

VISION 2023: Returning to the Essentials – Part 2

1 THESS 1:4-10

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■ Central Church

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■ Social Media: #Vision 2023

Week 1: Return to the Essential Virtues (2-3).

1. Aggressively Grow a Faith that Functions (3a).
2. Strategically Give a Love that Labors (3b).
3. Consistently Gather a Hope that Hangs-On (3c).

Week 2: Return to the Essential Values (4-10).

1. Value Exemplary Reception (4-7, 9).
2. Value Evangelistic Redirection (8-9).
3. Value Expectant Return (9-10).

Week 3: Return to the Essential Vocations (1-5).

1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

"We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

⁸For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything.

⁹For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come."

(ESV)

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APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. **Read Philippians 1:6.** The Thessalonians turned from idols to serve the true and living God. What did this look like for you when you came to saving faith? What changes took place in your life? How is God continuing to change you?
2. Another mark of an excellent church is its exemplary influence. The Thessalonians became an example to all of Greece (1 Thessalonians 1:6-7). How can Central Church become an example to be emulated?
3. Evangelism is one of the most vital parts for a biblical church. However, it is one of the most neglected ministries for most churches. What a cruel irony. Why does evangelism lack such participation in most churches?
4. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-20.** There are several references to the necessity of evangelism in this passage. What motivations does this passage give us for sharing our faith? Beyond this passage, what motivates you personally to share the gospel? What discourages you? How do you move beyond discouragement to witnessing? (see Romans 1:16, Matthew 28:19-20).

Quote for the Week. . .

by Ligon Duncan



"What will a church look like that is committed to the ordinary means of grace? It will be characterized by love for expository preaching, passion for worship, delight in truth, embrace of the Gospel, the Spirit's work of conversion, a life of godliness; robust family religion; biblical evangelism; biblical discipleship, biblical church membership, mutual accountability in the church, biblical church leadership, and a desire to be a blessing to the nations. Along with this all, there will be an unapologetic, humble, and joyful celebration of the transcendent sovereignty of the one, true, triune God in salvation and all things."

Ligon Duncan, The Ordinary Means of Growth, Tabletalk, October 2007, p. 15.