

Embracing Our Destiny **“Following God into the Future”**

Intro: You know, the future can be a scary thing. The economy / health care / war in 2 countries / a national debt that is astronomical / unemployment and inflation is up and earnings are down / There was an article in the Oregonian several weeks ago about the rise in the number of survivalists – people stockpiling food and weapons for a future doomsday. It’s easy to think about the future and live in fear. Fear can create paralysis in people and in organizations...the inability to move.

- We don’t have to fear the future. WHY? Because we get to follow God into the future. There are times when He wants us to trust Him and follow Him in obedience even though we have no idea where He is leading us. At other times, He gives us a glimpse of the future to encourage us along the journey.
- This is what I believe the Lord has done. The past few years we have been trusting and following as best we could. Now with us running out of room, I believe He wants us to see into the future where He is leading us. He has given us a glimpse. Today, I want to share with you what that vision of the future is and how we follow God into it.
- As I have been praying and asking the Lord for direction over the past year, last Spring He gave me a passage of scripture

Is. 54:2-3 “Enlarge your house; build an addition. Spread out your home, and spare no expense! For you will soon be bursting at the seams. Your descendants will occupy other nations and resettle the ruined cities.” (NIV)

- As I have had time to pray about this...reflect and ask God what He wants us to see, I believe there are three key commitments we must embrace in order to walk into our future with God.

I. We Must Embrace A Commitment To Keep Building

Enlarge your house; build an addition

A. We must keep building physically

1. This is what we are doing now. We have begun an expansion project that will allow the church to move forward reaching more people. We simply need more space. Explain the project.
2. As we move into the future, we must understand that building additional space for ministry is normal. This project is not an end to anything...but rather a beginning. WHY? Because once this project is done, God will increase us once again and we will have to enlarge the house again. Get used to it!
3. There is a cycle of growth / building – enlarging / more growth that God wants us to embrace. This is the way it’s going to be.
4. This building project will only solve some space issues temporarily. Within a certain amount of time, we will be out of room again. This will be the life of

Foothills.

B. We must keep building spiritually

*Eph. 4:15 "Instead, we will speak the truth in love, **growing in every way more and more like Christ**, who is the head of his body, the church." (NLT)*

1. It makes no sense at all to grow and enlarge our physical spaces if we are not committed to growing and enlarging our relationship with Christ. We must be building spiritual maturity in our lives not just building more space.
 2. I want to encourage you to give yourself to the process of growing up spiritually. The direction God is taking us will simply require more spiritual maturity. How can God entrust more responsibility to us without the maturity to handle it?
 3. Being a large immature church would be disastrous! We can't be a mile wide and an inch deep. We must grow in maturity. What does that look like? 4 key ways you can agree to grow this year.
 - Participate in TNT nights (begins Oct 13th)
 - Home groups
 - Self-study (learn to feed yourself) Spiritually mature people don't say things like; "I don't get fed at church listening to pastor Dale." WHY? Because they don't expect me to feed them! They feed themselves!
 - Serve
- We must be committed to keep building. (physically and spiritually)

II. We Must Embrace A Commitment To Keep Spreading

Spread out your home

A. We must keep spreading our influence physically

1. Over the past few years I have been asking the Lord where we may move to someday. I was worried about staying here and being landlocked. I was a bit surprised at how He has answered. I believe God wants us to spread out right here!
2. Let me share with you what our spreading out may look like in 10-15 years.
 - The first stage is what we're doing right now.
 - The second stage is to purchase this building
 - The third stage is to remodel the existing True Value space (15,000 sq. ft)
 - The fourth stage is to purchase surrounding properties on Grange and Center St.
 - The fifth stage is to build a new auditorium
3. Let me show you a Google satellite image
 - Google image of Grange / Center St. There's plenty of room to spread out.
 - The transformation that God has called us to is also physical. As we spread out in Molalla, we have a transforming effect upon the physical environment of this town.
4. The purchase of the Green House Café is simple the first purchase of a long process

of physical transformation.

B. We must keep spreading our influence spiritually

Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

1. The spreading of our influence will not just be physical but also spiritual. People’s lives will be transformed by what God is doing through us. This influence begins in Molalla, but what God is going to do will travel beyond Molalla.
2. The spread of the Gospel in the first century was supposed to start in Jerusalem. But, from there it was supposed to spread to the surrounding areas and beyond.
3. Our focus of reaching the 1000s unchurched in the Molalla area has not changed. But we need to embrace the fact that God will use us to influence and impact places beyond Molalla.
4. God may use us to impact other cities (Canby / OC / Estacada / Silverton) WHY? Because nobody thought God would show up in Molalla! Now that He is...people are noticing!
 - What about other countries? Look what God is doing through us in Guatemala! God put us together with a man like Juan Carlos who has the same heart and passion as we do! It’s God’s heart that the Gospel spreads!
5. What God is doing at Foothills is something special. It’s of the Lord and it should spread. We need to be willing to infect others with the reality of God’s transforming power! God is real and He can transform your life and your city!

We must have a commitment to keep spreading physically and spiritually.

III. We Must Embrace A Commitment To Keep Giving

spare no expense!

A. We must be generous physically

II Cor. 8:1-3 “Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will.” (NLT)

1. Where God is taking us is not cheap and will require faith inspired generosity. I know where our economy is at. I realize many people right now are struggling financially. BUT, so were the people in the passage. That’s what made it so remarkable!
2. This is what makes Foothills a remarkable place. We’re not a rich church. We’re not filled with a bunch of wealthy people. We are just a bunch of ordinary people who have decided to trust God in extraordinary ways!
3. Hard economic times do not negate our responsibility to grow and trust God in this area. Being willing to grow in this area despite our economy is how we see the

supernatural power of God in our midst!

4. Therefore, I want to present you with a giving challenge. Just like the people in this passage were being “tested” I believe we are being tested too. Will we trust God even in our economy?
 5. I do not think it is a coincidence that God is asking us to move forward and trust Him with our economy in the tank. This project is a faith test for Foothills and a testimony to this community. Therefore, let’s pass the test! Here’s my challenge!
 - If you’ve never given consistently, I challenge you to do so. (explain envelopes and boxes) \$63,000 a month
 - We need \$200,000 to complete our expansion project. KAC challenge – bulletin. So in addition to our normal giving, we need to raise this amount. Some of you wonder if this is possible.
 - 800 people @ \$250 per person is \$200,000 / OR 400 families @ \$500
 - See these rocks on the platform? Explain the significance.
 - Therefore, to help you grow in this, for the next 40 days I want us to read this booklet. 40 Day Journey to a Generous Life – explain – Pray and ask what God would have you to do. Ask Him for money to give back to Him! (You will get them today as you exit the auditorium.)
 - Then, at our weekend service on Oct 31 and Nov. 1st, I want us all to bring our gifts and let’s see what God does.
- Finally, the only way this is going to work is...

B. We must be generous spiritually

1. Sometimes, we can be spiritually stingy in the amount of our lives we give to God. Even in their own poverty, look what empowered these people to be generous. *II Cor. 8:4-5 “They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem. **They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do.**” (NLT)*
2. The only reason these people were able to be so generous even in the midst of their own needs was they gave themselves to the Lord first! Unless we are people completely given to the Lord radical generosity doesn’t make much sense.
3. We will never be free to be generous with our physical resources until we give God our lives...every piece and every part. This is what liberates us to be the people God desires us to be.
4. Giving ourselves completely to God allows Him to use us as rivers of His resources. Where He channels resources to us and we channel them to specific needs. Unless we’re completely given to God, we become reservoirs of resources, where we stockpile them. We will live in fear, filled with anxiety wondering if we’re going to

have enough.

5. During the next 40 days, the most important decision is not how much money you're going to give away, but how much of your life you're going to give to Jesus! It's not about your physical generosity that will make a difference, but your spiritual generosity that will change your life and this church.

Our commitment to generosity must be physical and spiritual!

Obedience = Blessing! Therefore, let's keep building...let's keep spreading...let's keep giving
This is how we follow God into the future. Let's show a community what a group of people who are sold out to Jesus can do through Him. People around us may fear the future. May we embrace our future with confidence because of the One we follow.