

Life Church Message 2013-03-24 - It's All Ministry (Part 2)

- **It's All Ministry (Part 2)**

Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday March 24, 2013

© 2013 Life Church Ministries, Inc.

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

- **It's All Ministry**

- **Preparation**

- **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 - KJV is an outdated translation.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](#)?
- **Life Group / Ministry Planning Questions**

- 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](#)?
- **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.
- **It's All Ministry (Part 2)**
- **Review Acts 6:1-7 "ministry of the Word" vs. ministry of tables**
 - 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 names of the chosen men were all Greek names. The apostles handed the entire ministry over to the overlooked group.
- **General Guidelines For People Serving in Ministry:**
 - Follow Jesus Christ.
 - Share the Life Church Vision.
 - Commit to the Life Church Mission.
 - Devote yourself to the apostles' teaching, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, prayer - **Acts 2:42-47**
 - No counseling unless you make yourself knowable and take advantage of group resources.
 - Fully participate in the relationship building aspects of the ministry.
 - Serve people appropriately:
 - Pray for everyone.
 - Befriend the open.
 - Evangelize the curious.

- Disciple the hungry.
- Promote the faithful.
- **Mental models and ministry.**

"Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action." "The Fifth Discipline" by Peter Senge (p. 8)

Our "exposing our mental models" should be an outcome of the honesty and openness that characterize our fellowship with other believers.

 - We should expose our mental models as a natural outcome of our honest and open fellowship with one another.
 - What are your key assumptions?
 - How will you know it worked?
 - Avoid magical thinking - don't assume God will do something that he has not explicitly promised to do.
 - 5 Whys.
 - Example: The vehicle will not start. (the problem).
 - 1) *Why?* - The battery is dead. (first why)
 - 2) *Why?* - The alternator is not functioning. (second why)
 - 3) *Why?* - The alternator belt has broken. (third why)
 - 4) *Why?* - The alternator belt was well beyond its useful service life and not replaced. (fourth why)
 - 5) *Why?* - The vehicle was not maintained according to the recommended service schedule. (fifth why, a root cause)
 - 6) *Why?* - Replacement parts are not available because of the extreme age of the vehicle. (sixth why, optional footnote)
 - The questioning for this example could be taken further to a sixth, seventh, or higher level: the "five" in 5 Whys is not gospel, but five **iterations** of asking why is generally sufficient to get to a root cause. The key is to encourage the trouble-shooter to avoid assumptions and logic traps and instead trace the chain of causality in direct increments from the effect through any layers of abstraction to a root cause that still has some connection to the original problem. Note that in this example the fifth why suggests a broken process or an alterable behaviour, which is typical of reaching the root-cause level.
 - It is interesting to note that the last answer points to a process. This is one of the most important aspects in the 5 Why approach - the *real* root cause should point toward a process that is not working well or does not

exist. Untrained facilitators will often observe that answers seem to point towards classical answers such as not enough time, not enough investments, or not enough manpower. These answers may sometimes be true but in most cases they lead to answers out of our control.

Therefore, instead of asking the question **why?**, ask **why did the process fail?**

- A key phrase to keep in mind in any 5 Why exercise is "people do not fail, processes do".
- What's the mental model?
 - Woman who deals with her unruly child by placing a bible underneath his pillow at night.
 - A gospel concert to solve a local youth violence problem.
 - A revival to evangelize a city.
 - A concert to raise money for a good cause.
- **Leadership perceived vs. actual - training (you must be trained)**
 - There are many types of leadership.
 - Almost everyone can lead on some occasions and in some contexts.
 - Some activities create a perception that you are a leader.
 - Guidelines for aspiring ministry leaders:
 - Follow the general ministry guidelines listed above.
 - Let the congregation get to know you for a year.
 - Valerie's example.
 - Pursue healthy relationships with spouse, children, other believers.
 - Be transparent (incl. home life) with ministry leaders. - **1 John 1:1 - 2:2**
 - Deny yourself - Mark 8:27-38; **Luke 9:18-26**
 - Practice the sermon on the mount - Matthew 5 - 7
 - Some ministries involve proclaiming the truth to others. Others don't.
 - Be teachable. Get trained by someone on the LT. - **2 Timothy 2:2**
 - Sitting down from ministry - punishment vs. therapy.
 - Sometimes we need to take a break from ministry in order to prioritize more foundational things.
 - We insist that newly married couples take a break from ministry.
 - Don't neglect the relationship building aspects of the ministry.
- **Conclusion**
 -

-
-
-
-
-

- **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 \(NIV\)](#).
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 [International Bible Society](#). Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

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.

Ephesians 4:7-13

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.

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.

Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

1 John 1:5 - 2:2

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense — Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Luke 9:18-26

Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?”

They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.”

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”

Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. And he said, “The Son of Man must

suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”

Then he said to them all: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

2 Timothy 2:1-2

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

Life Group / Ministry Planning Questions

- 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](#)?

- **Scriptures For 3/24/2013 Life Church Sermon**

Unless otherwise indicated scriptures are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV) Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

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.

Ephesians 4:7-13

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.

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.

Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

1 John 1:5 - 2:2

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense — Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Luke 9:18-26

Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?"

They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

2 Timothy 2:1-2

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

Life Group / Ministry Planning Questions

- 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](#)?

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

Unless otherwise indicated, scriptures are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV) Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. ®. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

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!**