

SERMON NOTES: THE VISION 2: (10/07/16)

SCRIPTURE

Ezra 3:1-6 (HCSB)

KEY POINTS

- + When developing vision, it's tempting to look to other 'surface success' stories and set vision along similar paths. But the theological vision of Red - the story in which we find ourselves - finds its meaning, clarity and approach in the story of God.
- + This story may be familiar but it cannot be overlooked:
 - + We have a sense of right and wrong, justice and injustice - because when God created us He filled us with His breath and Spirit; we are made in his image.
 - + While we are made in the image of God, we rebel, and find ourselves in a constant battle against the flesh. This extends beyond ourselves to a factoring of all of creation.
 - + Yet God is intent on working with humanity because He deeply loves us. In scripture we see God entering into the mess by calling out a people to be his chosen ones, holy and set apart for Him.
 - + Through Jesus, humanity is given a way of living beyond how it could before. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus' followers live out a new life not dominated by the flesh. The Church is called out on mission to reach the world with this Good News.
- + Only God has the power to fix this world, only He can offer a future where disease and death are undone and we can live in Him. This should change how you live now.
- + Our challenge is to **step into this story**. If this story is true, it means we have a purpose; we are called to live with passion; that the Spirit is waiting for you to invite him into your life.

- + One of the biggest challenges against the church today is apathy and cynicism, sometimes leading people to hold faith at an arms length or have one foot in and one foot out. Jesus invites you to fully step into faith in Him, made possible by His death and resurrection, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- + How at home do you feel in the story of God (as told by the Bible) being *your* story? Are there other stories that compete for the vision of your life?
- + What stands out to you most about God as you consider the overarching story of the Bible? What confuses or challenges you? Can you share any stories from your life for observation, of seeing God work in these ways?
- + Ezra 3:1-6 talks about how, once settled back in Jerusalem, the Israelites reestablished the rhythms and practices of worship that God had originally commanded them to. Why were these practices so crucial to God's people living out their true story? Do spiritual disciplines play the same kind of role in your life today/what is in place to remind you of God's story and realign your own with it?
- + **What stuck out to you from the teaching?** Did God remind you of something, or reveal something new? Did the Spirit minister to you?
- + **Were any questions raised for you?** Did you get stuck on any scriptures or points? Anything you need clarity on?
- + **Where do we see Jesus Christ in this teaching?** Jesus is at the centre of everything in the Scriptures. It follows that he is at the centre of everything we understand about church, faith and the Kingdom. What in the teaching has

helped you see more of Jesus and the cross, or moved you to love him more?

+ **How can you personally apply this teaching?**

Identify and commit to something you sense the Spirit is leading you to do in obedient response. Make it actionable and personal. What is in place to help you stay accountable to this?

+ **What/with whom can you share from**

here? Who in your life needs to know the truth you've discovered? How can you share it with them?