

Sunday 20 April 2008 Sermon - King's Centre Christian Church, Sheffield, UK

KC & Philadelphia Vision & Values Update

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On the back of an encouraging past few weeks, and in the middle of 2008, Marjorie & I want us all to take a step back and remind ourselves of why we exist as a community, a church and where we are going. So today we'll pull together our whole-church & KC vision, values & direction To keep us with a sense of goals – so that we can be mature and “press on towards the goal” as the apostle Paul exhorts us to.

We have a sense of momentum at the moment – built upon the past 2 or 3 years really. As a church (both KC & Phili) we aim to be led by the Spirit as we learn to be missional disciples. We're looking together at what it is to be a missionary people since Jan 08. Our April 08 church weekend away was very significant with testimonies, big move of Holy Spirit and the call to live as missional disciples. We're seeing healings & kingdom breaking in in various contexts – as well as **having to learn to travail, to work for, the kingdom to progress in the middle of trials & challenges**. That's Christian maturity.

If you take a snap-shot of KC now, I think it's in a really healthy state.

- A great local church, family, relationships,
- good cross-section of ages & things people do with their time.
- Small & comfortable enough to know people in your gatherings.
- Living in our heritage of being led and empowered by HS.

But the body of Christ is always maturing – plenty of room for improvement. Partly because we believe we have a city-wide calling – along with other churches, to influence and bless the whole of Sheffield with the gospel – and we're a long way off that still! To reach the city, really we need to become a **missionary movement, not just a successful local church**.

Our Vision

2 main themes of our vision – both KC & Philadelphia

- Knowing our callings
- Calling our City

Knowing our callings

Philippians 3:12-15 - “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us who are mature should take such a view of things.”

“I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me..” **You and I aren't Christians by accident, and we aren't here just to muddle through life without a sense of reason, purpose or direction**. We're told in the bible that to be mature followers of Jesus means “to take hold of that for which CJ took hold of me.” This church and its leaders at various levels are **committed to being intentional in our discipleship**.

This means working out that to which you are called – what it is that God is putting on your heart to do with yourself – and then making plans and action to achieve that calling. We do that while living humbly by God's grace with the help and empowering of the Holy Spirit.

Each of us has a calling for the season we are in.

- Maybe a long-term calling
 - to be a teacher, a social worker, a good parent to your children while they are at home
- Maybe a short-term calling
 - To follow Jesus radically and share Him to our fellow students at Uni or at school/college

It will most likely come from deep within. Your passions, the issues or experiences that get you fired up in life. ‘Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart’ (Ps 37:4). I’d be surprised if your calling that God wants you to take hold of is horrible, hurtful, the sort of thing that really turns you off! That doesn’t sound like Jesus’ promise of ‘life to the full’ (John 10:10)

I believe God calls each of us to something particular – within the circumstances we find ourselves. Or He calls us on – to change our circumstances so that we can better ‘seek first the kingdom’

You can know what God is calling you to at this time. And you and I have a responsibility to find that out, and live that out. That’s what it is to be a mature disciple of Jesus.

I know that may sound daunting to some people, but Jesus said about himself & his followers ‘the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.’ (John 10:3). You can hear Jesus instructing you in life. We have the bible to show us the general principles of how we should live to please God – and how we shouldn’t. And part of the value of community and small groups is so that you don’t have to make these kind of life decisions in isolation – friends around you who know you well. And the staff/leaders have tools to help you process your vision.

So our vision is that each person within this wide community gets their lives and families and futures to a place where they are living-out what God has called them to for that season.

Calling our City

As we live-out our God-given callings in everyday life, our vision is that this influences the city and communities in which we live with the gospel of Jesus. Our vision is to call our city to Christ.

KC has had a call to be a church with a city-wide vision for many years. We’ve attracted people from all over Sheffield and beyond (today – Rotherham, Peak District etc) for some years. But its wider than who *want to come to church*. Our vision is that we bring Jesus and the kingdom *to the people of Sheffield* – in many different ways

Loads of ways of engaging and furthering the kingdom of God

- social improvement
- local Govt & services
- businesses & financial prosperity
- schools, Uni’s, education
- etc

As the people of God, our calling from the very beginning with Abraham is to serve and save all of humankind – as Jesus’ hands & feet. We’re called to transform our societies, to turn them around with Christian principles and the power of the Spirit breaking out. Redeeming society for the kingdom of God to come near.



There is a tremendous range & variety of things going on around the whole-church. When you get to 1000+ people, you've got fantastic creativity & variety – and ways to get involved. The above 'Pods' give some flavour of our vision to engage with the city in various ways. You may fit into one or more – if you fit into none, then you need to ask yourself why!

- Gatherings
 - Important and will stay – but the 'how' may change over time
- Urban Community
 - Sharrow, Shiregreen, Pitsmoor, Eden Arbourthorne. Detached youth, STOMP, practical service, street evangelism,
 - Long-term, committed approach in community of disciples
- Marginalised
 - Our heart is that we are far more engaged with this
- Sub-urban community
 - The majority of us live in this but some have a specific calling to bring the kingdom into it
 - Building kingdom values, addressing the under-belly (divorce, debt, depression...)
 - Blessing your neighbourhoods – Nether Edge Fair & KC's involvement is a great start
- Students & Young Adults
 - Historically KC & Phili been strong in this, and since we've refocused its been a recent growth area for both
 - But there are 10s of thousands of unreached students & young adults in our city. How can we best engage, serve, reach them?
- Youth

- Similar position as students. KC & Phili are seeing fruit here with a structure designed to reach & keep local youth
- Teachers, social services, bus drivers etc – you all bless and can reach our youth too!
- Children
 - Energize, STOMP, Sidewalk, Education sector, primary healthcare, life expectancy in poorer areas, teenage mums, Sure Start....
- Workplace
 - Definitely not the least!
 - We take this very seriously – how can you see ‘work as worship’?
 - Building support internally (led by Anne Maclaurin) to support you externally
- Probably more pods in the future
 - The City, the Council, the movers & shakers.....
 - You can decide as you live out your callings....

What does this mean for me?

You’ve heard the vision again

- What does this look like for YOU? “What’s your call?”
- You are part of God’s call for reaching the city of Sheffield with God’s love. What does your part in calling this city look like?
- Where are you called to engage & change – in order to live out the kingdom most fully?
- May not be the picture in your head that you think!
 - Laying our lives down at the cross – doing it God’s way, not our way

Our current values

Called to be Ambassadors, assigned to this world but our hearts living in a very different one. Operating from an eternal perspective. What are values we live by?

1. Know your bibles

If we want to know God’s will and be used by Him, we have to know Him. Ask the Lord to reveal mysteries to you

2 Tim 2:14-15- “Keep reminding them of these things, do your best to present yourself as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

2 Cor 4:18 “So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. “

Not just knowing it, but receiving it as “fresh” bread. “Faith comes by hearing....” (continually)

The challenge for us as leaders when discipling people to encourage people to self-feed and to really treasure the bible.

2 Live by the Spirit

Gal 5:16 – “So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”

Gal 5:25 – “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”

3 Live by faith

Gal 5:6 “the only thing that matters is faith expressed through love”.

Faith comes from Spirit of God, witnesses to our spirit, but there is degree which needs **permission** of the mind. So we want to be in the business of allowing our minds to be **transformed to develop the mind of Christ; so that the kingdom can be released through us.**

4 Prayer

Lord began to speak to us about learning to pray this year. Through prayer we **pull resources of heaven into this realm. We need to mature** in prayer, learning to be specific ie hearing God’s will and contending for it. Keep it simple – we want Jesus to be glorified – that’s the goal, direction of our prayer.

5 Prophetic

Proverbs 29:18 KJV = “Where there is no vision, the people perish”

Message version = “If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed.”

We don’t want to stumble, we want to be strategic, like God is.

6 Live in God’s love

Keeps coming up for us as a church. Mature in our sonship, mature in our identity profoundly affects the way we interact together and are missional, **give it a way, preach it, live it.**

SUMMARY

KC/Phili Vision & Values

Living your calling, calling our city
through words, works, wonders