

2020 Vision (9): Where Do We Go from Here?

I. Introduction

- A. Today is a special Sunday, right? No, I don't mean Super Bowl Sunday
1. For Redskin fans, Super Bowl Sunday hasn't been special in long time
 - a. Today is Ground Hog Day. If it falls on Sunday, then it's special
 - b. If preacher sees his shadow, sermon series will last 6 more weeks
 2. I guess I didn't see my shadow our 2020 Vision series ends today
 - a. We have been using our mission and vision statement as outline
Living as God's family under the cross: Loving, Serving, Praising, Proclaiming
 - 1) We broke that vision statement apart and looked at it in pieces
 - 2) And then we asked, "*What'd happen if we really believed it?*"
 - b. And what we came up with, "*We'll have to make changes.*"
 - c. For a church that was born out of revival, we don't like change
 - 1) How many Church of Christ people to change a light bulb?
 - 2) 100. All of them to complain about why it shouldn't change
 - 3) That was tone true light bulb; if it was good enough for Paul
 3. No, we don't like change... and we need to repent (**James 4:9-10**)
 - a. Every sermon and service is an invitation for each to change
 - b. If enough of us change, must not the church change as well?
- B. Danish theologian Soren Kierkegaard challenged the church of his day
1. He thought a weak, watered-down gospel produced weak church
 - a. He thought that led to weak and passionless, joyless Christians
 - b. He threw down the gauntlet; like Christ it came in form parable
 2. Imagine a duck church with a duck preacher (*sermon on duck tape*)
 - a. On Sunday, ducks dutifully waddled to duck church to hear sermon
 - b. Duck preacher opened duck Bible to where God talks about wings
*With wings, ducks can fly! We can mount up on wings like eagles and soar!
We can escape the confinement of pens and fences; we can know euphoria
of unfettered freedom! God made ducks to fly! Praise God for his great gift*
 - 1) All the ducks in duck church stood and a big duck "Amen!"
 - 2) Service ended and all of the ducks left... and waddled home.

C. Are we going to rise up on wings like eagles... or waddle like ducks?

1. Frankly, it's easier to just keep doing what we've always done
 - a. It's easier to waddle to church, sing and fly, and waddle home
 - b. But church, we were not made to waddle; we were made to fly
 - c. We were made to storm the gates of hell and death (**Matt 16:18**)
 - 1) Jesus didn't say church strong enough to defend against hell
 - 2) He said the gates of hell were NOT strong enough to stand us
 - 3) Church wasn't made for defense—sure weren't made to waddle
 - d. We were made to trust God to lift us up on wings like eagles
2. So, if we're going to fly, what changes might that mean for us?
 - a. We're going to go back one last time to our vision statement
 - b. We're going to ask, "What would happen if we believed this?"
 - 1) I'll suggest one "change" per point of the vision statement
 - 2) I'm not talking today about maybe's; this is Denbigh in 2020

II. Living as God's Family Under the Cross...

A. **Loving:** We'll be a church where all are all accepted despite differences

1. One of the things people notice at Denbigh is we aren't all alike
 - a. Dr. King said the worship hour is most segregated in America
 - b. It still is in many places, but not here. That's one of our strengths
 - c. Politically we run the gamut from Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians (*I'm Contrarian. Opposed to anyone with easy answers or campaigns on FB*)
 - 1) We're blue-n-white collar, officer-n-enlisted, from north-n-south
 - 2) We're Redskins and Cowboys (neither will see a Super Bowl)
 - d. All differences are overwhelmed by power of the cross (**Gal 3:28**)
2. When people come through door, they often (always) bring baggage
 - a. That's how everyone comes to the cross, right? "*Just as I am*"
 - b. That commitment to love and accept has to apply to LGBTQ+
 - 1) I still believe homosexuality is sin... and that we are all sinners
 - 2) When someone comes looking for Jesus, "*we will receive them*"
 - 3) We'll walk with them as long as it takes... because of a cross!

B. Serving: We'll be a church where more will be expected of you

1. One writer suggests most churches are filled with 3 kinds of people
 - a. **Browsers:** Perpetual church shoppers who are just looking around
 - b. **Customers:** Want to see people serving, but want to be one served
 - 1) He tells of planting a church that grew from 25 to 125 in year
 - 2) **Problem:** They added 100 customers to be served by same 25
 - c. **Owners:** People who buy into the church's mission and vision
 - 1) They can be counted on to work and be involved in ministry
 - 2) They can also be counted on to overcommit and flameout
2. We are moving toward having more owners and fewer customers
 - a. **More Leaders:** Elders are discussing adding elders and deacons
 - b. **Leadership Team:** Elders will add advisory panel to meetings
 - 1) Cross section of church (age-gender-race-socioeconomic)
 - 2) These 6-7 people will meet with the elders at regular meeting
 - 3) Elders will make all decisions, but with fresh perspectives
 - c. **Ministry Teams:** Mentioned "*Outreach Committee*" (*New name*)
 - 1) Team will meet 4-6 times a year to discuss 100 dumb idea
 - 2) Of those 100, maybe 10 will be good; of those, we'll do 3-4
 - 3) What if Worship, Education, Building, Community teams
 - d. What if every member of the church were part of ministry team?

C. Praising: We'll be a church where women will find their voice

1. We can flippantly quote **1 Cor 14:34**, but our women aren't silent
 - a. Lynn can give prayer report on Brayden; she can't pray for him
 - b. Bailey can announce we need VBS teachers; not read **Heb 5:12**
 - c. Cindy gave a sermon-length report on Ukraine— can't call it that
 - d. Kati/Keri already lead worship (*long as they stay in their place*)
2. Whatever we do with 1 Cor 14, let's admit our women aren't silent
 - a. But then again, Paul's women weren't silent in church either
 - b. They prayed-n-prophesied; he wanted their heads covered (**11:5**)
3. What's causing the stir? *Discussing rationale for what we already do!*

4. *“But those kinds of things don’t involve any kind of spiritual authority”*
 - a. **Precisely!** Neither does reading scripture, praying, leading praise
 - b. We want newly baptized 10-year boy involved in public worship
 - 1) Does he have spiritual authority? Are we under his authority?
 - 2) No, we want him to use his gifts and to feel a part of the body
 - 3) We should feel the same way about his mother and his sisters
 - c. Recently had conversation with prospective (and now new) member
 - 1) He put off placing membership; women had no public role
 - 2) After my sermon, he was hopeful that they would. I am too
5. We’re not going to be in a rush; there won’t be any sudden surprises
 - a. There will be a process we’ll follow before change takes place
 - 1) Leaders will spend time in prayer/study to get on same page
 - 2) We’ll have a class series to allow others to be on that page too
 - 3) There will be a sermon series to announce the policy change
 - b. Every church won’t make the same choice or move at same speed
 - c. This is truly where we feel that God is calling us to move today

D. Proclaiming: We’re going to make the great commission our job one

1. This is what we talked about at length last week–
 - a. We talked about the “Outreach Team” (we’re taking applications)
 - b. Every event we have becomes a gateway event to invite people
 - 1) Super Bowl: Invite friends and introduce to church friends
 - 2) Valentine Party: Invite people to come (we’ll pay for it)
 - 3) Any time we have a movie night or game night– invite night
2. More Personal: Recover muscle-memory of inviting people to church
 - a. Need to get into practice of sharing faith (not arguing theology)
 - b. We tend to shy away from the term “witnessing” for some reason
 - 1) Baptists use it (if they use a front door; we climb in a window!)
 - 2) All evangelism starts with witnessing, what Jesus means to me
 - 3) Is that why witnessing is so hard; we have to fall in love again?
3. Maybe it starts with cup of coffee and talking about faith ([VIDEO](#))

III. Conclusion

- A. We've come to the end of this series that has us look at our 2020 vision
 - 1. I know some of you are glad it's over; I am glad it's over
 - a. Next week I get to stop talking about us & start talking about Jesus
 - b. Series is called "*Outcasts: Meeting the People Jesus Met in Luke*"
 - c. We'll meet some of us in those outcasts hanging out in Luke
 - 2. I know some of you aren't completely comfortable with all I've said
 - a. Think about it. Pray about it. Give it careful thought and time
 - b. The elders, Roger and I almost always available to talk with you
 - 1) I say ALMOST; we aren't available right after church services
 - 2) Church to encourage one another; we need encouraging
 - 3) It's also a time for us to talk to people and do ministry
 - c. Make an appointment; we'll even take you to lunch... on Bob
- B. Church, we must decide if we're going to be what God made us to be
 - 1. Will we fly on wings like eagles? Or are we just going to waddle?
 - a. It's a lot easier to waddle; it easier to do what we've always done
 - b. It a lot safer on the ground. Just to do what we've always done
 - c. But that's not what God made us to do or empowers us to do
Strength will rise as we wait upon Lord; He lifts us up on wings like eagles
 - 2. We can be the church God intended; we can be a church that flies
 - a. You can be the person God intended you to be. You can fly.
 - b. Don't be content to waddle in things that've always held you down
 - c. Lift is up your eyes, look up to the heavens... and fly!