

OAK LEAF CHURCH CORE VALUES

What are core values?

1. They are the philosophy behind what we do.
2. They are filters for our decisions. If you understand our core values, then decisions are easier.
3. They define our culture. Disney, Apple, Chipotle, and the Baptist church I grew up in...they all have a corporate culture. They are relentless about that culture.

LOST PEOPLE MATTER TO GOD

And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." – Mark 2:17

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." – Luke 19:10

Too many churches function like the people inside the church matter more than those outside the church. Yet when we look at the life of Jesus, we find just the opposite to be true.

Behind everything we do is the conviction that lost people matter to God. We intentionally *bend* the Sunday morning experience to attract and make sense to people who are not Christians.

- This means that we expect guests every weekend and look for ways to go over the top to welcome them.
- This means that we consider the needs of the outsider to be more important than the needs of the insider.

We will go where people are not willing to go and reach people that other people are not willing to reach.

- The radically unchurched. What if the biggest pagans in Cartersville met Jesus?
- Children and Teenagers.
- Men.
- Spanish speaking population (could be anywhere from 7-14% of Bartow County's population)

CREATE CONTAGIOUS ENVIRONMENTS

Do what you do so well that people want to come back and bring their friends. – Walt Disney
Disney World is an example of a contagious environment. Thousands of people take their annual vacation to one of their parks. They thrive off repeat business.

Light something on fire and people will come from miles around to watch it burn.

Where is a place you've been that you want to go back?

Contagious environments are:

- Welcoming
- Excellent
- Creative
- Exceed people's expectations

Why work so hard? Because God deserves our best.

Constant evaluation and improvement. Excellence doesn't happen by accident. Management my walking around. Look for things to improve.

Evaluation (It can always be better)

1. Ask good questions. Ferret out the facts because they are our friends.
2. Ask the right people good questions.
3. Look at things from the eyes of a guest. How can we keep improving their experience?
4. Constantly look for a better, faster, or more effective way to do things?
5. Fix the system, not just the problem

Malachi 1:6-14 "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty. "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. "But you ask, 'How have we shown contempt for your name?' "You place defiled food on my altar. "But you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' "By saying that the LORD's table is contemptible. When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty. "Now implore God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty.

"Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you," says the LORD Almighty, "and I will accept no offering from your hands. My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations," says the LORD Almighty.

"But you profane it by saying of the Lord's table, 'It is defiled,' and of its food, 'It is contemptible.' And you say, 'What a burden!' and you sniff at it contemptuously," says the LORD Almighty. "When you bring injured, crippled or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices, should I accept them from your hands?" says the LORD. "Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king," says the LORD Almighty, "and my name is to be feared among the nations.

Question: What could we do on Sunday morning that people would talk about during the week?

MAKE BOLD MOVES

Audacity - boldness or daring, esp. with confident or arrogant disregard for personal safety, conventional thought, or other restrictions.

Boldness in Teaching: Bill Gates releasing mosquitos when talking about the problem of malaria, giving away a week's offering, giving a tattoo on stage. Think about how impractical the Great Commission sounded when Jesus first gave it to the disciples.

Bold Moves:

1. Often rock the boat
2. Don't always make sense at first. (Nobody wanted the Mini Cooper during concept phase)
3. Aren't always cheap
4. Aren't safe.
5. Aren't easy.

1 Samuel 14:1-6 One day Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come on, let's go over to where the Philistines have their outpost." But Jonathan did not tell his father what he was doing. Meanwhile, Saul and his 600 men were camped on the outskirts of Gibeah, around the pomegranate tree[a] at Migron. Among Saul's men was Ahijah the priest, who was wearing the ephod, the priestly vest. Ahijah was the son of Ithabod's brother Ahitub, son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest of the Lord who had served at Shiloh. No one realized that Jonathan had left the Israelite camp. To reach the Philistine outpost, Jonathan had to go down between two rocky cliffs that were called Bozez and Seneh. The cliff on the north was in front of Micmash, and the one on the south was in front of Geba. "Let's go across to the outpost of those pagans," Jonathan said to his armor bearer. "Perhaps the Lord will help us, for nothing can hinder the Lord. He can win a battle whether he has many warriors or only a few!"

Question: What are we trying that is impossible by worldly standards?

We will go where people are not willing to go and reach people that other people are not willing to reach.

Daring, willing to try anything. Willing to pray anything. Praying for some free land. Praying for a free house to turn into Intern Headquarters.

Mark Batterson and NCC say it like this: Everything is an experiment. Don't be afraid to try something new.

Question: What are attempting that is impossible by worldly standards?

TEACH FOR LIFE CHANGE

What we think matters far less than what God says.

"You will know the truth and the truth will set you free." – John 8:32

The goal is life change, not information transfer. Are people applying what they learn or just collecting information?

Qualities of an effective sermon

1. Biblically based
2. Relevant application (could give a passionate, truthful sermon on washing machine repair and not many people would care because that doesn't apply to their lives)
3. Clear action step (makes it sticky)
4. Authentic delivery (personality)

5. Humor

Engaging people with the Bible

- Help get it in their hands.
- Encourage them to read daily.
- Use text messaging.
- Creative sermon illustrations.

Teaching for life change isn't limited to Sunday morning.

Question: How can we make our messages stick better?

INTENTIONALLY DEVELOP LEADERS

Leaders will not follow non-leaders.

Our job as staff is to equip our volunteer leaders.

Our volunteers don't serve us; we serve our volunteers.

- Get to know people personally (when personal lives are going well, professional lives usually follow). People won't work with you if they don't like you.
- Ask their opinions. The people in the system are often the best ones to improve the system.
- Tell them how they are doing. Leaders crave feedback, because they want to keep getting better.
- Be clear about what you are asking them to do. (Is there a page) Sometimes people drop the ball because they didn't know exactly where to take it.
- Provide training and resources (ask them what they want to learn). Atlanta is conference headquarters.

Self Development

- Intentionally develop yourself. Leaders will not follow non-leaders
- Spend time with people who have something to teach
- There is no Obi-Wan Kenobi
- Leaders read books, even when they don't have time. Read 100 books on the subject you want to become an expert in.

Appreciation, Recognition and Encouragement = Free Fuel.

- Appreciation – write thank you notes
- Recognition – catch people doing something good, recognize people publically.
- Encouragement – the take five principle: Something that takes five minutes can make a huge difference in the life of a volunteer or someone struggling.

People remember how you made them feel.

Question: Who are some leaders that need to be challenged to lead a higher level?

UNLEASH A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY

We must teach our people to excel in the grace of giving.

But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. - 2 Cor. 8:7

- Teach on tithing. Money series every 12-18 months.
- Remind people why we give on Sundays through giving emphasis, personal stories, and ministry highlights. Videos from church plants that we support. Let their stories become our stories.
- Lead people through Dave Ramsey Financial Small Groups.
- Provide one on one financial coaching and free financial tools via the web.

Generous Church

- Through special events like the Egg Drop.
- Through Journey Groups serving via servecartersville.com.
- Through initiatives like Compassion Sunday and ReGift
- Through church planting support and partnerships.
- Through behindtheleaf.com where we provide resources and encouragement for church planters.

Our attitude: We can't help but help.

Long term goal: Build community partnerships with great organizations. Places like...

- The Good Neighbor Homeless Shelter
- Schools

Question: How can we serve our community better?

KEEP IT SIMPLE

THERE'S A TENDENCY TO MAKE EVERYTHING BOLD AND DRAW ATTENTION TO EVERYTHING. BUT IF EVERYTHING IS BOLD, NOTHING IS. IF EVERYTHING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING, THEN NOTHING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING. IF YOU ARE MAKING SIX ANNOUNCEMENTS, THEN YOU AREN'T MAKING ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS. YOU DON'T HAVE TO YELL ALL THE TIME. SOMETIMES, A WHISPER IS ENOUGH.

In the paragraph above, you don't know what the most important sentence is.

There's a tendency to make everything bold and draw attention to everything. **Because if everything is bold, nothing is.** If everything is the most important thing, then nothing is the most important thing. If you are making six announcements, then you aren't making any announcements. You don't have to yell all the time. Sometimes, a whisper is enough.

Read the bulletin at most churches, and you'll see a Denny's-style menu of programs and ministries. It's not uncommon for church staff to have a program or event to attend most night of a week.

Sometimes, our programs and ministries compete with each other. Think about the churches that have adult Sunday School on Sunday morning and provide children's programming to kids. Do you want adults to volunteer with children or be a part of a Sunday school class.

We choose to say no to good things so we can say yes to the best things. We choose not to give \$10 to every worthy organization so we can focus our financial support on a few groups. We choose not to start lots of good ministry, so we can focus our finances, volunteers and staff on what we believe to be the most critical ministries.

Early on in the life of our church, we identified the things that we wanted to do really well.

- Weekend Services
- Kids
- Students
- Serving the Community
- Groups

Because we want to excel in those areas, we don't do a lot of other things that many other churches do. We don't have a mid-week program for children because we invest our resources into a weekend program for children. We don't have a men's ministry, because we want men to connect on a Volunteer team. We don't have special ministries for singles, women, or seniors, because we want ministries that appeal to a broad audience.

More ministries is not always better. In many ways, we're trying to be a good steakhouse, not a buffet.

If a group of men want to get together and ride motorcycles, they don't need the church to start a ministry. If some ladies in the church want to get together for coffee, they don't need a staff member to make flyers.

We don't want our partners up at the church every night of the week. We want you to work at your job, develop relationships with your neighbors, invite your friends to church and spend time with your family.