

Devotional: How The Church In Acts “Launched”

I. Share your observations about the early church from these passages:

Acts 2:41-47

Acts 4:23-37

Acts 6:1-7

II. Thoughts About A Growing Church

1. God wants his church to grow.

“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” ~ Habakkuk 2:14

“The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” ~ Matthew 13:31-32

2. Darkness must yield to light; death must yield to life.

“In [Jesus] was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” ~ John 1:4-5

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that [you] may have life, and have it abundantly.” ~ John 10:10

3. God wants to make us healthy, and healthy things grow.

"You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ~ Matthew 1:21

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey its passions...For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace." ~ Romans 6:12,14

4. People need the gospel, and many will respond when they hear it and see it lived out.

"And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." ~ John 12:32

"Worthy are you...for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation." ~ Revelation 5:9-10

III. Discussion On "The Unstuck Church"

1. Does the concept of the Church Lifecycle make sense to you? What are your general thoughts about it?

2. In the introduction, Morgan compares churches to businesses when it comes to the health of their organization. What differences does he observe between them?

3. Of the seven Lifestyle Stages as described in the introduction, where would you place FBC?

4. From chapter 1, what are some the characteristics of a church in the Launch stage?

5. Discuss each of the "Key Steps" needed for a church to move forward to the next stage:

START WITH STRONG LEADERSHIP:

IDENTIFY WHO YOU ARE TRYING TO REACH (YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE) – AND IT BETTER BE YOUNGER

DETERMINE THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF YOUR MINISTRY. YOU NEED A MISSION THAT TURNS SOME PEOPLE AWAY FROM YOUR CHURCH.

ESTABLISH A FINANCIAL PLAN

GIVE MINISTRY AWAY TO VOLUNTEERS. GOD DID NOT DESIGN THE CHURCH FOR THE PASTOR TO MAKE EVERY HOSPITAL VISIT.

6. What specific, actionable lessons can we draw from chapter 1 that we can apply to FBC right now? What should we be working on *today*?

Your Assignment for Next Week:

- Read through Chapter 2 – “Momentum Growth” in “The Unstuck Church”.
- Research at random churches from around the country, and write out their Vision and Mission Statements. Aim to do at least 10 searches. Write out the name of the church, its location, and its statements. (Some may only have a mission statement, which is fine.)

What Jesus Was Passionate About

Capturing a fresh vision from Jesus for FBC requires that we first lean our heads into Jesus' chest and listen to how his heart beats. How do we do this? We look through the gospels at Jesus' own words and actions to see the mission that drove him and the core values he lived by.

Examine the following Scriptures. In your own words summarize what the passage is about. Take note of key words and actions that stand out. We'll work on this in our devotional time next week.

Matthew 4:4

Matthew 4:10

Matthew 4:17

Matthew 5:13-16

Matthew 7:21

Matthew 9:35-38

Matthew 11:28-30

Matt. 13:31-32

Matthew 13:47-50

Matthew 16:15-19

Matthew 18:7-9

Matt. 19:13-15

Matt. 21:18-19, 43

Matthew 22:34-40

Matthew 24:14

Matthew 25:34~40

Matthew 28:18~20

Mark 1:15

Mark 1:17

Mark 3:31~35

Mark 10:42~45

Luke 4:18~19

Luke 4:42~44

Luke 5:16

Luke 5:31~32

Luke 6:12

Luke 9:10~11

Luke 9:23~24

Luke 9:57~62

Luke 10:38~42

Luke 11:1~4

Luke 12:32~34

Luke 13:6~9

Luke 15:3~7

Luke 17:20-21

Luke 18:18-24

Luke 24:46-47

John 4:5-10

John 4:23-24

John 6:35

John 7:37-38

John 8:12

John 10:14-16

John 11:25-26

John 12:27,32

John 13:13-17

John 13:34-35

John 14:12

John 14:15, 23-24

John 15:16

John 17:20-23

John 20:21

Acts 1:8

Our Roadmap For This Time Together

1. Fresh Vision and Mission

a. Let's fall in love with Jesus again.

- "I love Jesus because..." video project.
- 30-Second Testimonies

b. Let's make Sundays special

- Each one reach one
- Worship renewal
- Training protocols for Sunday volunteers
- Courtyard renovation
- New visitor/member pathways

c. Creation of New Vision/Mission/Values Statements

2. Fresh Structure

a. Commissioning of Transition Team

b. Defined procedures and planning for each ministry

c. Spiritual Growth Goals – Becoming "FULL" members

d. Accountability Leadership Seminar with TM

e. Seeing Taft with new eyes

3. Fresh Strategy for New Ministry Season

a. Defined ministry goals

b. Training and mentoring at all levels.

c. Formation of Search Team

Each one envisioned, growing, reaching, serving, supporting.