
Vision Sunday

Released - Part 2

Riverlife's vision for 2020 is to be – *Released* as empowered people to declare and demonstrate the kingdom of God. This takes the rhythm of coming in and released to go out. We talked about wanting to be an Antioch church, a sending church, where we as a family are released with this incredibly Good News and our hope is that as infectious carriers of this Good News we would see a whole city change by people coming to know Christ personally.

This whole vision hinges on every single one of us responding positively to this challenge.

In the early chapters of the book of Acts just after the Holy Spirit comes upon the disciples, we see a beautiful and powerful rhythm of coming in and released to go out starting to emerge.

- + Acts 2:42-47 – new believers started to find the rhythm of coming together to worship God in fellowship with one another where they found healing and were encouraged in the Word of God.
- + The result was they enjoyed the favour of all the people!

It's in the environment of coming in together that when they went out, it was with intentionality and with a knowledge of what they carried.

- + Acts 3:5-10 – out of their newly understood rhythms of coming in they were released to go out empowered as God's people.

Releasing the Kingdom of Heaven begins with prayer and worship, with the love of God, because if it's true that we're made in God's image we will find our fullest meaning, the more we learn to love and worship the one we are designed to reflect.

Fruitless Intimacy - Two Types

1. Intimacy with No Action

Jesus is not looking for fruitless intimacy. He wants us to engage our love for Him in obedience to His will.

“Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead” (James 2:17)

While God draws us into a loving, close and intimate relationship – this should always lead to a declaration and demonstration of His kingdom.

When we have a sense of intimacy without action it means there’s something wrong with our intimacy.

2. Action with No Intimacy

God never says, “just do it”. God’s will, done God’s way, bears God’s fruit.

God’s will is found in principle but God’s way is found through relationship!

God is not a formula or a series of steps. He's a Person who enjoys relationship. Actions flow from intimacy, not vice versa.

Fruitful Intimacy

In practical terms, fruit represents all sorts of ways the kingdom is displayed.

The fruit from your life is how God receives His due honour on earth (John 15:8).

You bear inner fruit when you allow Holy Spirit to cultivate in you a new, Christlike quality (Galatians 5:22).

You bear outward fruit when you allow God to work through you to bring Him glory.

The Vision and You

Together we create loving family environments and use quality resources so that out of authentic worship we might be released together as an empowered people to declare and demonstrate Christ's Kingdom.

Psalm 133 says where there is a heavenly unity amongst God's people, then there is an anointing present, God will release His eternal blessing, the promise of life forever! I can't help but think if we all are united around God's vision to be released then we will experience the church in action like never before.

Key Dates (Q1 & Q2)

The following are some key dates for the first half of this year that support the vision of the church for the year ahead.

9 Feb	Life Group Sign-on
16 Feb	REACH Q&A session 10.30am, The Chapel
22 Feb	National Day of Prayer and Fasting (<i>King George Square</i>)
29 Mar-4 Apr	Church Wide Prayer Initiative
3 May	Compelled by Love church-wide alignment series (<i>6 weeks</i>)
11-14 Jun	REACH 2020 Conference

Discussion Questions

1. What were some of the hallmarks among the early church that the Holy Spirit was at work? (Acts 2:1-4; Acts 2:42-47)
2. Why aren't Christians today, in general, seeing the same demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power as the early church was? This shouldn't be the case – discuss how we can see these things happen again today.
3. How do we remain true to fruitful intimacy rather than fruitless intimacy?
4. What are you going to commit to in the vision of being released in 2020? Share together the steps you are going to take.
5. Pray Acts 4:24-31 as a group.