

April 26, 2017

Leadership Equipping Thoughts



Things Of God Are Written On The Heart

It was a real tearjerker. Several of us were sitting around a room recounting what God had done with us during this past season. As we spoke about God's faithfulness as we had followed the vision he had put in our hearts, we had to keep the tissue box moving. It was wonderful. Important values God had written on our hearts became evident as real life stories were relayed.

This was a great reminder that in order to live as God's family together on His mission, we must have vision and values written on our hearts not just on documents, walls, and websites. We have heard much in the past few decades in both church leadership circles, as well as business circles about the importance of value statements, vision statements, and slogans that communicate the vision for any organization. Many of these bear important truths regarding people working together for a unified goal. It is important to continually communicate the common goal of the organization. If this is not done, the overall purpose can get lost and the effectiveness diluted. It is good to be continually reminded why organizations, including local churches, do what they do.

There is a Biblical truth behind all of this. God tells His people through Habakkuk 2:2 to "write the vision down so he who reads it may run." Vision and value statements written in publications, walls, and websites are important, but there is another place they need to be written that is even more important, the heart.

Vision and Values are not just catchy slogans written on documents, walls, and websites. They must be written on our hearts.

Christianity is a heart religion. It effects our outward behavior but it begins, and is sustained though the effect on our hearts. It is inside before it is outside.

The Bible speaks of writing important things on the hearts of God's people.

- *Proverbs 3:3... Write them on the tablet of your heart.*
- *Proverbs 7:2-3 Keep my commandments...And my teaching...(3)...Write them on the tablet of your heart.*

God said the New Covenant in Christ is to be written first on our heart.

- *Jeremiah 31:33 (Heb 8:6-13) "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them **and on their heart I will write it**; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

Paul speaks of the joining that God did with him and others as "written on the tablets of the human heart by the Spirit."

- *2 Corinthians 3:2-3 You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men; (3) being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.*

When God joins people together on His mission there are things written on the heart that they carry together. It is both vision (what we are doing), and values (how we are called to walk together in doing it). Both are things the Spirit writes on our hearts that resonate in and among us. Vision and

values are not simply fences that determine who is "in or out" but common springboards from which we firmly launch forward as His family.

Vision and values are much more than catchy slogans. When written on the heart, whenever they are seen or communicated it moves us on the inside by the Spirit. I had the recent privilege of sitting in a room with a group of leaders who were recalling some of their journeys. I witnessed something that was both moving and stirring in my own heart. As they recounted their journey, whenever they spoke of something in their experiences that touched on the vision and values that were written on their hearts they choked up. Others got choked up who heard it because it was touching the emotions of what was written on their hearts as well. It was an articulation of what the "Spirit had written on the tablets of their hearts" (2 Cor 3:2-3). A couple of prominent values we hold as a family of churches were articulated.

- **Everything in the Body of Christ is relational with God and each other.** Relationships is a central issue in the Kingdom of God (Mk 12:28-34). We believe that brother/sister relationships, pastor/disciple relationships, and small group relationships are a key to leaders, local churches, and the life among our family of churches. It is thus through our relationships that we are part of the Salt & Light/C2C family, not by 'signing a form' or 'joining an institution'. Family (both natural and Spiritual) only works as well as we pursue and walk in it relationally. We can have natural and Spiritual connections but they must be walked out in relational reality. (Eph 4:16, 32; Col 2:19, 3:12-17; Phi 2:19-22)
- **Family is the launching pad for all we do.** The pattern in Genesis was God creating His family then giving them a mission (be fruitful, multiply, fill, subdue, and rule over the earth). God works through spiritual and natural family which give us a place of belonging, love, fun, joy, security, friendship, vision, encouragement and care as we pursue the mission of God together.

How do we ensure that vision and values stay written on our hearts not just on walls or websites. Three simple things.

- **Continually see them in the presence of God and His word (see it in the word and in prayer)**
- **Live it out among people you are joined with who are of like mind and heart.**
- **Talk about it as reminders to yourself and testimony to others.**