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Philosophy of Ministry

General Principles:

My philosophy of ministry is centered around the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:35-41) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20). Out of these verses come five principles or priorities - worship, connecting, reaching, growing, and serving. All that the church does and is should reflect these five principles.

Authority:

The prophet wrote, "I know, O Lord, that a man's way is not in himself; Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). The authority of the Word of God is crucial and foundational to all that it is and does. We must not operate in a way that contradicts what is written in Scripture (1 Cor. 6:4). (Compare also 1 Tim. 1:10-11; 4:1-6; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; cf. Mk. 7:8-13; Col. 2:22.)

The Church:

The church is the body of Christ, the bride of Christ (Matthew 25:1-13). Baptized Christians constitute the church. It is created and sustained by the Holy Spirit. The church, further, is the vehicle (hands and feet of Christ - 2 Corinthians 12) of delivering the Good News of the Gospel to the world. As such, the actions of the church need to reflect the commands of Scripture. The church should put the Great Commandment and the Great Commission at the forefront of its being. I believe that the church needs to reflect these principles in everything it does: ministries, budget, etc. The ministry life of the church should be reviewed yearly to make sure they are aligning up with these principles. Yearly vision meetings need to occur to make sure the church as a whole is accomplishing goals that are set towards implementing these principles in the life of the church.

Vision:

Vision is crucial for the people of God. It is through vision that we know and stay aware of who we are, why we are here, and where we are going. Without vision, a church will end up in a maintenance program maintaining the status quo. This results in a stagnant church (Prov. 28:18).

God's people need a vision. We need to see the greatness of God and what is ours in Christ, but not simply for our own sakes or personal blessing. We need to see the world as God sees it and where our responsibilities lie as members of the body of Christ. This means a vision for (1) every member ministry, and (2) what ministry consists of in biblical terms.

Senior Pastor:

The first and most important task of the Senior Pastor is charged with preaching the Good News of the Gospel (Luke 4:18; Matthew 9:35). Secondly, but just as important, are the tasks of care-giving (Matthew 9:36), making disciples (Luke 10:2), and embodying

the vision that God has given him for the church (Proverbs 29:18). Towards that end, the pastor's teaching, preaching, leadership, and encouragement will go to build up these principles in the life and body of the church. The Senior Pastor should also live out the vision of priorities of the church in his everyday life.

Church members/attenders:

The body of believers must be equipped to reflect these Scriptural principles in their life. While every member is not a member of the pastoral or ministry staff, each member is a minister. They minister in the areas of life (work, leisure) where God has placed them, living out the principles above in their everyday life. Believers should not depend on the ordained clergy or staff for their own spiritual development, but engage in the Word daily to help their spiritual growth. Each "minister" should be equipped to serve in ministry and find a place of service in the church.

Church "Growth:"

Like a child, the church must be healthy. To be healthy means to be growing. The church grows in two ways: qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative growth means the church must grow in depth. This in-depth growth is evidenced in believer's commitment to worship, community, growing, reaching, and serving others. Quantitative growth means growing in breadth. This growth is evidenced adding new disciples to the life and mission of the church. Further, there needs to be a healthy balance of each type of growth. Neither type of growth is more important than the other. The church is a healthy place when both types of growth are happening.

Leadership:

Leaders in the church are servants in the church. Whether paid leaders or volunteer leaders, individuals are expected to have a servant attitude in their respective ministry area and/or circle of influence. Leaders are to be elected, appointed, or hired based on what I refer to as the "Three C's:" character, competence, and compatibility. Through their character, competence, and compatibility recognized leaders in the church support the comprehensive mission and vision of the church.

Personal Finances:

Like an individual's calendar, one's checkbook reveals one's commitment to Christ and the building of the Kingdom of God. Disciples need to understand that *all* of their finances belong to God, not just ten percent of it. Giving should be sacrificial and reflect God's gifts that He has given to disciples and their families.

Church Finances:

The outlay of church finances needs to be done in a strategic and accountable manner. By strategic I mean that the budget needs to reflect the purposes of the church. There should be a purpose behind every dollar spent. By accountable I mean that there needs to be multiple checks and balances in the church that makes sure that the finances are collected and utilized in a proper manner.