

There is something great about living for something greater than yourself. When we live for something greater than ourselves the monotony of life is broken, and the nagging companions of discouragement and self-doubt dissipate, because we know something lies ahead that is worth sacrificing our best.

This *is* one of the fundamental appeals of Christianity. Jesus invites into a cosmic vision, a freedom that involves taking our eyes off of ourselves and putting them on him and those around us.

Today I want to invite us to collectively live for something greater than ourselves. That is what Redemption Hill is all about! God has done amazing work over the first five years of our existence (**Timeline Graphic #1 - RHC Born**), and I've never been more excited about what he will do the next five years. So rather than simply unpacking our 2016 Vision, I want to set forth a picture of what Redemption Hill is going to look like in 2020.

BUT, I believe we should look beyond ourselves, even further down the road. For God to do a great work in us, we have to be driven by a greater vision than our small piece of the puzzle. That's why I want you to dream with me about a 2050 - City Vision for a moment (**Timeline Graphic #2 - 2050**). If we are truly going to live for a mission greater than ourselves, we can't simply focus on Redemption Hill.

We came to Boston because this is the place where churches become condos and museums. Only 3% of the population attends a life-giving, gospel-centered church today. Consider this: The Global Cities Institute projects Boston will boast over 6 million people by the year 2050. If only 10% of the population attend life-giving, gospel-centered churches, that will equal 600,000! If those churches average 150 people, we will need 4,000 churches to welcome those 600,000 people. [To put that in perspective, that would be roughly 47 churches serving 7,000 people in Medford alone.]

[We definitely want more than 10%, but that would more than triple the current spiritual temperature in the city. What if one out of every 10 of your co-workers, classmates, patrons on the T possessed a vibrant relationship w Jesus.]]

I believe we should feel a responsibility to our city and the mission of God to do something about the insane deficit and see that vision come to fruition.

Why is this important? Because what we see 35 years from now will effect what we go after the next 5 years and what we envision for the next 5 years (**Timeline Graphic #3 - 2020**) will effect how we live tomorrow (**Timeline Graphic #4 -2016**).

Our goal is to build *a city within a city*. And as we glorify God by living out his mission...over the next year and five years and thirty-five years, it is our prayer that what was said of the first Christians, will be said of us.

In Acts 17, Paul and his companions were in a city called Thessalonica. As they were telling people that Jesus died for them on the cross and rose from the dead, some people who were envious of them "formed a mob and started a riot." Basically, they wanted to drive them out of the city. Look at what it says vv. 6-7

**"6 And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, 7 and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus."**

We want people to consider the city of Boston turned upside down because of the presence of Jesus in this city.

That's... **The Vision: Become a thriving, multiplying church to help turn this city upside down.**

So how will we get there? Let me share 10 pieces of our **2020 Vision** with you this morning,

## 1. Build our weekly Worship attendance to 450.

Why?

- What happens on Sunday influences the other 167 hours of our week. It is here that we celebrate the infinite depths of God's love in the death and resurrection of Christ with one collective voice.
- We want the number of people who experience Jesus with us each Sunday to climb higher and higher.
- Now, you may be asking why we care about numbers and metrics?
  - Do we hope others will look at us as a "success." This is not the Financial District.])
  - The bottom line for us is *people*. That is why we care about numbers.
  - Every number represents a person who possess infinite value to God.
- Would any of you believe it if I told you that we have seen very little growth in our average attendance over the past 18 months? It doesn't feel like it, but it's true. Let that sink in.
  - The tendency for every church, even a very young one, as they become established is to get stagnant. Let's not let that happen.
  - There are 57,000 people in this city and 318,000 people when you include the cities that border Medford. That is why we want to see *at least* 4-fitty here, and we want to build our congregation to be positioned where we can send out 30-40 people every year to help a new church get started and not skip a beat. That's for the 2050. Can you see it?

Let's Build! But how are we going to get there?

- With every single one of these . . . 2020 Starts today! No upside-down city, without being on the GRIND this week.
  - **(Timeline Graphic #5 -2016).**
  - **TIMELINE - TODAY.**
  - **Pic of calendar... for 2016**
- **We alter decades by how we live today!**
- That is why we have highlighted 5 of these pieces by breaking them down into 2016 goals.
- Grab the sheet you were given when you walked in: "Goal Possibilities for 2016"
- Why do you have this? Here's why: Because **a great vision will not happen without great action.**
- You also have a Red Crayon. Welcome back to school. Professor Turl wants you to mark any that appeal to you, that the Spirit of God is saying - "Ugh, ummm... that's you. Right there. Mark it."

For us to get to 450, it's going to start by us . . .

### 1. Build our weekly Worship attendance to 230.

#### Goal Possibilities for Action (\*POINT TO SHEET)

- **I will prioritize weekly worship and increase my attendance.**
- **I will keep invite cards on me at all times and invite someone once a week.** (That's a little crazy to me.. Okay, what about this?)
- **I will invite one friend to join me at RHC monthly.**
- **I will make a list of friends who need Jesus or a healthy church, then pray and invite.**
- **I will bring \_\_\_\_ friends with me to worship in 2016.**
- **I will bring one friend with me to NEXT in 2016.**
- **I will get here "early" (10:15) each week to help welcome guests.**

Conclusion

- God just gave us the 6<sup>th</sup> largest theater in Greater Boston to call home. Did you know that?
- We are in here so that we can watch him fill it up. You say, "You're craz-ay." I'm saying: "He's God."
- You see that ribbon back there?
  - We have it because some of you crazy people would sit in the last row if we let you. Don't lie.

- Here's the vision: one week at a time, as we extend God's love, we're going to watch him push the ribbon back. In fact, when you come in and out of this place each Sunday, just say a little prayer: God, push it back.
- I deeply believe that **growth is the natural consequence of love.**

That's step one to the upside-down city. Step 2: We will...

## 2. Launch 30 Groups with 300 people Connected.

- Why are Groups essential at RHC? Let me just tell you what you've told me: "I love Groups...
  - "... because it is a place to come and ask the hard question and be real with no judgment."
  - "... because the people inspire me to dive deeper into the word (and they are just plain awesome)." - (Shake that dust off your shoulder)
  - "... because of how encouraged I am when I hear how God is working in the lives of others."
  - "... because I'm learning that I can't truly love people on my own and the part we have in one another's story."
- Sunday is great, but it's not enough...

So what action can you take to be a part of...

### 2. Launch 15 Groups with 150 people Connected.

#### Goal Possibilities for Action

- **I will visit a Group at least 3 times.**
- **I will grab a meal with friends in my Group monthly.**
- **I will open my home to host a Group.**
- **I will pursue a discipling relationship with someone in my Group.**
- **I will get to know my neighbors and invite them to a Group event.**
- **I will bring someone new to RHC with me to Group this year.**

*T: We not only want to see everyone **connect with a Group** [we also want to see everyone] and **serve with a Team.***

## 3. Commission 300 people to Serve with a Team.

Why?

- Here's a reason: You were made for this! Just go do something kind for someone and see if you feel bad about it afterward? You won't. You will feel satisfied, fulfilled. Why? Because you were made for this.
- We all have different gifts, passions, and experiences we can leverage for the good of others and the glory of God.
- I know some of you guys got skills and you being stingy with em! :) Just don't let Reddy see you flex your skills around here. He will put you in a headlock and get you serving on a Team.
- Listen, you don't have to be Mother Teresa to serve with Redemption Kids. We prefer that you kind of like kids, but even if you don't, :) there's probably something we can get you to do (Setup/Security).
- You don't have to be the Tom Brady of First Impression. If you can spread a smile or two, we'll sign you up!

T: Before the year ends... we are going to

### 3. Commission 150 people to Serve with a Team.

What's your step to be one of the one-fifty?

#### **Goal Possibilities for Action**

- **I will schedule a SHAPE assessment to explore how I can serve others.**
- **I will shadow a Serve Team to explore where I fit.**
- **I will join the \_\_\_\_\_ (Redemption Kids, First Impressions, Music, A/V, Venue) Team and faithfully Serve once a month when I'm scheduled.**
- **I will serve with our community serve efforts in Medford/Arlington**

Red Crayon... Fill em up! #4. We will...

#### **4. Grow our Covenant Family to 225 meaningful Members. (QUICKER)**

Why Membership?

- Our members are the backbone of Redemption Hill. They take the lead in serving, and they take the lead in leading.
- Under the direction and personal care of our pastors, they set the trajectory of our church through their collected wisdom and service.
- When needs arise and leadership gaps open, the pastors go to our members.
- I hope many of you take the next step - beyond Groups and Teams - to join the covenant family and join the mission of RHC this year!

T: Now we come to multiplication (RHC Discipleship Strategy). We're going to come back to #5 at the end, so let's turn our attention to...

#### **6. Multiply 100+ diverse Leaders in RHC & 3 new Churches in Boston.**

- Question: What happens when we see more people coming on Sundays, and more of those people connecting with Groups and Serving with Teams?
- We need more Groups, which means we need more leaders for those groups.
- We have greater capacity to create more teams, which means we need more leaders for those teams.
- We have more people to lead and care for and counsel and teach and, which means we need more pastors.
- We have more needs *and* more opportunities, which means we need more leader servants, known as deacons.

Not only that, we have greater capacity to start more new churches.

- We came here to start churches, not *a* church.
- So excited about what God is doing through the Sanders Family and our Arlington plant, Redeeming Grace Church! We have already had 4 people join their Core Team and expect that number to grow.
- As we add 3 healthy churches over the next five years, we will be in a greater position to multiply. Because we will be starting churches that also want to start other churches.

T: What else?

#### **7. Send 25% of RHC on short & long-term Mission assignments.**

- We came to Boston because the world studies, works, and plays in Boston. If you reach Boston, you can reach the world. Did you know that kids from 68 different birth countries walk the halls of Medford High School. That's what I'm talking about.
- This is really simple: God's heart is global.

- We have a mission strategy to go to the “unreached and unengaged” peoples in the world *and* to go “underserved” areas in North America outside of Boston (NYC, Toronto).
- Our dream is to send 25% of our congregation on mission assignments every year.
  - This could entail a) being sent to help a new church in Greater Boston,
  - b) going on a short-term trip or long-term assignment; OR
  - c) being sent out as a member from Redemption Hill to another part of the country or globe to live like a missionary wherever God sends you.
- Jesus said in **John 20:21: “As the Father sent me, I am sending you.”**

## 8. Equip 25% of RHC to benefit from discipling relationships.

Why?

- The New Year often means the pursuit of the “New You.” How many of you looked in the mirror and said: “I need to lose a couple. I’m not as ripped as I used to be.” No hands, but let’s be real with one another.
- People who want to get in shape often invest time with a Personal Trainer.
- Jesus was the greatest Spiritual - Personal Trainer the world has ever known, and those he trained, he told to train others, who trained others who trained others.
- That’s what we emulate here.
- Sundays, and even Groups, are not really enough. Ideally, we break it down into groups of 2 or 3 or 4, to become mature and multiplying followers of Jesus.

T: Get with Pastor Jon Chasteen. He’ll hook you up with a trainer! #9. Let’s talk finances... As a new church, one of our most important steps is...

## 9. Become [totally] financially self-sustaining by 2019.

- Though ministry is all about people. We need resources and structures to keep the mission to people going.
- A very helpful analogy by a couple of Australian pastors is that of a Trellis and a Vine.
  - They say helping people grow to all God wants to be through the Word and Spirit is vine work.
  - BUT a vine can only grow in a healthy and expansive manner if it is supported by the Trellis that holds it up. In the church, trellis work is administrative structures, Sunday morning details - like setup, and even Financial Ministry Plans.

T: This year, we have set a goal for our congregation to....

### 4. Give \$360,000 to God’s Mission through Redemption Hill.

How can you be a part of such a massive goal?

#### Goal Possibilities for Action

- **I will plan my personal budget and set a goal of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for 2016 giving.**
  - “A failure to plan is a plan to fail,” eh? Budgeting is not my favorite thing, but it enables Marsha & I to be more generous to kingdom ventures like this.
- **I will strive to give at least 10% of my income this year.**
- **I will increase my giving to serve more people and start more churches.**
- **I will begin systematic recurring gifts (weekly/monthly) through PushPay.**
  - We’re making it easy for you... I gave last week in 15 seconds. No joke.

## 10. See over 80% of RHC living in Medford or a border city.

- This one is huge... We moved to Medford to reach Medford. We're in the city, for the city.
- We long for the day when the streets of Medford are filled with joy, because of the difference they find in Jesus.
- In short, we are working for the SHALOM of our city.
- As more people live in Medford or a border city, we enhance our ability to serve, and build relationships, and be on mission as a city within a city.
- NOW, if you live outside of Medford or a border city, like about 40% of our church does, here's some good news! We LOVE you. We have always had and always will have people who come to RHC from "border cities of border cities." Catch that?
  - Because of relationship.
  - Because of mission & vision
- So please, stick around! But also... Please consider moving here.

Here's the ask:

- If you're staying in Boston, why not move to Medford (like John & Teresa Reddy are planning to do this year!, thank you very much). AND If you're staying in America, why not stay in Boston.
- God has already placed you right in the middle of one of the greatest mission fields on the planet.
- So put down some roots and let's be about the upside-down mission of God in this city and then from this city, change the world.

T: Finally, and we all have to be in on this one. We will...

## 5. Celebrate 30-50 people each year becoming new followers of Jesus.

Why?

- How backwards would it be for us to have found the greatest gift the world has ever known *and* then turn around and say. For me. Not you!
- We need a culture shift in our church and it's gotta start with me. . .
  - From cowardice to courage.
  - From caring to brokenhearted anguish. I'm serious. That's not empty rhetoric.
  - From good intentions to action.
- Yes, we understand most people are going to come to understand who Jesus is over time, and most of the time it is through close relationships.
  - We are all about being relational. We don't hand out awards to the people who make it the most awkward when talking about Jesus.
  - But we also realize our relationships are superficial and inauthentic if people don't know the most important thing about us.
  - That's all sharing the gospel is anyway. Here's the most important reality in my life, I'm desperate to let you in on this treasure.

I can't wait... to

## 5. Celebrate 35 people becoming new followers of Jesus.

### Goal Possibilities for Action

- **I will bring one friend to an Explore Group this year.**
- **I will give a Bible or other resource to a \_\_\_ friend(s) to discuss.**
- **I will learn to how to share my testimony and share it with (#\_\_\_) of friends.**
- **I will grab lunch with a co-worker once a month.**
- **I will create opportunities to tell \_\_\_ friend(s) (each week/month; this year) about Jesus.**
- **I will meet with Kevin Sanders to explore ways to help our Arlington plant.**

- **I will engage in (#\_\_\_) kingdom imprints this year to display and declare the gospel.**
- **I will start a prayer group that is focused on praying for this vision.** (Hannah story).
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That's the vision! A balance between realism and audacity *and* a recognition that vision must be accompanied with action.

Here's the question: **What kind of culture do we need to see God build to realize this Vision?**

Building a City within a City... is about **BUILDing. & CELEBRATE**

This is how we will work it out....

**BEHOLDING the glory of JESUS as a  
UNIFIED family, we will  
INTENTIONALLY  
LOVE all people completely  
DEPENDENT on his Grace exercising Audacious Faith**

And then...

**CELEBRATE** - HEAR HEAR.... every step of that way as God does his great work.

- Who wears the biggest smile in heaven? Not a trick question.
- Raise the Glass.... "Hear Hear!" Salute to God and his Work & This is how we study his works.

CONCLUSION:

- I discovered one of the ways we're going to celebrate this year when I was hanging out with my 4 & 7 year old over Christmas.
- Over Christmas, Parker and Kesed wanted to color some pictures. No big deal for super-dad... Here's what I came up with: **PIC of Thermometer...**
- I would love for you, either right now, or later today, or this week (perhaps in your GROUP) identify 3 goals that you want to watch the temperature rise, with God's help. You can take some of our suggestions or create your own.
- It doesn't matter if your goal measures one or one-hundred. It's all about taking the steps God is leading us to take together.
- Break out your Red Crayon and let's ask God to do his great work of turning this city-upside down!

We gotta pray for this: desperately dependent on his grace with audacious faith.

PRAYER:

- If we're screaming: "Jesus change this city!" He's looking right back at us and saying: "what you gonna do about it?"
- This will be fueled by our pursuit of you - devotion to delightful duty