
Released Revisited

Part 2

Introduction

Vision leaks! And without vision, we can't see where we're going (right?). So, it's worth taking the time to remind ourselves of what we're about! We want to take this time to re-orient ourselves to what God has called us to as a family, to realign ourselves with the call on us as a church.

To sum it up simply, as an empowered family centred on God's presence, we have thrown ourselves at two things:

- + Developing a missional heart and a missional lifestyle (that John spoke about last week)
- + And hand in hand with that, continuing to develop a deep culture of prayer and worship as the engine room of our church

Building Foundations

We are "released to be living out alternative relationships within an alternative community, in order to establish an alternative society." – Pastor John Robertson

NT Wright on Acts: "Do people look at us and like what they see?"

Matthew 7:24–27

Luke 6:46–49

Build on the Rock

Jesus has just outlined His vision of the Kingdom and how we live in it in the Sermon on the Mount (or the Plain, in Luke's version).

Jesus calls us to build on the rock. The application point of Jesus' whole kingdom vision is that we live out, that we act upon, that we apply His teaching to our lives.

One commentator asks this sobering question: "Can we call Jesus 'Lord', but take the easy way out? Not love others? Not practice forgiveness?"

Jesus' kingdom vision isn't information, it's life transformation.

Question: How am I different to this time last year? What about 3 years ago? 5 years? 10 years? Am I different? Am I different to what I was like before I knew Jesus? Have I even taken the time to reflect on that?

Am I weathering the storm, or am I being shaken?

Prayer and Worship

How do prayer and worship fit into this?

Prayer leads us to (and flows out of) intimacy with God: We get to know the rock on which we build our lives.

Worship reorders our priorities to God's priorities. We get to see and learn from His plans for the building of our lives.

Prayer and Worship are the way we build our life upon the rock.

See Matthew 6, John 4 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17.

A Vision for Prayer and Worship

We have spoken in the past about God calling us here as a family to be a fireplace: a resting place for the fire of God.

We believe that God desires to bring revival to people, to transform families and neighbourhoods and cities and nations with His love, power and presence

Honestly, I don't think that praying, worshipping and telling others is going to bring revival. I think that prayer, worship and evangelism, along with discipleship, are our basic responsibilities as believers. These are the basics of our faith, the source of our daily bread.

Prayer and Worship are the way we build our life upon the rock.

Prayer and Worship are the bricks that build the foundation of the fireplace.

2 Corinthians 5:19–20

We get as close as possible to Jesus.

"Turn your eyes upon Jesus..."

This is Our Time

It's a moment, a time, a season that we have an opportunity.

Pastor Ric Benson received a word from God 19 years ago, about the call on this church. I think that we are being tested in this call right now: will we be a church that seeks the face of God above all else, that prioritises God's presence through prayer and worship, above all else? If we do, He promised we will be empowered to do EVERYTHING that God places before us. But if we don't, as the Lord told Ric, we will descend into a man-centred church and our call will fall by the wayside.

How are you different to this time last year? Does your life look a little more like Jesus than it did before? Honestly – between you and God, ask Him. Ask yourself. Do an inventory.

Today is a red-letter day, it's a day to draw a line under – will we be a people of prayer and worship?

Prayer and Worship are the way we build our life upon the rock.

Discussion Questions

1. What form does prayer and worship take in your daily life?
2. What impact has Jesus made in your life in the past year? What about the past 3 years? 5 years? 10 years?
3. Think about the people who aren't believers that you know: do you think they are like the people watching the early church in Acts? Do they look at you and like what they see? What is God doing in your life that is attractive to those who don't yet know Jesus?
4. When you hear Jesus' words from the Sermon on the Mount about where we place our foundation, what is God showing you about your life? What is founded on rock, and where is He showing you may need a stronger foundation?
5. Our identity in Jesus allows us to be His children, and His ambassadors. What would that look like in your life? Where is God calling you to bring mercy and forgiveness?
6. Ultimately, it's all about Jesus. We are called to keep our eyes on Him, seek His kingdom, and live like He lives. What does that look like in your life? How is He calling you closer to Him?
7. How do you let prayer and worship establish your life in the foundation of Jesus our rock?