

Life Church Message 2013-03-17 - It's All Ministry (Part 1)

- **It's All Ministry (Part 1)**

Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday March 17, 2013

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<http://www.LifeChurchBoston.org/>

- **It's All Ministry**

- **Introduction**

- Welcome to another church meeting at the Hampton Inn & Suites.
- Welcome Cards -
- Transition
- Review what it means to be a Christian.
- As followers of Jesus, we gather on Sundays (The Lord's Day) to celebrate him.
- We are called "Life Church" because I wanted the ministry to be a place where people could simply live.
 - We don't pursue a programmatic top-down agenda.
 - We don't want to keep "rearranging the crops".
 - We've slowed down.

- **Exegetical Idea**

It's All Ministry!

- **We've Slowed Down**

- I'm in the "asphalt removal" business.
 - Asphalt keeps the seeds in the earth beneath it from growing.
 - Our pursuit of programs keeps the ministry that God has planted in the saints from growing.
- God has placed ministry in his people.
 - God designed the universe to be ordered enough for us to have faith.
 - God has given us faith to exercise various gifts - **Romans 12:1-8**.
 - We've "slowed down" and made space for people to "hang out" and interact with each other and exercise their gifts in the process.

- **We "minister" or serve.**

- It's not about all ministry coming from the person in the pulpit.
- We minister to each other.

- "Minister" is an older English word for servant; it was not a special religious word.
- Example - selection of people to distribute food - **Acts 6:1-7**
 - KJV retains older English "minister".
 - KJV is an outdated translation.
 - Jesus wants us to put his words into practice - **Matthew 7:24-29**.
 - In order to put his words into practice we must understand them.
 - We understand best when we read the Bible in modern language.
 - Nobody in the Bible spoke English. Jesus didn't speak English. Nobody in the Bible had a British accent either.
 - If you're using the KJV comprehension is not your priority.
 - Men full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom were chosen to manage the distribution of food.
 - Acts 6:2 "ministry of the word" (NIV) is "the word" in the Greek
 - Acts 6:4 "ministry of the Word" (NIV) is "ministry of the word" in Greek
 - The word we translate as minister has its origin in the serving that slaves and household servants do (e.g. table waiters).
 - Whether you bring chairs into the room or preach the word, it's all ministry.
- **The Leadership Team is here to coach you.**
 - Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers - **Ephesians 4:1-16**
 - These leaders are placed in the body to coach the rest of the body in their own ministries.
 - These leaders are not placed in the body to do direct ministry.
 - We need to adjust to being biblical rather than traditional in this area.
- **Life Groups**
 - Life groups are groups of believers who come together regularly for fellowship and to experience and express Jesus together.
 - Life groups may be homogenous or diverse. They may be organized geographically or by some common interest.
 - All life groups and other ministry must be accountable to a LT member.
 - Submit to the oversight of the Leadership Team. - **Hebrews 13:7-10,17**
 - Follow their example.
 - They have to give God an account for you.

- To help us in our oversight we've developed some questions for people who want to launch a life group or other ministry
 - Don't be put off by the fact that this is a form.
 - The purpose is to facilitate a guided conversation with a LT member.
 - At Life Church we maintain a free atmosphere.
 - We provide great freedom for people to speak up and share.
 - We try to avoid restrictions that might quench what the Holy Spirit is doing in people.
 - We don't necessarily endorse everything that is shared by the folks from the congregation who come up to speak.
 - I've often said happily that at Life Church people start ministry activities and I don't find out about it until after the fact.
 - Our free atmosphere has a down side.
 - Just because I don't need to know about every activity that get's launched at Life Church doesn't mean that no one on the LT needs to know.
 - People who speak effectively can appear to be operating under an authority that they do not actually possess.
 - Strangers, newcomers, and others who are not well known by the leaders may attempt to lead inappropriately.
- **We need to think carefully about the activities we launch.**
 - Count the cost - **Luke 14:25-33**
 - Evangelize the Curious
 - Disciple the Hungry
 - Promote the Faithful
 - Life Group / Ministry Questionnaire
 - What do you want to do (i.e. what type of group do you want to lead)?
 - What timeframe do you have in mind (i.e. how long will the group run)?
 - How will it work (i.e. how will the group be run)?
 - What is your mental model or theory of ministry (i.e. how does what you do in ministry produce results)?
 - What has God said to you about this?
 - How does your proposed activity advance our [vision and mission](#)?
 - How does your proposed activity reflect our [core values](#)?
- **Discussion Questions & Topics**

- What do you want to do (i.e. what type of group do you want to lead)?
- What timeframe do you have in mind (i.e. how long will the group run)?
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- How does your proposed activity advance our [vision and mission](#)?
- How does your proposed activity reflect our [core values](#)?
- **Wrap-up**
 - These questions should help you better implement your activity.
 - These questions alert LT members to potential problems
 - People who want to actively recruit everyone to join their activity.
 - Proposed leadership by people who should not be leading or perceived leadership by people who should not be seen as leaders.

- **Life Group Material**

- **Life Group Word Material**

These are sample discussion questions / topics. Your life group leaders may choose to adjust these questions, substitute new ones, or spend the Word section of the meeting in a different way altogether.

Scripture taken from the [HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION \(NIV\)](#).
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Romans 12:1-8

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Acts 6:1-7

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Matthew 7:24-29

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Ephesians 4:1-16

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit — just as you were called to one hope when you were called — one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Hebrews 13:7-10

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by ceremonial foods, which are of no value to those who eat them. We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat.

Hebrews 13:17

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Luke 14:25-33

Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters — yes, even his own life — he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'

"Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

Discussion Questions & Topics

- What do you want to do (i.e. what type of group do you want to lead)?
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- **Scriptures For 3/17/2013 Life Church Sermon**

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Life Church Mission Statement

Our mission is to teach people:

to enjoy knowing Jesus without fear, inadequacy, guilt, or shame,
to follow him together as his family,
to function together as his body,
and to work together to expand his kingdom.

Understanding The Bible

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Here, for your convenience, are the Bible passages for today's sermon at Life Church. We use mostly the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible so that you can read it in modern English. You may have been accustomed to reading or hearing the King James Version of the Bible, which uses older English (with words like "thee" , "thou", "thine", "believeth", etc.). Don't be alarmed - the passages are really from the Bible!

The Bible was originally written in three ancient languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. None of the people in the Bible, and none of the people who God used to write it spoke English. In fact, English did not even exist as a language when the Bible was written. The King James Version, first published in 1611, was a translation of the Bible from it's original languages into the every day English that people used back then - almost 400 years ago! They didn't just speak that way in church - they spoke that way with everyone. The King James Version was "modernized" in 1769, but, even so, English has certainly changed a lot since then! **We believe that if you're reading an English translation of the Bible it ought to be up to date - written in the English you speak every day. God wants you to understand his Word so that you can put it into practice!**

Life Church Sermon Handout for March 17, 2013

Leading a Life Group

Leading a life group is a privilege and a wonderful way to serve the Lord. If you're interested in leading a group speak to one of the members of the Leadership Team. They will be able to assess your readiness and guide you towards any training or other preparation that you may need. All life group leaders are supervised by a member of the Leadership Team.

Before you start leading a life group someone from the Leadership Team will discuss the following questions with you and ask you to write out your answers:

- What do you want to do (i.e. what type of group do you want to lead)?
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Vision Statement

Available from our web site

As believers in Jesus Christ, we are a new family, a visible body, and an active network nourished by God's river of life:

- a family of believers who
 - enjoy God without fear, inadequacy, guilt, or shame (FIGS), and love him with everything they've got,
 - genuinely love one another,
 - live by the resurrection life of Jesus within them,
- a body through which Jesus loves our community and our world
- a network of churches, ministries, and businesses that lead people, communities, and cultures to follow Jesus.

Life Church Mission Statement

Available from our web site

Our mission is to teach people:

to enjoy knowing Jesus without fear, inadequacy, guilt, or shame,
to follow him together as his family,
to function together as his body,
and to work together to expand his kingdom.

Core Values

Available from our web site

- Doing the Bible
- Listening to God and talking to God
- Celebrating God
- Devoting ourselves to other believers
- Developing friendships with the unchurched
- Becoming more like Jesus
- Communication
- Helping people ask questions and find answers and solutions
- Working with others
- Trying out ministry ideas

Galatians - Tools For Understanding (available @ Amazon.com)

1. "The Untold Story Of The New Testament Church" by Frank Viola - \$10.87
2. "Paul For Everyone" by N. T. Wright - \$10.39
3. Galatians (N.T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides) by N. T. Wright - \$7.76

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