



CONVICTIONS OF A GOSPEL-CENTERED LEADER

I. Introduction

1. Welcome everyone. It is an honor to be with you all.
2. I want to thank you all for your dedication to the kingdom of God, your sacrifice, and your willingness to spread the Gospel. So much of what we do is pouring out to others, feeding, leading, and sacrificing. Thank you for giving your life to the Call!
3. Introduce Yourself – Exec. Pastor CBC with PF almost 19 years. CEI, Saved 1982, Passionate to share
4. I am extremely excited about focus of our time, and season in which we live. [Joel 2:28](#) living it out!
5. Tonight Topic– “Convictions of a Gospel Centered Leader”

II. Possessing a Gospel Centered Conviction

#Story about group of people on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, there is a little museum devoted to a volunteer organization formed in 1786 called the Humane Society. In those days, travel by sea posed extreme danger. Because of the severe storms in the Atlantic along the rocky coast, many crews and passengers drowned within a mile or so of land. So a group of volunteers went into the life-saving business. These people built little huts along the shore. They had people watching the sea constantly. Whenever a ship went down, they sounded the alarm, and the Humane Society would devote their full attention to save every life they could.

They put themselves at risk because they prized human life. In fact they adopted a bold motto, “You have to go out, but you don’t have to come back.” These brave people risked everything, even their own lives—to save people they never met... But over time, things changed.

After a while, the U.S. Coast Guard took over the task of rescues. Eventually, these willing warriors shifted to the idea, “We’re not the best at it. Let the professionals do it. They’re better than we are.”

Volunteers stopped searching the coastlines for ships in danger. They stopped sending teams out to rescue drowning people. They eventually moved away from their huts on the coast to safer inland locations. They even stopped thinking about those being saved. Yet, a strange thing happened. They couldn’t bring themselves to disband. The life-saving society still exists. The members meet often to have dinners and fellowship. They tell stories of all the great things they used to do... They are just not in the life-saving business anymore.

1. Tragically, there are some startling parallels between this story and the church in America. #360k churches, 288k plateaued. 50%/180k won’t add one new convert 12 months. Yes, there are many great churches. Yes, there are people who love Jesus. Yet so many churches are challenged to live out their primary purpose for our existence. HOW ABOUT YOU? US? When was the last time you shared the gospel? Someone saved? How about our churches? Are souls being saved? Are we ‘Gospel-centered?’ Are we still on mission?
2. Current stats on Church abroad: (Brad Wagoner – Shape of Faith to Come) Declining Behavior
 - “Do you believe glorifying God in all you do is important?” Only 54% strongly agreed.
 - “Is God’s will for your life important and worthy pursuing?” Only 37% strongly agreed.
 - “Do I welcome input, direction and correction from my church leaders?” Only 17% said yes.
 - Majority state that church attendance is critical, yet only 18% attend weekly.
 - Majority believe tithing is biblical principle yet only 5% tithe consistently.

- Majority believe sharing faith is their responsibility. Only 5% led someone to Christ.

3. It is time to refocus on why we exist. We must face the brutal facts and truly assess how we do church and how we lead. Where we spend our time, energy and finances? How we pray and preach?

4. This must become a compelling conviction, which saturates our every waking moment. Not just a stated value or belief statement or a cool 'sermon series'.

#My Prayer, "Lord give me your heart for the Lost!" You can't handle that burden! Put hand on heart

Every minute=100, hour=6,000, day=144,000, year=52,600,000.5 billion haven't heard 1st coming.

CONVICTION DEFINED

"An unshakable belief in something that compels one to fulfilling a cause regardless of the cost; guides ones thoughts and actions towards a certain destination."

5. Conviction Defined – "An unshakable belief in something that **compels one to fulfill a cause regardless of the cost**; it guides ones **thoughts** and **actions** towards a certain destination."

Gospel Centered Conviction – "An all-consuming revelation that propels you to focus all your passions and energies on one thing; the saving of souls." Woe unto me if I don't preach the gospel.

Q- Paul Harvey – "Too many Christians are no longer fishers of men. Instead they have become keepers of the aquarium."

6. The gospel can't be leadership preference, belief, principle or dept. **IT MUST BE A CONVICTION.**
Q - Can't be a Paraná in the pulpit and a weasel in your neighborhood. It must consume us.

GOSPEL CENTERED FOUNDATIONS

- Acts 2:47 They added daily those who were being saved.
- Acts 5:42 You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching.
- Acts 5:42 And daily they didn't stop preaching Christ!

7. A Gospel Centered Conviction is based on Gospel-Centered foundations - 1st century church.
Acts 2:47 Added daily those who were being saved. Not transfer growth; converts! #5000 in a day!

Acts 5:28 You have filled (turned upside down) Jerusalem with your teaching #2 WEEKS!

Acts 5:42 And daily they didn't stop preaching Christ! Can't stay silent

8. Tonight I want to share **FIVE CONVICTIONS OF A GOSPEL CENTERED LEADER.** We must live for these and be willing to die for these! YOU KNOW THEM ALL, VERY SIMPLE, BUT LETS VISIT THEM AGAIN!

CONVICTION #1: We are Living in Supernatural Times:

A. It is not a "church as usual" season.

1. We are living in volatile times. A world in crisis!
 - a. Social Shifts – More isolation/introversion: Tech-driven - Texting, Facebook, Instagram, etc.
 - b. Moral Shifts – Sex before marriage, same sex, relative thinking, confusion of right & wrong.
 - c. Religious Shifts – Many trying to redefine 'God, Christianity, Faith, Truth, and even Church.'
 - d. Educational Shifts – War over what to teach. Evolution, safe sex, no absolute truth.
 #Alameda School Dist. K-5th, mandatory LGBTQ curriculum.
 #Illegal to hand out bibles, but can hand out condoms.
 #Parental permission slip needed for aspirin, get abortion without parental approval.
 - e. Political Shifts – Shifts away from constitution, rewriting laws, foundations being removed.
 Attempt to remove – Nat'l Day Prayer, God from money and pledge of allegiance.
 Christ from Christmas. Civil Rights trump Religious Freedom. That battle has just begun!

William Booth had a prophecy about the generation that would enter the 21st century:

CONVICTION #1 WE ARE LIVING IN SUPERNATURAL TIMES

- It is not a "church as usual" season.
- We cannot treat the precious as common.
- The church is being restored to it's original design.

“Six things will dominate this generation; they will have religion without the Holy Spirit, forgiveness without repentance, conversion without new birth, Christianity without Christ, politics without God, and heaven without hell.” He wasn’t too far off. It is not what Christ intended!

PUT ON YOUR SEAT BELT FOR THE NEXT DECADE!

We are living in opportunistic times – GOD’S PERSPECTIVE! Setting the whole thing up for us!

- a. People are more open to the gospel than in years - **#Fishing salmon run. Looking for answers!**
#ME – Speak to Police Bureau about death of beaten 2 yr old. How to cope with such tragedies.
- b. More people getting saved than ever. **#250K daily, 35k China, 30k Russia, 20k Africa, 15k India**
#Arms growing back where severed, Guys being raised from dead after 3 days!
- c. More unity amongst churches and leaders - **#Portland Gospel Movement**
- d. More desperation to fix societies problems in all sectors. **#Collective Impact Movement**
- e. Increased spiritual activity – Intercession, evangelism and discipleship, social justice, etc.

B. We cannot treat the precious as common.

1. We cannot miss the day of our visitation. God is positioning us for something Great. It is why we are here! It is not a “Church as usual” season.
2. It is a kairos moment! The time is now!

C. God is restoring His Church, back to the intended design. Acts 2 church!

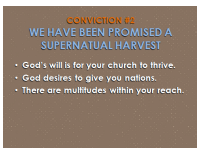
1. There is a blueprint God has in mind. It is what He desires us to build. **#It’s not our church!!**
2. All the ingredients are spelled out for us in Book of Acts.
3. **Acts 2:38:47** Benchmark scripture pertaining to NT Church foundation stones. (13 in all)
 - a. Repentance/Salvations
 - b. Water Baptism
 - c. Holy Spirit Baptism
 - d. Evangelism – City Taking/City Impact
 - e. Apostle’s doctrine
 - f. Fellowship
 - g. Breaking of bread
 - h. Prayer
 - i. Signs & Wonders
 - j. Community
 - k. High level unity
 - l. Worship
 - m. Discipleship**#Great Leadership Team Discussion- Face Brutal Facts. Assess yourself WE DID & CHANGED ALL!!**
4. It is the combination of all thirteen principles working ACTIVELY and SIMULTANEOUSLY in PROPER BALANCE in a local church that provides the possibility for a great revival to exist.

#PRAY – BREAK OFF NATURAL, TEMPORAL, ROUTINE, LOGICAL THINKING

Not only are we living in supernatural times but....

CONVICTION #2: We have been Promised a Supernatural Harvest:

1. God’s will for you and your church is that you thrive! Reach! Grow! Multiply! Can’t settle for less!
Think big thoughts. Dream big dreams. Pray big prayers. Preach big proclamations! **Gen 1:26-28**
Isaiah 2:2 In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.



Revelation 7:9 After this I looked and there before me was a **great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people & language**, standing before the throne...

#Two 10-year-old boys in China: Led 10,000 people to Christ in 10 days, baptized 3000 of them in the following 10 days. They believe the bible to actually be true.

2. God desires to give you nations for your inheritance.

Psalms 2:8 Ask of Me, and **I will give You The nations for Your inheritance**, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. Possible for everyone here! #1 person reach world in 33 years.
75/23yrs

3. There are multitudes within your reach. You are placed as a church in your city by divine design.
#Portland = 1.5 million people that still need Jesus. They are everywhere! GIVE US OUR CITY!
IF we are living in supernatural times and are promised a supernatural harvest then....

#PRAY TO BREAK OF BARRENESS PLATUEAUED AND DECLINING CHURCHES – MULTIPLICATION!!!!

CONVICTION #3: Reaching People far from God is our Primary Purpose

This statement is a controversial statement in many circles. In this room tonight! Give me a chance to unpack this thought further. #What about counseling, pastoring, worship, prayer... all a means to an end.

A. Jesus came to seek and save the lost

1. Jesus spent 66% of his entire recorded ministry sharing the Good News. 128/199 situations

Luke 19:10 Jesus came to seek and save the lost. He came to die and to proclaim the good news.

2. Jesus did not come just to make us in the church have a comfortable existence on planet earth it was quite the opposite. He didn't come to make good people gooder! His intention was not to hide us and protect us from the world until His return.

- a. Jesus didn't say to go into "Hibernation, but **Go into Every Nation**"
- b. Jesus didn't say to be "Pre-occupied until I come, he said, **Occupy 'til I come.**"
- c. Church is not a love boat but a battleship.
- e. It is not a hospital for hypocrites but a headquarters for heroes. Church is incubator hatch convts

3. If this is the way that Jesus lived, we should remove any obstacles from us living the same.

4. We should at least align our time to align with Jesus? **If this is case.....**

B. We Must Remove Gospel- Centered Roadblocks (Major in churches today...some are you).

1. **The Belief – Behavior Dilemma** – "Our behavior is not aligned with our beliefs. "
Mark 16:15-20 NIV Then he said, "**Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the Message of God's good news (I BELIEVE!)**... And the disciples **went everywhere preaching, (BEHAVED)**
a. The greatest dilemma facing the church today is this one...
b. We principally agree but don't practically apply. We believe, but we don't behave.



#The Plane that never takes off- An Indian entrepreneur gives people who can't afford to fly a chance to try it. The Airbus 300 never leaves the ground. One wing, no lighting, no toilets, but can hear announcements & be waited on by flight attendants. People come from all over to sit in plane that never flies. Go through motions without any action! Some Churches are the same.

2. **The Five-Fold Imbalance Issue** – “Our leader gift mix doesn’t reflect the biblical five -fold model.”

- a. As spirit-filled churches, we all understand the definition and purpose of the Five-fold ministry. These ascension gifts were given by Christ to us as key positions to build up the church.

Ephesians 4:11-12 NIV He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

- b. **GET THIS! The Biblical balance of the five determines the overall DNA/ health of the church.** All are important and all must be given proper representation to build a thriving, healthy local church. The usage/mixture determines the fruit!

#Pastor = caring community of introverted people. Prophetic = subjective, etc. **#BRING THEM IN!**

- c. There is a DNA imbalance in many churches today due to the enhanced focus on a few of the internal ascension gifts and the lack of focus on a few of the external extension gifts. Lack of evangelism/apostolic five-fold results in a lack of true conversion growth.

BE BRIEF WITH CHART! 703 Five Fold mentions in NT

APOSTLE	PROPHET	EVANGELIST	PASTOR	TEACHER
apostolous (noun)	prophetas (noun)	Evangelistas (noun)	poimen (noun)	dikaskalous (noun)
8 Times in Gospels; 78 times altogether.	149 Times in NT; used for both OT and NT Prophets.	3 times in NT, but only one man mentioned; Philip.	18 times it is translated 'shepherd' and 1 time translated, 'pastor.'	58 times mentioned, of which 40 times referring to Jesus.
Apostello (verb)	Porpeteuo (verb)	Evangelidzo (verb)	Poimaino (verb)	Didasko (verb)
133 times 'to send forth' or 'to send out'. Outreach in nature	28 times translated as, 'to prophecy.' Many were Outreach in nature.	55 times, 'to evangelize. To declare good news.' 77 times, 'proclaim the evangel.	11 times, 'to feed, to tend or to keep sheep.' 4 times referred to tending to the Church.	93 times in NT. Often used to describe church ministries. Some Outreach
211 TOTAL	177 TOTAL	135 TOTAL	29 TOTAL	151 TOTAL

FIVE FOLD IMBALANCE				
Apostles	Prophets	Evangelists	Pastors	Teachers
211	177	135	29	151

346 total
Evangelist
and
Apostle
50% OF ALL
FIVE-FOLD

#Combined
66% like
Jesus

- d. We MUST ask ourselves a few honest questions, individually and corporately:

- How much of MY/OUR ministry areas focuses on internal vs. external ministry?
- Where do I/WE devote most of my time and energy in my ministry area? Personal Lives?
- How much of our services and programs are focused to reaching lost people?
- How many people (volunteers/staff) in MY/OUR ministry area focus on reaching the lost?

- Where do we spend our finances? Our staffing?
3. **The Internal Focus Syndrome** – “The majority of time/resources are focused on the church family.”
 - a. We have been blessed with an abundance of people to care for. We are admonished to know the state of the flock and attend to the herds.
 - b. Caring for people is right and important. We need to pastor, teach and equip. We need to love, encourage and relate. But for what purpose? Jesus seemed to allude to going and reaching!
 - c. We are called to make disciples, but building disciples is not the end, or the means, but both; it’s cyclical. God desires both quantity and quality! **#Great commission/Great Commandment.**
 4. **The Pharisee Mentality** – “I have a hard time loving those who willfully sin.”
 - a. If we were painfully honest, there is a little Pharisee mentality in us all! It is so easy to be irritated with the destructive, careless behavior of those who need Christ. **Harvest is MESSY! #Bum at Camp – Provoked believers to consider their heart.**
 - b. It was this attitude that Christ detested most. He despised the Pharisee’s and yet adored the broken, hurting, wounded, abused, accused and accursed
 5. **The ‘Retreat from the Big-Bad World’ Mindset**
 “I am concerned about the world affecting my church, family and my life.” **#HIDE THE KIDS/WIFE**
#READ Salt and Light: Our Christian habit is to bewail the world’s deteriorating standards with an air of rather self-righteous dismay. We criticize its violence, dishonesty, immorality, disregard for human life and the materialistic greed. ‘The world is going down the drain,’ we say with a shrug. But whose fault is it? Who is to blame? Let me put it like this. IF the house is dark when night fall comes, there is no sense in blaming the house, for that is what happens when the sun goes down. The question to ask is ‘Where is the light?’ if the meat goes bad and becomes inedible, there is no sense in blaming the meat, for that is what happens when bacteria are left alone to breed. The question to ask is, “where is the salt?” just so, if society deteriorates and its standards decline, till it becomes like a dark night or stinking meat, there is no sense in blaming society, for that is what happens when fallen men and women are left to themselves, and human selfishness is unchecked. The question to ask is, “where is the church?” Why are the salt and light of Jesus Christ not permeating and changing our society? It is sheer hypocrisy on our part to raise our eyebrows, shrug our shoulders or wring our hands. The Lord Jesus told us to be the world’s salt and light. If therefore darkness and rottenness abound, it is our fault and we must accept the blame.

C. Our Primary Purpose is to seek and save the lost:

1. We cannot forget that the world is in desperate need of a Savior.
John 4:35 Don’t say “four months and then the harvest...” **#Maybe this fall we will start, tomorrow?**
2. TODAY there must be a DIRECT intervention of the Gospel message, thru us, to those who are lost.
2 Corinthians 6:2 Behold NOW is the accepted time, TODAY is the day of salvation

3. This mission will only be accomplished through His people, the church. We must take the message of the cross to every person, in every neighborhood, in every city and nation! THIS INCLUDES YOU!

Acts 1:8 ... you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

CONVICTION #4: The church must go into the city to get the city into the church.

A. Mindsets Must Change to Match the Times in Which We Live.

1. Society's religious views continue to radically shift to more non-Christian views.
#Witnessing experiences - White Magic Satanist Jew. Calvinist-Catholic-Jehovah's Witness.
#Only religion to double in size in America in last decade is Atheism and Agnosticism.
2. Society's perspective of church has drastically shifted in the last few decades. #Not in Kansas anymore
They perceive Christians as; boring, irrelevant, hypocritical, and judgmental to name a few.
#80%+
We are not societies "go to group" for their needs like yesteryear.
3. The danger we face as the church is that we continue to believe (for the most part) that program-based, event-oriented, church-centric evangelism approaches are still the means in which to reach people... and it isn't working in the way that we desire it to. #Gospel of Come vs. Gospel of Go

#Portland Public Schools— Most liberal school district in nation! In desperate need of help. Huge budget cuts, 45% of all kids don't graduate from High School. 73% meal program.

Asked School Leaders, "What are biggest needs? How can we help?"

- No landscapers: Community Care Days = 1, 2, 3, now 450 churches/26,000 volunteers. #SSN
- After school help for elementary/latch key kids = 3 programs 200+ kids, goal for 10 this year.
- Food/Clothing/Tutor – Creating "Student Revolution" Student center, 1000+ ft. Mad.High.
- SRO's – Zman Talent Show – all high schools, Portland Police and us. AT OUR CHURCH!

B. A Gospel-Centered Church has a Go-Centered Culture

1. The only way we will ever get our city into our church is to get our church into our city.
Luke 10:33 and a certain Samaritan came to where he was...
2. We must go be where lost, hurting, broken, people live.
#Police Commander – "What are your greatest needs?"
#Police Rest Stop/Executive Lounge – 300+ officers at church every month.
Ride-alongs – Get in their world, seated in for 10 hours with hurting guys!
#Prostitution Team – People to meet with girls, help build network not 80 organizations!
#Royce, Aaron, John – Prayer, counseling, Marriage Weekend in two weeks 50-60 officers!
3. **A Go Centered Culture must permeate all areas of the church.**
#CBC – Our journey. We have focused all on the main thing. Budgets, Staff, Departments, Services.

4. A Gospel Centered Church lives out a holistic Gospel message. **# Proclaim AND DEMONSTRATE** I John 3:16-18 This is how we know what love is. Jesus laid down His life for us... let us not love in word only but in deeds and actions.

CONVICTION #5: The Heart of the Church is determined by the Heart of the Leaders



1. Evangelistic leaders produce an evangelistic church. Introverted leaders produce an introverted church.
#If everyone in your church witnessed like you did, what kind of church would you have?
2. Change in our church starts with change in us! Change in our town, begins with change in us.
Q – Dr. Armstrong - “One painful conclusion I reached long ago, and have not had reason to modify after many years of trying to help churches accept and fulfill their ministry of evangelism, is that the bottleneck in the process is often – if not usually – the pastor and key leaders. It may be theoretically possible, but it is highly improbable, that any congregation will accept its corporate evangelistic responsibility without the active leadership, support and involvement of the pastors.”
The Apostle Paul said...
II Timothy 4:5 NKJ: But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.
3. It is time that we stop spending most of our time ‘doing church’ and start ‘being the church.’ Get out from church offices, buildings, programs, events, groups and model to the rest of the church what it means to live a “Gospel Centered Life.”

#Band to Platform

#Dr. Alexander Duff – Aged old missionary to India

Dr. Alexandar Duff was a great veteran missionary to India. When he as an old man, he returned to his homeland of Scotland to die. There, during the general Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Dr. Duff addressed the meeting, and then made a strong appeal for young people to volunteer their lives for India.

But no one responded. Under the strain of the appeal, the aged missionary fainted and fell to the floor and was then quickly carried off the platform. The doctor bent over the old veteran and was examining his heart when suddenly he opened his eyes and asked, “Where am I? Where am I now?” The doctor replied, “Lie still! Your heart is very weak.” The old warrior interrupted, “But I must finish my appeal. Take me back! Take me back! I haven’t finished my appeal yet.” Again the doctor cautioned, “Lie still, you are too weak to back.” But the missionary would not be stopped.

Gathering his strength, he got back on his feet. With the doctor on one side and the Assembly Chairman on the other, the white haired warrior was led back to the pulpit. While the whole congregation rose in honor of his courage. Then he resumed his appeal. “When Queen Victoria calls for volunteers for India, hundreds of young men respond; but when King Jesus calls, no one goes.” Then he paused. Once more he continued, “Is it true that Scotland has no more sons to give for India?” The he waited and still no one responded. There was silence.

The old man then made a major decision, and under the heavy burden of India’s unreached millions he concluded his call. “Very well, if Scotland has no more young men to send to India,

then, old and decrepit though I am, I will go back. And even though I cannot preach, I can lie down on the shores of the Ganges rivers and die, in order to let the people of India know that there is at least one man in Scotland who cares enough for their souls to give his life for them."

As the old veteran turned to leave the pulpit, the silence was broken at last. All over the congregation young men were getting to their feet, crying out, "I'll go! I'll go! I'll go!" And after old Dr. Duff passed on, many of those young men did go to India investing their lives as missionaries as a result of an old gospel warrior's burden, love and vision to preach the gospel to the lost people of India.

CONCLUSION

1. CLOSE