

June 25th Sermon notes

What was the Strategic Faith Launch? When our church had a financial crisis, nine years ago, instead of just settling for asking God for money, we asked Him for things money can't buy. And He set us on a path to the realization of these things and our church has been blessed forward as a result.

We called it a Strategic Faith Launch because that is what it was.

Strategic - the identification of long-term or overall aims and interests.

Faith – assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen.

- Trusting God to bring these qualities about in our midst, recognizing they were beyond us.

Launch – to set in motion; to initiate.

- We stood before the Lord together united in heart and spirit.

I. Know Him Better

- Ephesians 1:17 "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better."
- Matthew 22:37 – "Love the Lord with all your heart, soul and mind"
- Jeremiah 9:23-24 Thus says the Lord, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me..."

II. Love each other more.

- John 13:34 - A new commandment I give to you...
- Romans 5:5 says The love of God has been poured into us by His Spirit. But it is activated and dispensed by His Spirit.
- Money issues are a primary and often existential threat to churches, families and really any other organization; we asked God to instead use it to bring us together.
- Ephesians 4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

III. Use each one of us to meet the need.

- 1 Corinthians 12:7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

- o Nobody can do everything, but everybody can do something.

- Ephesians 4:16 (NIV) 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.

- 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV) Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

- Roles differ but our value to God and to His purposes is equal.

- The Lord uses the body to meet the needs of the body. So, we asked God to show each of us how he wanted to use us.

We have this orientation to these things because of Jesus. So, we remember His sacrifice for us each fourth Sunday through Communion or the Lord's Supper.

Communion helps anchor our faith. It keeps us mindful of Jesus' real life, real death and real resurrection - all on our behalf. It reminds us of His love. It reminds us of our forgiveness. It reminds us of our citizenship in heaven. And it reminds us of the blessings of the New Covenant, highlighted by His Spirit

You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death." The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear.

[That was the situation before Jesus! The Holiness of God versus frailty and fallibility of man. But that is not our story...]

But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names

are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.” (Hebrews 12:18-24).