

threw them in the lake...immediately the man could hear the birds singing and the fish jumping with perfect hearing.

The second fellow who was nearly blind ask the Angel; "If I could just see without these horrible thick glasses..." The Angel reached out and took off the man's glasses and threw them in the lake...immediately he could see every individual leaf on the trees around the lake; the man had perfect 20/20 vision.

The third man seeing all that happened yelled at the Angel, "Don't touch me, I'm on disability!"

Could it be... that you don't really want the Lord to change your life?

Jesus died on the cross to save you from your sins; His death, burial and resurrection removed all the debt of your sin forever and oh, how we rejoice in that!

Paul asks this question of each of us this morning...

Romans 6:1-2

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

What You Really Need to Know About Our Spiritual Goals

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Good morning, Lighthouse; are you ready for the Word of God this morning?

Jeremiah 6:16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and **ask for the old paths, where *is* the good way**, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

Today I will address the subject of our spiritual goals.

This subject should be of great value to all of us; many, if not most Christians do not really know what the spiritual goals of their Church are.

Our goals should, of course, be nothing more or less that what the New Testament teaches us should be accomplished in the life of our Church and the lives of its individual members.

Even where this is understood, how to go about this varies greatly from Church to Church.

Some Churches can be very legalistic in their efforts to bring their members into line with our Holy God. This produces much preaching against sin and against what is wrong with our society and what is wrong with us.

And certainly there is a need for preaching against that which is wrong; in balance, of course.

Other Churches can be very heavy on love, love, love; which is essential and even primary; but again, without balance and the realization of real consequences and a clear perspective of love by God's definition, real love becomes something less.

There is something we should remember above all else as we begin to think about what we want our Church to be like.

This Church belongs to Jesus. Not just by right of He being our Creator and thus owns all things; this is His Church; He is the Head of it. It was created by Him and it exists for Him.

We are allowed by Him the privilege of being involved and a part of what He is accomplishing in this place. That does not mean that we get to choose or decide what is to be accomplished here.

Our job is to cooperate and assist in what Jesus Himself is accomplishing here.

We all know by now that whatever plans we believers make, the Lord is likely going to adjust those plans and add His finishing touch.

Proverb 16:9 A man's heart deviseth his way; but the LORD directeth his steps.

Never is this Proverb more true than in the life of our Church.

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service.*

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Your exposure to the Word of God; that truth presented in love, will transform your life!

That's why we have a Sunday School; that's why we have AWANA Clubs; that's why we have Wednesday Night Bible Study; that's why we have home groups and seminars and various other studies; these are events and opportunities for you to be exposed to the truth in love.

The Word of God will transform your life; there is no doubt about this!

There is a story about three guys out fishing who met an Angel out there on the lake.

When they understood the Angel had been sent to give them a blessing;

The one fellow who was hard of hearing asked the Angel to heal him of his deafness. The Angel reached out and took his hearing aids off and

- 1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
- 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;
- 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

5. You cannot make someone else be at peace with you, but you can be at peace with them...even whether they like it or not.

Conclusion:

Did you know the Lord is not worried about how Holy you are or how sinlessly you live?

He has long since proven that is not His greatest concern.

All He is asking; all He really requires is that you grow; that you are making progress.

That we as a Church are growing; that we are making progress.

The Lord will guide you to where you need to be; as long as you are making progress.

It is the Word of God that has the power to make us what we ought to be.

Romans 12:1-2

Yes, we get to work out the steps one by one on our journey to where God is taking us, but there are some very clear and unchangeable guidelines for us to follow as we seek the Lord's direction.

These guidelines become the foundation for:

I. Our Spiritual Goals for Our Church.

A. One big one I have painted on our wall in big clear letters; GLORY!

1. Unto Him be Glory!

2. Ephesians 3:20-21

20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,
21 Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

3. Imagine a big wheel with a hub in the center. That hub in the center is the Lord's glory and all the spokes of that wheel - no matter how many - must all contribute to that glory; everything we do is there for the purpose of keeping God's glory at the center.

4. All the things God enables us to do according to the power that worketh in us are for the purpose of bringing Him glory!

5. **1 Corinthians 10:31** Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, **do all to the glory of God.**

B. Another very specific goal is to create an environment in which God's glory can flourish.

1. Spiritual goals come to fruition in an environment where the things that matter are kept in priority.
2. We can get so caught up in what is right and what is not; what you should and should not eat or drink; what you should and should not wear; how God hates sin; how sin dishonors God...it is very easy to become legalistic.
3. Although what **is** right and wrong has to be dealt with; we must not be about what is right and wrong or what is allowed and what is not.
4. God will always be right and sin will always be wrong. What we are about will not affect either.
5. What we must be about is clearly spelled out for us in scripture.

6. **Romans 14:17-19**

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

2. Remember the goal of the Kingdom...Righteousness, Peace and Joy.
3. There will be no joy until we learn to walk in righteousness and peace with God and with each other.
4. We were not made to live unto ourselves; fellowship with the Lord and right-minded other believers is essential to life for us.

D. You must Walk in Peace.

1. Learning to live in peace with each other is what Jesus has in mind for us.
2. This may be one of the toughest goals of all to see fulfilled in our lives.
3. It requires everything our human nature is against.
 - a. Forgiveness; whether it is asked for or deserved or not.
 - b. It requires longsuffering; simply tolerating a lot of unbecoming behavior because Jesus did (and does) and He is our example.

4. It requires a commitment to it.

Ephesians 4:1-3

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

3. Both kinds of fruit take time and development.

2Peter 1:3-8

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5 And beside this, giving all diligence, **add** to your faith **virtue**; and to virtue **knowledge**;

6 And to knowledge **temperance**; and to temperance **patience**; and to patience **godliness**;

7 And to godliness brotherly **kindness**; and to brotherly kindness **charity** [love].

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C. You must Walk in Fellowship.

1. **1John 1:3-4**

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

7. Only where the righteousness of God is received and freely available, where the peace of God that passeth understanding rules our hearts and where the joy of the Lord truly is our strength...only in a place like that will all that is done truly abound to the glory of God.

C. Life here at Lighthouse must also be easy.

1. **Matthew 11:28-30**

28 Come unto me, **all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

2. Lighthouse must be a place where you can know you are loved.

3. It must be a place where you are accepted based on a genuine relationship with Christ and absolutely nothing else.

4. That includes even sin. We may not put you in charge of teaching our kids or other things you are obviously not yet ready for; but if you know Jesus, you are accepted here...and if not, we will be glad to introduce you!

5. Lighthouse must be a place where it is easy to be.

D. All that is practiced here is to reflect God's love and be filtered through God's truth.

1. We all know the priority of love.

2. **1Corinthians 13:1-3**

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not [love] charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have *the gift of prophecy*, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not [love] charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not [love] charity, it profiteth me nothing.

3. There is a second and equally important priority as well.

4. **Ephesians 4:15** But speaking the **truth in love**, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even Christ*:

5. Someone well said that truth without love is legalism and love without truth is liberalism.

II. We also have very definite Spiritual goals for each and every member. I will give you four:

A. *You must Grow.*

1. There is one giant goal for every new Christian.

2. **1Peter 2:1-3**

1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, **that ye may grow thereby:**

3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

3. **2Thessalonians 1:3** We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because **that your faith groweth** exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

B. *You must Bear Fruit.*

1. **John 15:8** *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

2. There are two kinds:

a. Reproduction...introducing others to Jesus like someone did for you.

b. Spiritual Fruit.

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,