

## Hope, Part 2

### I hope my future is bright

Moses led the nation of Israel out of Egyptian slavery, but it was Joshua who would lead them into the Promised Land. On the eve of the battle of Jericho, which was step one to taking control of the Promised Land, Joshua had a bit of a divine encounter.

When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, Are you for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, No; but I am the commander of the army of the Lord. Now I have come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, What does my lord say to his servant? And the commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy. And Joshua did so. – Joshua 5:13-15

1. **Does your future involve God, or does God have your future?** Joshua wants to know if this figure is for him or against him. Response: Neither. That probably confused Joshua, and it wasn't the answer he was looking for. But it wasn't about whether this figure was for or against Joshua, it was whether or not Joshua stood with him. God was not coming down to Joshua to join his story. He was asking Joshua to join HIS story. Your plans, your dreams, your goals...those are all too small and not worth your life. Our dreams are too small.
2. **Are you asking God to bless your plans or are you following God's plans?** Align your future with God's purpose. God does not want to be a part of our story. He invites us to be a part of His story. Too many times, we come up with our plans, and ask God to bless them, almost as an afterthought. We try and tack on God in order to obtain His blessings. But the Scriptures repeatedly teach us that we should seek His plans, His ways and His will.

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. – Jeremiah 29:11

The reality is that God wants what is best for us, even more than we want what is best for us.

3. **Who are you serving?** Last week, we said by attaching your purpose to His purpose, your life will have eternal significance. Today, we're learning that our lives are part of a much bigger story. Joshua wasn't out to make a name for himself...He was out to follow God. And God would lead Him to the best future.

Let's talk a little bit about the future of Oak Leaf Church. The future of Oak Leaf Church is multi-site. In 2010, we're going to start a campus in Canton, Georgia. Think of a multi-site a little bit like a franchise.

### Why multi-site?

1. **NEW reaches people better than OLD.** When you study statistics, you'll find that new churches are far more effective at reaching people than older churches. Even in our

short history, we grew faster in the first year than in any other year.

2. **A campus approach is a great way to grow large while staying small.** We see it with our services now...there can be 1,000 people at church on the weekend, but because of multiple services, people still appreciate the family-feeling.
3. **We want to keep growing.** Staying still is not an option for a church that wants to stay true to the great commission.
4. **It adds more seats at optimal times.** I would do a service at 1am if people would come to it, but for some strange reason, people want to come to church at more normal times. A campus approach allows us to have more services at 11 am on Sunday morning, when people are most likely to come to church.
5. **A campus model is good stewardship.** We are not opposed to buildings, but it would cost millions and millions of dollars to build a facility that could hold 2,000 people. We could start another campus in rented facilities for a fraction of that. With the campus model, facility and staff costs dramatically reduced.
6. **A campus is a great way to reach pockets of people,** who might live just outside our normal sphere of influence.
7. **A campus approach is great for developing new leaders.** When we launch a second campus, we will send our best people to that location. That creates new opportunities for people to step into places of leadership. Whenever we create NEW opportunities, new people will step up.

I'm out to convince you to align your life with God's purpose through this church. Not to ask if God is for you or against you, but to be for him. Not to invite God to join your life, but to leverage your life to accomplish these eternal purposes. We have an important mission and a big vision...one that I think is worthy of your time, talents and finances.

So there are two big ways that you can do this

## **1. SERVING**

You might have noticed that today is a little different. When you drove up this morning, there were no parking people helping you find a spot. There were no greeters saying hi. There were no volunteers helping with your kids. No volunteers running lights. No band playing music. No elementary volunteers teaching your kids about Jesus...they are in here...bored and causing you not to pay attention. Everything was done by the staff and our spouses.

I want you to see what it's like to be a part of a church where there are no volunteers. It's not all that fun, friendly, or meaningful. Some of you haven't been able to pay attention because you're trying to keep your 2<sup>nd</sup> grader interested. Some of you are guests and you're thinking "this church isn't friendly." Some of you were more than annoyed that you couldn't get a cup of coffee this morning. It's volunteers that fuel this place, and I want you to invite you to join their ranks.

There is significance in serving. Those that serve are often the happiest people.

## **2. GIVING**

In the 1960s, storage units didn't really exist. Today there are 30,000 of them representing 1 Billion square feet. Americans spend \$12 Billion a year to store stuff that we really don't want. I'm not so sure we have money issues as much as we have priority issues.

Jesus said "where your treasure is, there your heart will be."

As we analyze the numbers around here, there's clearly a crowd that does, and a crowd that doesn't. If you're part of the crowd that doesn't. I'm asking you to trust God, trust us and take one small step. Start now.

**Two things: Give once (\$50,000) and Give regularly. (\$200,000)**

**How did that Joshua story end?**

Take off your sandals...this is holy ground. Then they marched around the city seven times and God gave them the victory. When you stop asking God to bless your plan, and join God in his plan, you will have the victory.