

LOOK FORWARD 2022

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Eddie Williams

Deuteronomy 6: 1-8

We're going to read scripture from Deuteronomy chapter 6 verses 1-8. "Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the rules that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you that you may do them in the land to which you are going over to possess it; that you may fear the Lord your God, you, and your son, and your son's son by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you all the days of your life; and that your days may be long. Hear therefore, O Israel. Be careful to do them, that it may go well with you. And that you may multiply greatly as the Lord, the God of your fathers has promised you in a land flowing with milk and honey. Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes." This is the word of the Lord. Please be seated.

Well, good afternoon, good evening, everybody. My name is Eddie. I'm the lead teaching pastor here. If you are new so glad you guys could all join us. This Sunday is a special Sunday for Doxa. It's a really special Sunday. It's called our Look Forward Sunday, where we get to begin to think about what God is calling Doxa to do as a church going forward for all of 2022. So it's going to function a little differently and I'm going to need your help, going to need your participation. Not in the way of, you know, sort of like you're going to come up here like Nickelodeon and get slimed or something like that-not like that. Just be present and be engaged because I think you're going to like what we talk about this evening. So let me pray for us and we'll get started.

Lord Jesus, it's not lost on me the privilege of being up here before a great church, before Doxa. And so I ask for your provision this afternoon, Lord, for your Holy Spirit to cover me as I speak. Lord God, I pray for your provision for Doxa over the next 360 plus days going forward for this year. Lord God, would you provide, would you protect. Lord, I pray for a hedge of protection around the pulpit as I preach; Lord, a hedge of protection around the people of Doxa as they serve in their homes and in their communities, Lord God. This is going to be a year where you provide and where you demonstrate your power and your glory. And so Lord God, I ask that their loins be girded up, that they be ready, that they be excited, but they be protected by you and your Spirit. We love you and it's all about you. In his name. Amen.

Again, I am honored to be with you. This is my first Look Forward for Doxa, being a part of the team, because Doxa is six years old going on seven years old and this is my very first one that I get to do. Pastor Jeff has done the ones in the past and I'm excited to be here. And this is exciting. And Doxa has been on a journey for sure over the last six years. And I've gotten to see it from afar, but I've also gotten to participate since I've been here. It's been quite a journey-amazing six years filled with transition and fun and healing and challenges and victories, all of these different things, ups and downs, and yet here we are. Here we are and I don't know about you, but for me, my short ride with Doxa since I've been here has been filled with a lot of like the first one I said, transition-new leaders, me, I'm new, there's more leaders to come, new leaders. You've seen some people leave Doxa. You've seen people join Doxa. So lots of different transitions that's taking both.

You also know that we're transitioning from a building downtown Bellevue to a building in Redmond Lots of transitions happening. I don't know if you felt that. Anyone felt that -lot of transition? Yeah. Some of you like, it's okay, you can raise your hand. Yes, exactly. Me too. Because that's what it's been like all since I've been here. Now, I've been thinking about this and praying about it, what it means to be in transition. And I wouldn't be discouraged by transition. I know transitions often a time for people to reevaluate. Like it's an opportunity for people to reevaluate where they're at in their lives. And maybe this isn't for me, and maybe this is my stop on the train so to speak and it's time for me to get off and others to get on, and what have you. Right?

But transition has always been a part of building a church. It's always been a part of it. It's never not been a part of it. You know, all transition really means is that we're going somewhere. It means that God is leading us somewhere and there are decisions to be made. There are things that will happen that will cause more transition. It means that God is moving us. It means that is redirecting us. And it's also, like I said, a large part of building a church. You know, experts actually say that establishing a church is a lot like building a plane in the air. You're already doing the thing that you're trying to build. So there's a large chance that there's going to be some chaos in the air, right? And that's what we're doing. We are building a plane in the air. And maybe you look around at this big building and you think Doxa is not in transition. I mean, look at this cushy house. Oh, we'll get to that in a second. But we are absolutely very much in

transition. And again, I would not be discouraged by that because this is part of building a church.

Experts also say that it takes ten years to establish your average church. Doxa is headed into year seven, very much still not established. It's still working towards that. Now this means that fundamentally we're in the research and development phase. We are in the sort of trial and error, the R & D phase of churching. Okay. That's what it means. This means though, that we should be gracious to ourselves. Imagine someone going into an R & D, a research and development for a product or for let's say a plane, and every time it failed, they got angry at themselves, or got mad, or wanted to quit the team. How silly would that be? Well, if you knew it was an R and D you knew that by design, there's going to be some failures. There's going to be some trials, right?

And by design churches are in this period where it takes a long time to sort of get things going. And that's where we find ourselves in. And by the way, this is true for all churches. All of them. Every church that's ever existed takes around a decade to figure out its groove. So if you find a church, Doxa included, that's a little too polished, a little too early, there is something you're missing; either there's a disconnect in the communication, or there's something you actually just aren't seeing. So that's encouraging to be where Doxa is. That means that the challenges and the movement that we're on is all a part of the process. And this is exciting. So this evening you are going hear some really new and quite honestly, really cool updates and initiatives that Doxa is undertaking, but I don't want you to get lost in those things and forget really what churches are going to go through in the trial and error, but also why churches exist in the first place.

So before we get started, I want to offer you two things. Okay? The first thing I want to offer you, I'm going to be sharing what I'm sharing with you about Doxa's future, not so you would know what Doxa is doing, but that so you would participate in what Doxa is doing. Do you understand? I want you to come along with me. I don't want spectatorship for you. I want participation for you because there's a lot of great stuff coming. And second thing, I don't want you to miss forest for the trees. There is a reason we are all here and there's a lot of great things I'm going to talk about and a lot of great things I'm going to announce, but there is a really important reason why churches actually exist. And it's not for programs. It's not for buildings and it's not for cool ministry stuff or whatever it is. YouTube channels. Not for any of that stuff. It's for Jesus. A church fundamentally exists for its creator. Okay? So our church is the means by which we hold, one of the ways by which we hold, relationship with our God. So Doxa is a church about Jesus, and for Jesus, that serves Jesus. And so before we get all caught up in everything else, we're all about Jesus.

So what is most important as we unfold, all of these different things, and we're about to talk about all this great stuff. What is deeply most important? Well, I want to tell you about something called the Shema. Now you heard Habby read the text in Deuteronomy chapter six, and we just heard a very important text read. And if we focus in on the verses four and five of chapter six, we're essentially plucking out what Jewish traditions call the Shema. Now in the

Shema in Jewish traditions, this was prayed once a morning and once in the evening. And the reason why they did that was it acted as sort of like a pledge; think of a pledge of allegiance and a song of praise combined. It's like a pledge of allegiance and a song of praise combined. And that's what they were doing. They were worshiping and they were also pledging their obedience and their whole self to God. That's what they did.

So let me read it for you. So you can get more of a bigger glimpse and a broader glimpse of what I'm talking about. Let's do Deuteronomy chapter six versus four and five. It says this, hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. Okay. Now the word Shema translates roughly to listen or hear-the first word in that you heard it say hear O Israel. "Hear," that's what that word Shema means. Now in this part of Deuteronomy, this early section of Deuteronomy spoken by Moses, in this section, Moses is actually challenging God's people with his wisdom and warning because he doesn't want the Israelites to sort of repeat the mistakes of their parents, all of their ancestors before them. And by the way, their ancestors messed up a lot. They had been wandering in the desert for 40 years and Moses does not want them to repeat that. So, so, instead he invites Israel to respond to God's grace and mercy on their lives with love and devotion of their whole self-everything they are, everything they are-worship God. Don't get caught up in the sort of legalism of the law. Don't get caught up in who said what in the desert. Worship the Lord your God with everything you are.

Now, these words here that I read, the Bible is not sort of random in the way it's structured and it's not random in the way the words are put together, right? The Bible says that all scripture is breathed by God and profitable for teaching, correction, or reproof, training and righteousness. That means that God has uniquely breathed out-"theopneutos"-he's breathed out his word into these words for us to read. And all of them are intelligently placed where they are. And so there are three specific words that it says in the Shema that we're supposed to worship God with. And it's this, the heart, the soul, and you remember the last one, strength, right? Heart, soul, strength. Now, if you've heard this before, but you like, don't remember reading Deuteronomy because that's too deep in the Bible for you to go. You have read it before because Jesus actually repeats the Shema three times across the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. He does it three times. And so I want to read one interaction with you that Jesus has reading the Shema and it's going to frame up our time nicely together. It's going to be in Mark chapter 12 versus 28-31.

It says this, "And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another. And seeing that he answered them well asked him which commandment is most important of all. And Jesus answered. The most important is, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. And the second is this. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." Now, if you read that you thought, and you're really, really paying attention, you heard that Jesus kind of tweaked the Shema didn't he? He tweaked it. He added a word. He said, heart. He said soul. He said strength. And he added one other thing. You catch it? Mind. Yeah. Yeah. He added mind.

Jesus adds this mind piece to sort of cement, to demonstrate the depth of commitment it's going to take to worship God with everything you are.

So, he names all of these things together to say if you want to worship me, what's the most important thing you have to do. You've got to give me everything you are. And these are the four things that sort of represent everything you are-your heart, your soul, your strength and your mind. So what does this mean? It means that the cost is high. The cost is high to follow Jesus. It means he's asking for everything. So what's the most important thing, to worship God with your entire self, and it's required. And that means your entire isn't just on Sunday. It's actually not just when other Christians around. It's also not when you feel guilty, but always, all the time. And that's very difficult. And Jesus, knowing what he knows about human history and the human soul, and the human heart, he said, oh yeah, you just have to give me everything you are. That's the most important thing. Give it all, give it all. He's demonstrating the difficulty of the call.

So God acts. He gives us his heart, his soul, his mind his strength. And then we are supposed to respond with those four things. Now, if you're a visual person, I've put together a graphic for you to take a look at, that'll help you understand this a little better. Let's throw it up there for a second. This is what I'll call the Shema graph. So there are those words there. Now, again, the Bible is intelligently designed by our creator. These four words are not an accident. All four of these words are meant to articulate something, some part, some aspect of you. And so I've structured them here. Below the line you've got your heart and your soul. And then you've got your strength and your mind above the line. Now, what does that mean? It means that what's above the line is essentially the physical, right? This is what we can see. This is what we do. Our strength, our minds, right? This is how we behave. Below the line you see what's internal, your soul, your heart, right? Your conscience. Those are the things that are below the line. And then above the line.

Think about a plant with roots, right? The roots are below the line. What's above is above, our mind and our strength. So when God transforms a believer, he doesn't just transform you above the line and that you have great behavior, but your heart's not changed. That doesn't happen. God, vice versa, doesn't just transform like your heart, like you've accepted Jesus, but then you just do whatever you want with your strength and your mind and however you want to live. He actually transforms everything you are. God is growing you both ways above and below the line. He's growing Doxa both ways above and below the line. God is doing 10,000 things in our lives, 10,000 things in our lives. And he's doing some of them above the line, and some of them below the line in our church, and in ourselves.

So to break up our time together, I'm going to share where God is taking us above the line-where are the physical, big picture things we're doing? And then below the line, what is God doing spiritually through our evangelism, through our discipleship, through our formation. That's what we're going to go through today. Now, as a reminder before you hear this stuff, as a reminder, I'm sharing about Doxa's future not so that you would know what Doxa is doing, but so that you would participate in what Doxa is doing.

Where do you see your part? Ask yourself this question. Is it going to be starting a new missional community this year, bringing people into your home for meals and community, a DNA group, going deeper with people, confessing your sins, repenting, generosity. Is it joining a team? Is there a team at Doxa that you feel like you can serve in? Is it joining our staff or for you maybe it's just, I think I need to just get to know Jesus a little more. Whatever that is, I think you're going to find your part in what we're about to talk about today. Okay.

Now permission, if something excites you, you have permission to clap. Yeah. Come on. Let's practice. Okay. Okay. Okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Because I know we're in Seattle and the Seattle freeze is real, there's no doubt about it. But global warming's taking place and it's time to thaw out a little bit. Okay. So we're going to clap and cheer only if you feel like, don't feel pressure only if you feel like you need to. You can give an "Amen". You can holler. As long as you don't stand up with a tambourine, you are good to go. Okay. But if you brought one, I mean, you got it. So let it rip. Honestly, that'd be refreshing. You have permission to clap. You have permission to "Amen". You have permission to holler if you like, because God's moving.

So what is God doing below the line first? What is he doing? Let's start slow. Let's talk below the line. What is God doing with our discipleship and spiritual formation? Let's talk about our missional communities for a second. So with our missional communities, the first thing for Doxa, its leadership, its elders, its staff, that's become clear, is that Doxa needs to double down on our vision for missional communities being a primary way we make disciples at Doxa.

Now, if you're new, you might ask like, what the heck is a missional community. That's a whole lot of jargon. Well, we believe that the way God intends his people to live and to thrive as disciples of Jesus is in the context of community. It's growing to know Jesus more in the gospel, and it's being on mission helping other people to know Jesus in our communities. And that's fundamentally what our missional communities-or you'll hear me call them "MCs" do. That's what missional communities do. So if you're looking for a place to start with Doxa, that's the place you start. You start in a place where you can be friends with people, get to know people, share meals together, enjoy other people's company. You get to go on mission, get to meet people in your community, bring them back into your missional community, to share the gospel with them, to get to know them, to serve them, to love them, to care for them.

And we're going to go deeper and learn the gospel together. That's what missional communities do. We believe that these will help essentially all of us follow Jesus in a way that's easily navigable. We want to be able to do it. And there's a plan that's attached. And you believe that even if you're not a Christian yet, we think there's ways for you to connect even in that space. So for 2022, many of you know as MC leaders, we have sort of reworked the missional community guides to help guide our MCs in prayer, in meals, in reflection and in mission a lot more clearly. So we believe that these guides are going to help make our MCs a lot more accessible to new and non-believers. We want those to be open for people to come be a part of and to participate in, to get to hear the gospel, to see radical transformation take place in their lives.

Man, I tell you the amount of people that I've seen come to know Jesus in a living room, it's just amazing to see someone get meet Christ in that sort of intimate setting. I mean, I'm thinking of a guy that I've had in our group in the past and he'd come in really resistant, young guy, single living in a big city. Comes in, doesn't want anything to do with the gospel, works for Homeland security, super private about his life-I'm going to do my thing. Hey man, why don't you just come have a steak? I guess I could have a steak. Like who's going to turn down...I swear. It's USDA prime, it'll be grass fed if you want it to be, but not if you don't. So like, if you want a grain finish, we'll make it work. Like whatever you want, we'll make it. I'll smoke it or grill it, whatever you want. And you bribe a guy like that over. He comes over, he gets to eat food. Hey, we're doing a, you know, thing next week. Ah, no, I'm good. That's fine. Hey, let's come over for dinner. Then you get to know him, get to meet the people, you get to engage with him and all of a sudden, he starts asking questions about things that are going on in your life. That's the goal. And I remember going out one night to a bar with a bunch of people that were there, and I show up with another pastor and my friend is there in the bar. And he sees me and he's not doing so well. You know, it's 11:30 I mean, which I thought was late, but I guess not for a bar. And I walk in and he immediately tries to like straighten up because he sees me and the other guy. And then after he talks to me, he's like, man, I just, I felt like I needed to be better in that moment because there's things in my life that have been going on that your presence reminded me of and I want to know more. And then all of a sudden we have a conversation and we're able to start talking about Jesus more. That's all these missional communities do is provide that.

And so what are we doing? We're making this sort of format of these be a little smoother for people to plug into. So if you are sort of along for the ride with Doxa and you haven't jumped in with this, oh man, you are missing out, right? It's like going to a theme park and not getting on any rides. That's what you're missing. This is an important part of what we're trying to do. So there's going to be a clear format. Now, one other thing that sort of goes along with helping people in our missional communities flourish, is a reworked Doxa discipleship pathway. Now I want to preface and say, I know you're all really excited, but we don't have this rolled out just yet. But here's what I can say. We want to make an easy, clear path for when someone comes to Doxa or joins Doxa through their missional community, that they're able to easily plug in and participate in the life of Doxa without such a high bar or anything being too complicated. We want people to easily plug in, right?

And so that's what we're going to do with this pathway. It's going to be laid out for people that are new believers, people that are non-believers and even seasoned believers alike, they'll all be able to find their place along this pathway and easily jump in wherever you are and use it for your growth. When people come to churches, we want people to be able to easily plug in, to find out, hey listen, what's my next step? What do I do next? Do I just keep coming to church? Do I give money? Do I join a group? Like what do I do? This pathway is going to make it incredibly clear for people regardless of where they find themselves to easily participate in. So here's what I need from you. Once that gets rolled out, I need you to be courageous. I need you to go talk to your friends about Jesus. I need you to go forth and make disciples of many nations, plugging them into Doxa, to missional communities and helping them, because we will

have the confidence to know that it's going to be incredibly clear how they continue forward in their faith-walk through this pathway.

And by the way, that's really what our great commission is, right? It's to go forth and make disciples in many nations. Now, again, I don't have it to roll out for you, but what I can say is there is one word that it will be sort of theme, the pathway. And I've already said it 50 times. I can't help myself. And it's clarity. It's going to be incredibly clear. It'll be easy for you or anyone else to jump in. Okay. All right, what's next? Let's get into some good stuff.

Now with the changing landscape and the sort of post COVID world we find ourselves in, and the sort of church attendance models, and what it looks like to be a part of a church, and transients, and people moving in and out of the region, some of you are new and some of you are getting ready to move, right? How do I plug in? What's important for a church in this season? We also do know that unfortunately you can come to church looking for sort of a message only. We don't want you to do that, but you can, and you can come to church looking for great worship music. You can also do that. Well, I don't think that's a good idea. There's more to church than that, to being a part of God's family. But you can do it. And you can also get those things on the internet, for a better or worse if that's all you're looking for you can get that on the internet.

So what is one thing we can't provide on the internet that really speaks to the sort of zeitgeist in the ethos of our area. And that's something called hospitality. Our goal this year is that we would grow in hospitality as a church family. Okay. Pop quiz. What's one thing Seattle's known for besides coffee, besides Nirvana. What's one thing Seattle's known. Someone say the Sonics?! No, not anymore. The Seattle Freeze, the Seattle Freeze. Does anyone know about that? No. If you don't know about it, it's because you're doing it and all of us are like stop, right? The Seattle Freeze. What is the Seattle Freeze if you're new to the area- it's the sort of...it's the...I don't know...maybe everyone's sort of depressed from the weather and no one's really talking to each other. There's a lack of eye contact. There's an overwhelming lack of friendliness. So when people come to the city, to our region to engage us, they get the cold shoulder from us, right?

Now for the Christian, we don't have to be known by the Seattle Freeze. In fact, Jesus for the Christian is like a spiritual antifreeze. Think about it like that. If you're a mechanic. Jesus is the antifreeze for the Seattle Freeze. And we do have actual access to an immeasurable joy that allows us to enjoy life, no matter how well it's going. And no matter what the weather's like, no matter how bad our job's going, we have access to an immeasurable well of joy and gratitude that other people do not. So why don't we leverage that more? I think we should. And Doxa thinks we should, and our team thinks we should. And so we want to work on becoming a more hospitable and friendly church for people who walk in our doors and people who walk in our homes, or MCs and our DNA groups. So in order to work on this, we're going to be focusing on hospitality in our discipleship pathway.

So you're going to actually receive some formal training on it. And we're going to be preaching on hospitality this year. And by the way, we actually already have, Pastor Ken has written a spiritual formation's guide on hospitality in our Doxa app that you can download right now. And you can actually go deeper with your DNA group and with other people to learn about what it means to be hospitable in a culture like this. And we're going to be reworking some of the elements out in branding, in our lobby and all that sort of thing, sort of make room to be more hospitable. And finally, we're going to look to actually add to Doxa staff in this area. We believe and we're hopeful to add a staff person that's dedicated to hospitality that would lead in this area. And that would include the training of our volunteers and the improvement of the sort of DNA of what it means to be hospitable in our community. Make sense? Exciting. All right. Yes. Yes.

Next one. Next below the line thing, children, kids. Your elders and staff feel like the Lord is leading us now more than ever to resource and improve what Doxa offers for our youth and our children. I am so fired up for this. I am trying to be calm. My wife gave me a hug in the lobby and was like calm down. You know, because of this one, because I'm so excited for this. We absolutely want to pour resources into what Doxa is going to be doing through our children. Now, one of the reasons, by the way, the Shema was so important and why it was recited in Jewish culture so often is for discipleship. And actually, so that children would learn what it means to worship God.

So let's go back to verse one of our text. Let me read this to you. It says, "Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the rules that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you that you may do them in the land to which you are going over to possess it, that you may fear the Lord your God." Look at that. "You and your son and your son's son by keeping the statutes and his commandments, which I commanded you all the days of your life so that your days may be long." That's pretty cool. See that, God commands Moses to tell you, to tell your son, to tell your son that's five generations of discipleship taking place that happens in the home. Verse six, "And these words I have commanded you today shall be on your heart". That means with everything you are, write these laws on your heart. "You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house."

Friends, we want to pass down the sacred gospel to our children. We've lost a lot of this sort of symbolic nature of reciting something like the Shema in a modern culture. I mean, we'll recite things like fight songs for the university we go to. And we'll recite like our football team's favorite, you know, song or whatever it is. We'll memorize the latest Billy Eilish jam for the kids. Man, that's the first time I felt really old. I'm not that old. And I felt super old. But these are some things we need to think about memorizing something like the Shema, right? We want to pass this down to our children. Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go. And even when he is old, he will not depart from it." Have you heard that before? I think many of you have heard that before. If you don't have kids, statistically, you're going to have them. And trust me from someone who is bad with kids, still, sort of, you need to know this information. Okay?

In our context...I remember my pastor, real quick, my pastor in Chicago told I will never trust you with my children. He said that to me, I was 21 years old. He said, I would never trust you with my kids. He still hasn't let me babysit. Just saying... in our context, the Eastside is home to more families now, more than ever. Any eight-year-olds in here? If you're 8, or 17, or 14, or 11, or whatever you are, hey, we care about you. We actually do care about you. We want your discipleship. Doxa is not here so that mom and dad can have their like church experience and you can tag along and play on your iPhone in the meantime. That's not what this is for. We want you to grow and learn and know about Jesus too. And you care. You matter to us.

Critical to our mission of reaching the Eastside is reaching families, as you know. I've talked to some of you in the lobby and some of you say, you know what, like I had friends that went here, they loved it here, but because of their kid who was 12 or who was 9 or was 8 or whatever...we need to resource our children. And you know what, as much as I hate to hear when people leave Doxa because of whatever reason it is, I understand your desire to resource your children and Doxa will be a place to do that. Okay. It absolutely will. So, in the next several weeks, let's talk about some things we're going to do. Let's start with the low hanging fruit. In the next several weeks, we're going to be reopening our third and fourth grade, because for over a year we haven't had them.

So for you eight and nine-year-olds, and some of you ten-year-olds, you're going to be back there hearing the message. And by the way, we only need three or four more servants to serve once every few months back there to take care of our children alongside of us. And so if you would please, please sign up at the connect desk and jump in with us every couple months. We would absolutely love to get that open. Next thing, Lindsey, by the way, Lindsey Bayne is our children's coordinator. She's back there now. Yeah. Let's clap for her. Hopefully she listens. We'll quiz her on Monday and see if she listens on the podcast. Lindsey and her team are going to be launching the Gospel Project curriculum in late February.

Now this curriculum is done by Lifeway and it will teach our children the entire Bible over the course of three years, which means parents, you don't want to miss a Doxa gathering because if you miss one, you don't just miss me or pastor Donald or pastor Jeff or whoever preached; your children are missing an important part of what they're going to be going through as well. So we don't want you to miss those things. They'll miss important aspects of the learning. Now, what else are we doing? Investing in the next generation, including some of some really key things I'm about to say here, is so important for us that we decided we are going to work an entire revitalization and complete rebrand of our Sunday kids programming and art-that includes the design of the rooms to start when we move in the new building to Redmond. So yeah, that's good. So Lindsey Bayne and the kids team, they're at work every week so that kids who come to Doxa can hear and grow in their faith. So in 2022 Doxa is going to serve kids from zero to fourth grade with a sort of natural progression of their discipleship through five stages connected to the word of God. So our discipleship goals are essentially hear, say, memorize, apply and share the word of God as they grow up.

So check this out. So our babies are going to hear the word of God read and prayed over them. So these are actually going to be the names of the classrooms. These are the design of the classroom. So if you have a one-year-old or a six-month-old, they're going to be in this very soon. They are going to be hearing the word of God read and prayed over them in their classrooms each week.

So, the next stage, once kids can speak, we are going to help them say the word of God by repeating back scripture shared in class. So, we want our two and our three-year-olds to be able to continue to say the word of God. It's important. Now, early school age children will memorize the word of God, focusing on a key verse each week. Someone who has a five-year-old...memorization...I mean, they memorize stuff so fast as you know. Some of the things you say, they repeat back to you, not so good. We do want them back there to hear things and repeat those though, right? Amen. Right. So they're going to be hearing things and then memorizing them.

K through second grade kids, they're going to be applying the word of God through questions and answers in the teacher's lesson. So again, this is a natural progression. They're learning what it means to be a disciple. And then our oldest kids will learn to share the word of God with others, where they live, learn, and play. We want our children to be able to articulate the gospel, to people and to places. This is really, really important. And obviously, as you know, we have an amazing youth program that we already are running right, from fifth grade all the way to 12th grade that you can plug into as well with Natalie. It's awesome. What else? Finally, in 2022, the elders have decided to commit to hiring a full-time family discipleship/next generation pastor over this entire area to oversee from infants to children, to youth, to young adults for all the way through the entire process of life. Yeah. You can clap for that.

Their chief task will be to oversee the discipleship of our young people. So we want to see them become better disciples and even within how they're disciplined within missional communities. So you're going to see this leader connecting our mission communities and our DNA groups to the everyday things that happen on Sundays from zero years old, all the way up to 17. Now this person's going to bring true leadership to our families, to our young people and will represent a major investment from your elders and staff. And also, by the way from you, because we're committing financial dollars that you give to hire this person, because we believe this person is so necessary moving to serve the next generation here on the Eastside. Okay. That's a lot for kids. Friends, our kids are so important aren't they? They're so important, but our kids are not just objects of discipleship, where we pour into them and we give them pizza and crayons and hope that they're good. They're not just objects of discipleship. They are ambassadors of discipleship. They are also people with friendships and with relationships, sports teams, communities, classrooms, play dates that they can share the good news of Jesus to their friends. I want for them such boring testimonies that like, I don't know, I just one day remember kind of praying with a mouthful of animal crackers in my mouth that I love Jesus and that's when I met him, I was five or six. I don't know. That's what I want. I don't want a crazy brutal story. I was 45, down on my luck and Jesus saved me-if that's your story, praise God. But

we want them to have boring testimonies and we can help with that by discipling them well. Okay. Yes. Clap.

Now, if that wasn't enough for you, pastor Donald and the team decided to put together a little video to help articulate this position. Let's watch that.

You can also thank my daughter, Emmanuella and Harper, pastor Donald's daughter, Donald and Kelly, for being good sports about that. Yeah, let's go. Awesome.

So that's what Jesus is doing below the line to us. He's working one our discipleship. He's working our evangelism. what is he doing above the line? Let's talk a little bit about preaching. We more than ever feel like the gospel is obviously the most important thing, but we have spent a good deal of time talking about the church. We've done a, We Are Church series. We did the He Gave series and we're really excited to jump back into some lengthy books of the Bible that will sort of teach the ways of Jesus. At least I am very excited about that. You know, preaching the power of Christ with a clear message of the gospel is great for those of you that are bringing people to hear the good news of Jesus, but it's also been Doxa's bread and butter.

So here's a list of what we're going to be preaching this year. We're going to be working through the book of John, you can see that there starting next week. By the way, 12 weeks in John starting in chapter 12, you're going to hear from all of your pastors. You're going to hear from pastor Ken. You're going to hear from pastor Jeff Vandersteldt. You're going to hear from pastor Donald Zimmerman. Of course you're going to get me. We're going to go through this book succinctly and tightly and man, we're going to bring it out. I'm so fired up for that. I can't even speak because John's all about Jesus. It's all about preaching the good news of who he is and that's what we're about. Then we're going to go through Ezra. We're going to also go through the book of Psalms, the book of Galatians and we're going to be doing a series on discipleship, faith, and work in evangelism.

So we're going to be talking about what it means to be a good disciple at your place of work. So if you work at Amazon or you work at a hospital or you work at Microsoft or you work at a school or a bus station or wherever you work, we're going to hopefully desire to equip you through that series. Also, we're going to be adding some reflection questions to the MC guides to really help people make easy and practical connections to the message. And I just cannot wait to get started with you all next week. Next thing, given the new post COVID climate we find ourselves in, the leadership really finds it necessary to emphasize our social media and our digital communication through technology. Now it's important in this season and obviously, you know, we all actually went online only for a long time, so there's people still watching online only right now. And we want to be able to continue to provide excellent resources for people.

Now we know that the average person pre COVID used to attend church less than three times a month, which we want more. We all want more, right? Less than three times a month. But now it's even less. The average person attends church less than twice a month. So about one time a month, one and a half times a month, which is not great. So in light of that, in light of all of the

conversation around sort of gathering and be in person and COVID, we want to be as technologically accommodating with our communication and telling the story of Doxa as possible. Here's what I'm not saying. I'm not saying we want you to only watch Doxa online or any church online. That's absolutely not what we're saying. In fact, if you were part of our We Are Church series, you would know that we believe online communication is absolutely a supplement, but not a substitute. It's a supplement to a healthy diet, right? You wouldn't take only a bunch of pills in the morning for your supplements and then stop eating. That's essentially what we're talking about here. And so we're beefing this area up. We believe it's absolutely valuable and important.

So in light of this, we're making two very important additions to Doxa's staff in the creative and the arts and communications arena. That might be you, by the way, you should pray about it. Maybe it's you. And we'll be reallocating our time of our staff to make sure absolutely everything on this end is accommodating. So that means you're going to see us more frequently on social media, more frequently on things like YouTube, better email communication. You're going to see all of these things come up four or five clicks in the new year. So that way you're connected and you know exactly what's happening at Doxa. And our goal is that Paul says we want to be all things to all people. And if there are people far from God or on the fringes with God that live within the context of this sort of internet space or web 2.0, we want to be all things to them so that they might come into our midst and get to know Jesus in amazing ways. So that's absolutely going to be a focus for us, particularly because where we are at in the country in one of the hubs of technological innovation. All right.

And finally, God is doing many things through Doxa this year, but perhaps the biggest thing God is doing is changing where we'll be located. So in just a few months, Doxa will be moving to Redmond. This is our building here getting worked on. I swear it looks like a prison right now but, I swear that we got rid of all the barbed wire, it'll be really cozy. I'm just kidding. I'm just kidding. This building is amazing. Some of you've been there, you've seen it. It's an awesome building. It's being changed, renovated as we speak. And it is absolutely so important to our future. And we really dubbed like the idea of Doxa's new building...we want to call it an "everyday place for everyday mission." An everyday place for everyday mission.

So briefly, what does this building mean to Doxa? First thing, it means-stability for our church family. Woo, we could use that, right? We need stability. Pastor Jeff would tell you, pastor Donald, pastor Tim, all our elders would tell you that it has been a challenge being here in the Danz Building since 2015. Obviously many of you know, the sort of spiritual, emotional challenges that came with that. But just the financial challenges of being here have been difficult, particularly because it's so expensive. And you have no idea when it's coming down. When you drove up, you saw construction taking place on both sides of this building. Construction is planned for right here as well. And for the last six years, it has been uncertain as to when that would start. Very uncertain. And it still is to a large degree, which has spurred on the movement to move to Redmond. Now this will provide stability for a church family, a place that we can actually grow in as a family. And it's a place that we get to raise our children in. It's

a place that our kids get to grow up in for their church home. Not that they don't grow up everywhere else, but also grow up in this place. So it's stable.

The next thing is its strategic location. You obviously maybe know Redmond around with this area. This whole region is one of fastest growing regions in Washington. Redmond in particular is one of the most diverse cities on the Eastside. And by the way, the new building is a walk away from a new link light rail station that's being built just two blocks away. So people in theory could live wherever down the region and walk to church. Yes, that's worth clapping for which means it broadens Doxa's reach. It's strategic. It helps young people consider what it means to be a part of Doxa if nothing else was the reason for their absence here. And it's also next to, right near all these new, brand-new developments, multifamily units, restaurants, and shops. It is absolutely transforming. Our leadership got into a great building at a great price really early in this place, and it is going to be amazing.

Also, this building is a chance for us to exercise Biblical stewardship. We always have to ask the question, not just as a church, but you individually, what is God asking us or me to do with the resources he's given us? Now as a staff, as a church, as the elders, we have to ask the question, what do we do with the resources that all of our people have given, including us, we give as well. What do we do with what God has entrusted? Or what do we build with what God has entrusted us to build with? What do we do? So we have to look at that and we had an option we could rent, or we could own. We decided owning made more sense. Owning a building on the Eastside was an absolute opportunity for us.

And by the way...March, we are launching something large for the building in terms of the campaign for fundraising. And I cannot wait for March, but I can't give you any more than that so you just have to sit on that. March, get ready for March. Also, gospel legacy-what does it mean to pass off gospel legacy and resources? Do you know, as someone who used to be a church planner, the story after story I heard of large churches growing old with giant buildings and no people inside and then dying without ever passing off a building, selling it off and giving it to an apartment complex. Those are kingdom resources that were wasted, absolutely wasted. And now God has given Doxa an opportunity to steward a building that we can continue to pass forward for the kingdom and the kingdom alone. That's great. That's tremendous.

The last thing this building does is it roots Doxa. It roots us. Doxa buying this building, getting this building, roots Bible believing church on the Eastside permanently. Permanently, not temporarily, not month-to-month in mom and dad's really nice expensive house, but permanently rooted in a community. There is something different about it. I'll tell you what, when you buy a house for the first time and you walk in the backyard, you put your feet in the grass, you ever done that? It's probably raining here-that's your lawn. You own that lawn. You're not renting that lawn, right? That's the same thing for this building. This is gospel legacy. We're rooted in this community for eternal purposes. Now, everything we're going to do this year is going to sort of, you know, inadvertently be filtered through this building, this move to Redmond because it's such a big move when it comes.

So when we preach the gospel, we are sort of going to be having a home to preach it out of for those who are far from God, and for those of us who can grow in our discipleship. So when we're hospitable, we're able to do it out of our home that's established by God and for God. When we disciple our children, they will grow up in a permanent and a familiar place that they'll be able to call their own. And then when we make disciples, we have an everyday place to invite our community into. We get to serve them. We get to love them. We get to care for them. But maybe you're thinking, you know what, the church, it's great, but a church isn't a building. Why are we talking about this? Church isn't a building. I don't see why this has to be so important.

Yes, you're correct. A church is not a building. And that is Doxa's belief as well. We don't believe the church is actually a building. But if you do feel this way, I understand where you're coming from and I want you to take note of one thing. Doxa has often said that God gives the church its mission, right, to make disciples of many nations. But, the Bible also gives the church its vision. Jesus says, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." See Jesus there is promising that a new creation would come, that one day the world would slowly transform into this amazing new creation where we'd one day be redeemed and renewed and restored and that would be called the kingdom of God. So in that context, Doxa's building becomes a heavenly embassy on the Eastside representing God's heavenly kingdom in the midst of a complex and changing world. So yes, the building is not the church, the same way the U.S. Embassy in South Africa, isn't the U.S. But it represents the U.S. to South Africa. Doxa's building represents the kingdom of God to a changing and foreign world-the Eastside. That's what we're doing. So our building represents a heavenly embassy.

And by the way, Paul says you are ambassadors for Christ. So what does that mean for you? It means that you have an embassy and you go out from that embassy as an ambassador and you give the good news of Jesus to the foreign land that you live in. That's what it means. Now we must be ambassadors for Christ. Okay, so maybe you're thinking you hear this building and you're thinking amenities. Maybe that's where your head goes, right? Maybe you're from Texas. And when you hear building campaign, you think 200,000 square feet, slide in the lobby, Applebees in the lobby, bookstore in the lobby, come to think of it, everything in the lobby, everything you could possibly want. Maybe that's what you're thinking. If you're from Texas, right?

If you've ever been on a cruise, you know what I'm talking about? You ever been on a cruise and they've got like a Chick-fil-A and a Johnny Rockets and they've got slides and Mickey Mouse is walking by and you're like, oh my gosh, like, there's everything I could possibly have there. And you go into the room. Oh my gosh, the bed's so comfortable. You open up the closet and there's like a robe and little slippers and you put them on and you kind of hang out, you drink your \$8 water bottle and you're hanging out, right, enjoying the amenities. By the way, those slippers never fit my feet in case you had to guess.

But I used to live in Alameda, California, and that's where one of the old Navy shipyards was. And you could go take a tour of a boat and you can go look in it. And when you go in it's actually

kind of nothing like a cruise ship. No Mickey Mouse, you know, there's not even really, probably any toilet paper or soap. There's not a lot going on in that thing. And you go into the room, you don't see any slippers. You don't see a robe. What do you find-a like really hard piece of wood that you sleep on. That's what you find. But that's the difference between a cruise ship and a battleship. Friends, our church is not a cruise ship. Our church is a battleship.

The church is not a cruise ship. It is a battleship. And like my friend, Brian Howard says, I've never heard of anyone complain about a bed on the battleship because fundamentally we are at war.

Doxa's new building in Redmond will not be a place for everyday comfort. It will be a place for everyday mission. And when you are in our battleship, you go on mission because there's actually a kingdom of darkness that is out there that is actually waring for your soul. And not just for your soul, the soul for your children, the soul for your families, the souls for everyone you know that's been to Doxa and has since left and left Jesus-their souls are on the line. And that's why we're here. We are not here to be comfortable. We are Christians. They persecuted Christians for hundreds of years. You know what they did with them? They killed them. They weren't comfortable. They didn't get to enjoy their upside-down crucifixion or being boiled alive. They died.

The church, Doxa's building, before you frame it up as a spot for amenities, it is absolutely not. It is a place to equip the saints for the work of the ministry to go forth and make disciples of many nations, because there is a spiritual war that is on the front-the spiritual kingdom of life and light and the kingdom of darkness. And we represent the kingdom of light. But here's the good news, we actually know who wins the war. Spoiler alert, we actually know that Jesus wins. Yes, but they don't know. They don't know. They think it's up for grabs. They think, who knows who's going to win-I don't know if that's true. We've got to tell them what the truth is, but you've got to do it by being a part of an actual mission, an actual team, an actual family, an actual church family that will go forth and make these disciples and not just maintain our comfort until we get into coffin and go on to be with whoever it is that we worship. Do you understand?

There's a lot coming at us this year, but where we plant our embassy, where we've decided to plant in Redmond, it absolutely matters. And I know we've been together for a long time this morning, or geeze, now it's this evening, maybe it's tomorrow morning at this point. But it was important for us to walk through all these important things, that there will be an everyday place of everyday mission for us to go forth and make disciples in. And so I hope you're excited about what is coming. Lastly, the most important thing is not the building. The most important thing is not social media. The most important thing is not a discipleship pathway. It's not a move to Redmond. What's the most important thing, guys? Jesus. It's to love the Lord your God, with your entire self, your whole church, above the line and below the line. So as we get ready to do this, remember what's most important. We serve a God in a battle who's already won, right? And we have a sort of pledge of allegiance that we get to recite to him to remind ourselves that we have won this war. It is Deuteronomy chapter six versus four and five. And I'm going to read it once, but I would love for us to read it together after. So let me read it for

you to get settled. It says this, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength." Friends, this is what is so important. Give everything you have to Jesus, ask nothing in return because he's going to give to you everything you need. So if you don't mind, if you're able, would you stand with me? I feel led to say that. Let's read this together to end our time.

All right, let's read. It'll be on the board. Here we go. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength." And so it is. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, thank you for an opportunity to serve. Lord God, I pray for everyone in here to give their hearts, their strengths, their souls, and their minds, to what you're about to do for them this year. Lord Jesus, as we wrap up our time together, I pray there's a fantastic time of worship as we love you, as we praise you, as we give you all the glory. In his son's name. Amen.