



- **Did you know that it was only 10 months ago, right here on this stage at the August congregational meeting, Pastor Gary shared with us a powerful and moving Vision that we as staff, elders, pastors, and SGLs felt strongly that God was leading us to pursue as a church family for the next 3 years, Vision 2019...**
- **READ SLIDE...**
- **In the past, we as a church family have pursued different 3yr visions together, FROM THE MEN UP, FROM THE CHURCH OUT, GROWING DISCIPLES THROUGH SMALL GROUPS, and now we are turned outward again, toward our communities, the ones that we have already been sovereignly placed in by God...**

- **It's not just one community. It's many communities (PLURAL) that we are all a part of individually...yes, it's the larger community, but it's also who you go out to coffee with, the softball team you play on, the quilting group you are a member of, the school you go to, the place where you shop most often, your neighborhood that you live in, your workplace, your co-op, the board you serve on, the golf league you joined, you name it....wherever you encounter other people on a consistent basis...that's your community...a people group...**
- **TR: So our vision for the next two years, more specifically is this...**

*Seeking to win and grow disciples who show allegiance to Jesus Christ,
the Christ-followers of Trinity Fellowship will*

MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY



OUR COMMUNITIES

*We will seek the welfare of the communities
we are part of individually. We will do this intentionally,
even at great cost, as we courageously advance the Gospel.*

*Together, striving side by side with one heart and mind,
our small groups will lead us with the encouragement and equipping
needed to boldly go into our communities.*

READ SLIDE

**What a big vision for our church family, that now consists of
Two Campuses...**

- **HOW** are we supposed to live this out? **WHAT** does this really look like for each of us?
- Well, for the next **THREE Weeks**, that's what I want to focus on...how to live and pursue this vision more individually and as a church family.
- Ultimately, this vision is nothing new...It's what Christ commanded us to do in His Great Commission, the last words he had for His disciples before he left this earth...

- “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations (ALL COMMUNITIES), all people groups, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

TR: Go INto all communities, quilting groups, sports teams, golf leagues, clubs, grocery stores, neighborhoods, co-ops, schools, churches, and BE Salt. Be light in them...



... Jesus said those words to his disciples, but hear Him saying them personally to you today...

- **YOU are the SALT of the EARTH...**
- **YOU are the LIGHT of the WORLD...**
- **“Let your LIGHT SHINE before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”**
- **Essentially, Vision 2019 is simply a call back to live out Jesus’ Vision for us His followers...**

TR: ...to make disciples of all communities, to be salt and light

in a decaying and dark world, and I think it can all be summed up in the phrase GOSPEL INFLUENCE...



...Every ONE of you has influence, the capacity to have an effect on someone, whether for good or for bad, intentional or unintentional...

- As the Global Leadership Summit highlights every year...Everyone is a leader, because leadership is influence, and EVERYONE HAS INFLUENCE.**
- The question is, do you have Gospel Influence?**
- TR: Well, you might be asking, Patrick what do you mean exactly by Gospel INfluence?**

WHAT IS IT?

...WHAT IS IT?

TR: Basically, ...

It is connecting God's story (the Good News of Jesus) to your story and to others' stories, in the context of relationship, as led by the Holy Spirit.

...READ SLIDE...

- **Even more simply, it's pointing people to the good news of Jesus, specifically HOW Jesus is good news to them in their unique context and what they're going through in life...**

TR: So, who's it for?

WHO IS IT FOR?

...Who is all this pointing to Jesus for? All this making disciples and being salt and light? Who needs to have their story connected back to God's story in the context of relationship as led by the Holy Spirit?

TR: Just who exactly are we talking about right now?

EVERYONE.

EVERYONE, PERIOD.

- **I'll be the first to admit that I need Gospel Influence in my life...**
- **I think we can't miss this important point about the Vision 2019, and that is that we need it first. We need to make the most of every opportunity to grow as disciples in this community, our church family (BR and NWG), intentionally, generously, courageously, and together.**
- **We need to be salt and light to one another, in the decay and darkness that exists in some of our marriages, our broken relationships and unforgiveness, our sinful addictions, our selfish and prideful ways.**

- **We desperately and daily need Gospel Influence in our own lives, before we even think about seeking to bring Gospel INfluence IN our communities.**
- **Let me give you an example in my own life how I've needed to hear how Jesus is good news in my own life recently... (Nurse Sue – It's HIS Church.)**
- **TR: So...**

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

...why is Gospel Influence so important, why vision 2019, why Jesus' vision of salt and light and commission of making disciples?...

There are DEAD people who need to be RAISED, and there are RAISED people who are living like they're DEAD.

Because, READ SLIDE...

- **There are many in our communities and some of you listening today who are dead spiritually on the inside, and you need to be raised. You desperately need to hear how Jesus is good news for your life today, how he can mend your brokenness, heal your pain, fill your emptiness, give you joy instead of mourning, give you rest in the midst of your chaos, and is the only one worth surrendering everything to in order to discover what you were made for.**
- **AND there are some of you who have been raised and who are in Christ, but there are areas of your life where you're living like you're dead, and you need to hear again the same good news of Jesus...and all that you're trying to do apart from him in your own strength is futile. You can't save your**

marriage, your family, yourself from your addictions...Only IN Christ and in His grace, power, wisdom, and strength.

- **So, we need this vision and influence in our lives and church family as much as anyone in our communities needs it.**
- **TR: So, how do we start living this out better in our church and in our communities?**

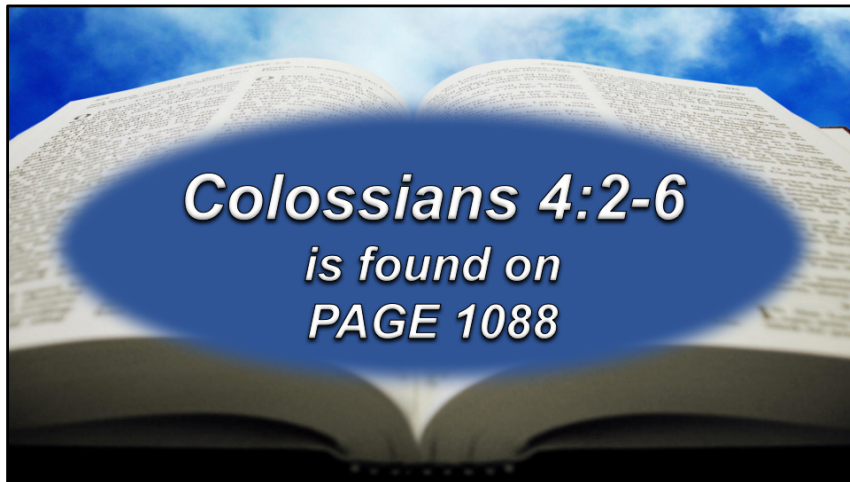
Gospel INTENTIONALITY –

**“with Christ-centered
purpose”**

**. . . I believe it starts with INTentionality...Gospel
Intentionality...**

**...Having Christ-centered Purpose in WHAT we PRAY and HOW
we LIVE...**

TR: Turn with me to Colossians 4:2-6...



Colossians 4:2-6
is found on
PAGE 1088

. . . Just to give a little context...The apostle Paul is writing to the Colossian Church while in Prison, likely in Rome...So, his community that he is IN is prison, which includes those he is in prison with and those who are guarding him there...

- I'm just going to read it straight through all at once, and then we'll go ahead and break it down after...**

READ PASSAGE – ALL OF IT...

Colossians 4:2

²Continue steadfastly in prayer,
being watchful in it with
thanksgiving.

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Gospel Influence begins with being...

Gospel INTENTIONALITY
PRAYERFUL (v.2)

. . . Intentionally Prayerful...

...praying steadfastly with an Attentiveness to what God is doing AND a Thanksgiving for what He has done.

- **The focus of our prayers ought not to be on us, but rather on Him...NOT us telling Him what our desires are (He already knows them anyway), but rather us asking Him what His desires are for us and being attentive to them...doing more listening than talking.**
- **Prayer is simply communion with the Lord, and the words are simply a vehicle for it to take place...It matters more where our heart and mind are. Are they attentive? Are they grateful?**

TR: So, what does Paul pray for and ask for prayer for when he does use words?

Colossians 4:3-4

³At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— ⁴that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

ESV

READ SLIDE**TR: He asks the Colossians to pray. . .**

Gospel INTENTIONALITY

PRAYERFUL (v.2)

- *That God would OPEN the DOORS (v.3)*

. . . READ SLIDE...

- Isn't it interesting that Paul prays for "Open Doors" for the good news of Jesus to come through...
- He's in Prison...wouldn't you think one of his prayer requests would be, "Open the doors so I can get out of here!" ...
- But no, it's the opposite, "May God open the doors so that the Word may come in" ...NOT that he would be able to flee his community...but that Jesus would enter his community.
- For all of us, another important point we need to recognize is that it is God who opens the doors...
- He is the one who softens the hearts, opens the eyes, makes

the connections, and sets up the divine appointments.

TR: Even though God is the primary agent, he does choose to use us to bring Gospel Influence through Jesus, and so Paul also prays...

Gospel INTENTIONALITY

PRAYERFUL (v.2)

- *That God would OPEN the DOORS (v.3)*
- *That Christ would be MADE CLEAR (v.4)*

. . . READ SLIDE...

- That how he speaks about who Jesus is and about how Jesus is good news to his hearers, that that would be made crystal clear to them.
- The prayer is for clarity here, not necessarily receptivity. Once Christ is made clear, some will receive Him, some will reject Him (hence Paul in prison), and some will simply want to explore more. While God is sovereign in all things and works in peoples' hearts, everyone still has a choice of whether to surrender to Him or not.
- We're not responsible for peoples' decisions in our church or in our communities, but may God grant us the understanding and ability to speak Christ clearly to each

person.

-

TR: Well, Gospel Influence starts not just with intentional prayer, but also with being intentional in how we live...

**Gospel INTENTIONALITY
INCARNATIONAL (John 1:14)**

18

. . . Being INcarnational...

- **Incarnate literally means “in flesh,” and it’s a term that’s been used throughout church history to describe Jesus...That God came down from heaven and took on flesh, being fully God and fully man.**
- **John 1:14 says this...**

John 1:14

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

ESV

READ SLIDE

- **The Word, being Jesus, being God, Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, became Creature/Man and dwelt among us.**
- **He came to our level to understand us, to know what we go through, to breath our air, eat our food, experience hunger, pain, suffering, joy, laughter, tears, temptation, friendship, family, betrayal, all of it...because he is so crazy in love with us...you've got to be crazy to give up heaven even for a second to come down and be with us, let alone go to the cross for us and bear every sin of every person on earth, past, present, and future...but that's our God.**

TR: I love how Eugene Peterson states it in the Message. . .

Eugene Peterson (The Message)

“The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood...”

. . . READ SLIDE

- **So, INcarnational is a way to describe how we intentionally ought to live...JUST AS Jesus moved into our neighborhood, so we too ought to move into others’ neighborhoods...**
- **For example, I served with Young Life for a number of years, and this was the driving vision for ministry, that we would Not ask kids to come to us where we were, but rather we would “move into their neighborhood” by going where they were, understanding what their world was like, learning who they were, what their story was, so that we might be able to make clearer Jesus in the context of their world.**
- **With me being the campus pastor now at Trinity|Newaygo, Incarnational has a very practical application for me, and**

that's moving into Newaygo county...which we're going to do on July 15. To make the most of every opportunity in that community, I needed to, I wanted to literally move into that community, that region, that world.

- **Incarnational can also be a mindset or attitude (Not always a literal moving)...At the core, it's really one of humility...seeking to understand first before being understood...entering into someone's story (hearing it fully) before interjecting your own or even God's. It's a combination of walking wisely and humbly.**

TR: Going back to Colossians 4, Paul writes in verses 5 and 6...

Colossians 4:5-6

⁵Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: . . . These are commands and exhortations from Paul here, but I say let these be our prayer as well...

Gospel INTENTIONALITY

INCARNATIONAL (John 1:14)

- *That we would WALK WISELY through the doors (v.5)*

- **First, that we would WALK WISELY through the doors that God opens for us...the doors that we prayed he would open.**
- **What's it mean to walk wisely?**

TR: Well in part, what immediately follows it is “making the best use of the time” or as Eugene Peterson phrases it...

Eugene Peterson (The Message)

**“...Make the Most of
Every Opportunity.”**

. . . READ SLIDE

- **Essentially, Make the Most of Every OPEN DOOR...Wisdom says “Hey, walk through the door that God just opened for you here.”**
- **Wisdom is also...**

Gospel INTENTIONALITY

INCARNATIONAL (John 1:14)

- *That we would WALK WISELY through the doors (v.5)*
- *That we would SPEAK GRACIOUSLY the truth (v.6)*

. . . Speaking GRACIOUSLY the truth

- At the heart of being INcarnational like Jesus is being full of grace and truth.
- To sum it all up, May God open doors for us with people, and may He grant us the wisdom to make the most of the open doors he gives us and the wisdom to speak Christ clearly full of Grace and truth.
- Why seek to pray all this?
- Because there are dead people walking who need to be raised, and raised people who are living like they're dead.

TR: Do you want to see greater Gospel Influence in your communities and dead people raised and raised people awakened?

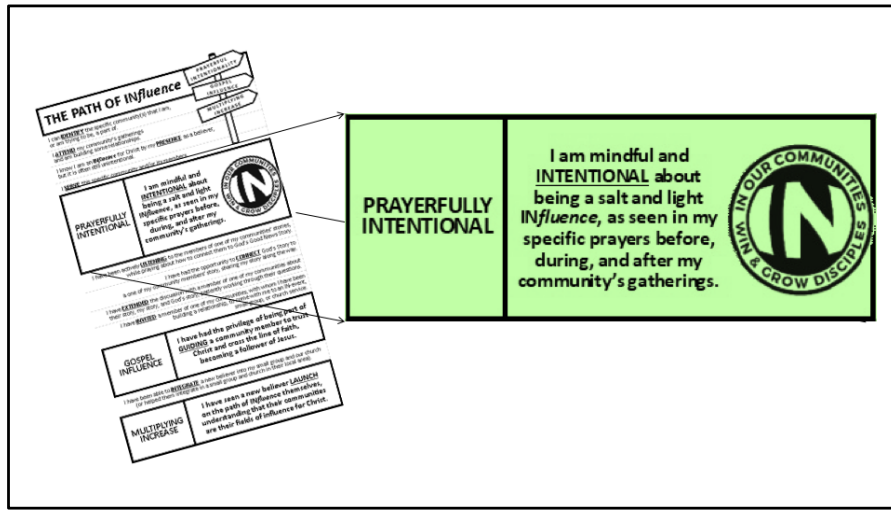
In order to see greater

IN^{GOSPEL}*fluence*

IN your community...

Will you PRAY?

Well, it starts with prayer, so will you pray?



- I think intentional prayer is the foundation and beginning point of what it means to truly be IN our communities.
- If you take out the insert in your worship flyer, you'll find a tool that Pastor Gary and the staff developed to help us better discern how we're doing in living the Vision of being IN our communities...
- We call it the path of Influence, and these are some of the steps that we take with a person on that path of influencing someone for Christ.
- There are THREE major signposts that point us along on this path, the FIRST being intentional prayer...toward gospel influence (what we're focusing on now), the SECOND being

Gospel Influence...actually having opportunity to hear someone's story and connect it clearly with God's story (what we'll focus on more next week), and finally the THIRD, seeing multiplying increase...seeing a new believer now launch on the path of influence with someone else...disciples who make disciples who make disciples...

TR: So, we start with the first, Intentional Prayer...and I thought of THREE areas in particular in which we interact with our various communities...

Will you PRAY...

- Before you POST?
(Social Media, E-mail, Text)

Will you pray before you post?

- **Many of our communities are online now, and instead of posting like the rest of the world posts, will you pray before you post that God would open doors, that Christ would be made clear, that you post wisely, full of grace and truth?**

TR: Will you pray before...

Will you PRAY...

- Before you POST?
(Social Media, E-mail, Text)
- Before you PARTICIPATE?
(Meetings, Social Gatherings, Events)

...you participate?

- **Whether it's a meeting, sporting event, going to work, neighborhood BBQ, community event, parade, or even a picnic?**
- **The final night of Greater Days is tomorrow night, and it is the perfect Open Door for our church family to make the most of. Come and Join us in praying that Christ would be made clear and that we all speak of Him to every child, parent, and guardian graciously and truthfully.**

TR: Finally, will you pray...

Will you PRAY...

- Before you POST?
(Social Media, E-mail, Text)
- Before you PARTICIPATE?
(Meetings, Social Gatherings, Events)
- Before you PLAY?
(Vacation, Hobbies, Sports)

...even before you PLAY?

- **That even on vacation you would pray for God to open doors for Christ to be made clear, and that you would speak graciously and truthfully of Him wherever you go. Could be at the restaurant, on the plane, waiting in line for something, wherever...I think especially at restaurants and in grocery stores on Sundays, when it's typically a dead give-away where you just came from (because of how you're dressed)...**

TR: Join me this Summer...



. . . in seeking and praying that we each would have Greater Gospel INfluence in our communities, and have the joy of pointing someone to the only One who can raise the dead, and truly transform a life...

Let's start now and pray...

END