

**THE MAIN THING:** Vision Sermon, Part 1 Dr. Henry Schorr

April 20-21, 2013

In the past seasons of Grounding and Growth, in this season of Generosity, and in the future of our church, nothing matters more than our love for the Lord Jesus Christ and our obedience to Him. It is not about small or large church, but about brokenness, humble dependence, and prayer. The one thing that matters is, "Do you love Jesus?" Are you listening to the promptings of Jesus? Are you being who Jesus wants you to be? Are you doing what Jesus is calling you to do?

**This message calls for a time of reflection and prayer**

Please use this study guide as an opportunity to grow in dependence on Christ as you reflect on the scriptures and study questions, as you pray with others, and as you bring your own concerns before God throughout the week.

**PURSUE RELATIONSHIP:** *Connect and pray as a group*

1. Share a time when you were broken and God did what you could not do.
2. Share a time when you were *brilliant* (you relied on your own abilities) and God let you do it all — all by yourself.

**PURSUE GOD:** *Time that is devoted to the Word of God*

1. Read Deuteronomy 6:10-14 and reflect on each phrase. Feel free to use any of the following questions to guide your thoughts and discussion:  
*What do I have that I did not build, plant, or dig? Where is my satisfaction? From what slavery did the Lord rescue me? Am I fearing the Lord only? Are there other gods in my life? What are their names? What are the gods of the people around me?*
2. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Pastor Henry called us to care for the next generation.  
*How may I share a whole-hearted love for God with the children in my life?*
3. Read Acts 1:8. Reflect on the relationship between waiting, praying, being full with the Holy Spirit, and being Christ's witnesses.
4. (For deeper reflection) Read Deuteronomy 6:15. Reflect on the meaning of this verse in the life of ancient Israel and on its application today.

**PURSUE SIMPLICITY:** *Seek to simply love and reflect Christ*

It is hard to step out of busyness. So as you pray as a group, as a family, or individually, be open to what God is saying to you. When you are going through a struggle, keep being brutally honest to God and to yourself. Commit to prayer for humble dependence upon God.

**As a group or family, ask:**

- What is God's call on us?
- What do we need to bring to Jesus? - hard things, exciting things, choices?
- Where is the messiness in simply obeying God? Who will be impacted by our obedience?

**In a personal prayer time this week:**

- Ask the Lord to reveal one thing this week that you can relinquish to create a special prayer time.
- Ask, "Do I love Jesus? Am I listening to the promptings of Jesus? Am I being who Jesus wants me to be? Am I doing what Jesus is calling me to do?"
- Pray, "Lord, fill me with your Holy Spirit."

**THE WORD (NIV)**

Deuteronomy 6:10–15

<sup>10</sup> When the LORD your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you—a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, <sup>11</sup> houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant—then when you eat and are satisfied, <sup>12</sup> be careful that you do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. <sup>13</sup> Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. <sup>14</sup> Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you; <sup>15</sup> for the LORD your God, who is among you, is a jealous God and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land.

Deuteronomy 6:4–9

<sup>4</sup> Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup> Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. <sup>7</sup> Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. <sup>8</sup> Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup> Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Acts 1:8

<sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

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All through Scriptures, we are reminded not to forget what God has done and to tell the story of His activity and faithfulness. We see this, particularly, when Moses reviewed God's guidance and faithfulness just as the children of Israel were about enter the Promised Land. So it was that Pastor Henry Schorr, in his VISION WEEKEND SERMON, spoke about God's past activity and faithfulness in our church and where God is leading us in the future. He began by reviewing:

**The era of grounding:** 55 years ago, a group of 61 young adults took a giant step of faith to begin a new church—Centre Street Church. Their foundation was prayer, uncompromising teaching of the Scriptures, Bible study and a deep commitment to see people come to faith in Jesus Christ. In the first years, there was little fruit. In fact, discouragement set in during the early 1980's as people started leaving the church. The turning point came at a lay-leader's meeting when they covenanted to pray together before each service for God to move in our church. Then a year after Pastor Henry was asked to be the Senior Pastor, he was diagnosed with cancer. "This led to brokenness in me—that took my relationship with the Lord to a whole new level of trust and intimacy with Him," he said. A personal and collective sense of weakness and need for God, along with the accumulated prayers of many faithful prayer warriors, was preparation for:

**The era of growth:** Pastor Henry, feeling inadequate for the task, sensed God was about to do a new thing. Both he and his wife Gwen sensed God was saying, "I'm going to bless this church." In the following years, God moved despite weaknesses and limitations, even though the church wasn't always intentional, strategic or purpose driven. But God was at work. When the children's Sunday School ministry was in danger of being shut down, the prayer team began to pray for volunteers. Suddenly, people came "out of the woodwork" to volunteer. The church learned that "God moves far more through our brokenness than our brilliance. He moves far more powerfully through our prayers than our perspiration." Our church is not the kingdom of ME but about the Kingdom of GOD. We entered the spirit of renewal that continues today, as we surrendered our lives to Jesus, becoming people of humility and prayer, and living in humble dependence on God. During this era of growth, God used us to see thousands come to faith in Christ. There are currently 400 Bible studies, dozens of local, national and international agencies and missionaries, and over 30 partner churches worldwide. Then we sensed that the Lord was preparing us to enter:

**The era of generosity:** What God has in mind for this era is huge. It will be a movement, not a strategy, as we obediently take Jesus to the community, involving Spirit-directed, practical initiatives. It will at times become messy, unpredictable, disorderly and frustrating, but God is calling us to do this. As a result, we will be both a **gathered church** and a **scattered church**.

As people in the gathered church, we will be a hub of support to strengthen and encourage the scattered church: meeting together, worshipping, developing tools and resources for making disciples, and providing spiritual growth and care opportunities for our children, people with special needs, and those in crisis and bondage. Like the children of Brazil who prayed for their friend in a wheelchair and saw God immediately heal him, we will receive His power and will be His witnesses, through our lives, our character, our attitudes and words. God will use us in some small or significant way to affect the eternal trajectory of those God brings across our paths. The issue is: Are you in love with Jesus? Are you listening to the promptings of Jesus? Are you being who Jesus wants you to be? And are you doing what Jesus wants you to do?