

XPastor - Dream Bigger - From Maintenance to Multiplication

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As I look around the room this morning, I'm struck by something that we have in common... call it a shared love!!!

There is a love that we all share in common in this room today!

That love is... a love for the local church and God's people.

Our lives reveal a real love for the local church

Our schedules reveal a real love for the local church

Our gray hair/ or lack of hair reveals our love for God's people

Even on the heels of a very busy fall and winter season of ministry, our hearts continue to grow in affection...

We love this thing called "the church!"

We love what she can become in our town

We love how God works through weakness to reveal His strength...

We love how he has personally redeemed our stories!

Along with you, I'm convinced that the church remains the primary vehicle that God uses to fulfill His purposes here on earth.

Indeed, nothing has changed since Jesus proclaimed over Caesarea Philippi community saying, **"I will build my ecclesia and the gates of hades shall not prevail against her!"**

With all of this being said...

Culture and society is doing all that it can to reduce the perceived relevance of the local church. Shifting attitudes and cultural trends are working to reduce/ remove the voice of the local church. We've been told by documents such as the TGO that the next 30 years represent the greatest evangelistic opportunity in the history of our nation...

(www.thegreatopportunity.org)

Any yet...

As our nation continues to grapple with issues of poverty, injustice, racial tension, political fighting and rampant sexual abuse, I believe that the voice of the church matters more than ever!!!

In these days of desperation, I see a great opportunity for the resurgence of a biblically faithful, relationally humble, evangelistically fruitful, life-transformational local church!

But a question has to be answered...

How is the church going to RESPOND in this new day? I believe that it will require more of us as leaders than ever before... Throughout history, every new work of God has required men and women to raise their game! We need to ELEVATE the standards of our faith, of sacrifice, of our expectations of ourselves, and of our belief in the goodness and the generosity of God!

We must move beyond our desire to only *maintain* what we've accomplished and boldly step into a new thinking wavelength - beyond maintenance to multiplication.

If we hold back, we will limit our leadership potential and occupy our days with only ministry survival and minimal growth!

But the battle is that we all get busy in ministry and entrenched in the maintenance of ministry. *It's always easier to maintain than to multiply!*

What could we accomplish if we dreamed bigger...

Isaiah 54:2-3 says...

**2 "PASTORS... Enlarge the place of your tent,
and LEADERS let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out;
do not hold back; lengthen your cords
and strengthen your stakes.**

And here's why...

**3 For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left,
and your offspring will possess the nations
and will people the desolate cities.
4 "Fear not, for you will not be ashamed;**

The very act of dreaming bigger will change how you think, how others around you think, and ultimately how you behave. (Ferguson, Hero Maker)

It all likelihood, we've all accomplished much in ministry together, but what are we dreaming about next?

There is far more that God wants to do...!!

Let's reimagine the capacity of our church today!!

Now is not the time for small dreams or weak ambitions.

Now is not the time for territorial jealousies or status quo ministries.

We need to be THE community leaders who think bigger and live with greater faith!

>>*Where maintenance in the church requires repetition*

>>*Multiplication in the church demands greater faith*

As leaders, we don't lead well or last long without great faith!

I want us to talk through a basic framework to evaluate your faith quotient right now...

Honestly evaluate your leadership using this framework...

Are you a leader focused on maintenance or multiplication?

Maintenance

Requires old rational

Minimizes the glitches

Modifies the style

Limits the attrition

Assumes the challenges

Tasks the doers

Presumes the same

There is never enough

Demands limits

Needs control

Prioritizes the moment

Documents the past

Multiplication

Inspires new thinking

Solves the problems

Changes the approach

Releases new action

Anticipates the opportunities

Empowers the leaders

Imagines the possibilities

Believes there is more

Declares freedom

Grants permission

Emphasizes the mission

Dreams of the future

Great leaders always live within a multiplication frame!!

What else would you add? What is your greatest challenge?

**Leaders, you likely have a baseline to maintain
but you need a blueprint to multiply!**