, 1/2 mile road frontage... \$5.62 mil, deal!
- b) Total current debt — \$10 mil, very manageable — not that much for long...

Special Sacrificial Offering

- a) history — 2007 first expansion, needed \$2 mil, 1 offering, \$2.85 actual came in!
2012 second expansion, 1 offering, \$3.8 came in. SACRIFICE!
- b) now — Good Friday, 3/25/16, 10 weeks from now, (on day of Ultimate Sacrifice), we'll receive one-time offering, with goal of at least covering the new purchase of \$5.6 mil. SACRIFICE

Time Offering

VOLUNTEERS, takes 500 a Sunday, be one of them, ushers, greeters etc. PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITIES TO OCCUPY!

New sermon series next week (January 24, 2016)

Many of the past sermons have been emphasizing standing strong for truth. Next week we're going to unpack love — truth in love!

Discussion Questions

1. How have you been doing with the first week of prayer and fasting?
2. Are there any distractions that are particularly challenging to you?
3. Have you learned anything, or have any revelation that you want to share with your group?
4. Are there other ways that you want to / need to become involved at Grace?
5. Will you commit to praying about the sacrificial amount you will give on Good Friday?