

Every year about this time, we carve out a few Sundays to re-envision us as a church...for a very simple reason:

Whenever a number of people get together--there's a natural tendency for each of us to drift in our own direction.

And when that happens, churches stop being effective.
Another way to say that is, we rob the Holy Spirit of His power.

This is key, because one of the great distinctives of a church is how God uses us together, collectively.

Philippians 2:23 says that the church should be
"working together with one mind and purpose."

And I wish this weren't true--but our city and country have plenty of dying churches. And a church that's dying is a church that's lost its vision and purpose.

And so we're talking about Oakbrook's vision and purpose today and next week because we want this church to THRIVE in the ways of Jesus!

We want everyone in this church to be on the same page so that the Holy Spirit will use us in powerful ways to reach people who don't know Jesus and to build up each other.

We say this in this simple sentence:
We're trying to help people find Jesus and live like Him.

(congo repeat)

So today and next Sunday we're going to take a look at two of our 12 Core Values.

Many of you have never seen these, so let's read through these:

Oakbrook's Core Values

1. We Pray First. All glory and honor is centered on the Cross of Christ. Our hope is in Jesus, so in all we do, we pray first. We rest in His power not in our own. We are nothing without Him.
2. We Are the Solution. We are not a group of people who come into a nice building and sing songs. We believe the Bible is true, and we do what it says. We feed the hungry, help the sick, give water to the thirsty, give homes to the homeless, and we become the

SOLUTION God designed the church to be. Not a place where we gather, but a place where we are sent.

3. We Chase Lions. We are not OK living the status quo. We believe God wants a life of influence and significance for all of us, so we won't settle, we won't hold back, and we won't back down. We will chase the Lions God has placed in front of us. We will leverage our everyday life for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

4. We Are Story Tellers. We are real people with real stories. We don't hide behind nice clothes or religious masks, we don't hide our scars or draw curtains over our broken places. We show people who we are. We tell our stories of rescue so God can use them to draw people to Himself.

5. We Are in Community. We believe God made us for relationships. Relationships with Himself and relationship with other people. So we will be a church of Small Groups. Friends who live life together and figure out what it means to live like Jesus... TOGETHER. Nobody does life alone.

6. We Reach Out. We are about creating environments that are engaging to those who don't know Jesus yet. (*Why we don't have crosses.*) That's the reason we do church. We will create environments that boldly celebrate Jesus and attract people far from God. We can't help but invite others into the movement because it's everything to us. We will make bold invitations because we truly believe Jesus is the hope of the world.

7. We Keep It Simple. Simplicity enables excellence. We will do fewer activities with greater excellence. We believe excellence honors God and inspires people. We believe in doing less for more. (*why not a million sub-ministries*)

8. We Are Known For What We Are For. We will speak God's vision and life over people. We will lift up Jesus rather than using our platform to condemn. Following Jesus' example, we will never use our platform for a political agenda or worldly gain.

9. We Are Multi-Generational. We believe in people of all ages. We freely give honor to those above us, beside us and under us because of the calling and potential God has placed inside of them. We believe it takes all ages for the church to do the work God has called us to.

10. We Are Generous. We will be a church that goes above and beyond to give sacrificially to the work of God through our church.

11. We Are c2. We are all trying to move from new-comer to Christ-Centered (c2). We don't think that happens by being passive consumers, but by being actively engaged in our own spiritual journey.

12. We Are Sunday Plus Two. We believe to be a part of this movement of God means to be a part of our weekend experience, be in a Small Group and to be a Volunteer. The church is not a monument of days gone by, but a movement of God working among His

people RIGHT NOW. Everyone's in. Nobody's on the sidelines. We are Sunday Plus Two: We are here on Sundays, we are in a Small Group, and we Volunteer.

(SELAH)

So today we're going to talk about the Core Value, *We are Sunday+2*.

And I really want to pull *you* into this topic today---because it does not matter if the church leadership or staff know this info--it matters that EVERYONE knows it.

Because if only a church's hired guns know about the core values, then those Core Values really don't exist.

So my challenge for you today is--that you can understand, do and explain Sunday+2.

(SELAH)

A question we get fairly often is, "Do you have membership at Oakbrook?"

The simple answer is no.

The better, longer answer is:

At Oakbrook we don't write our names on a membership list.

Instead, we believe if a person is part of a church, they declare it with their body as they attend regularly, are involved in a group, and serve.

In other words: Sunday+2.

What I'm about to say is going to put some of you back on your heels--I don't mean it that way, hear me out on this point:

If you are not a Sunday+2 person yet (which is totally ok!),
don't tell people, "Oakbrook is my church." (O-O)

Instead say something closer to the truth--something more descriptive of where you are:

I'm checking out Jesus at Oakbrook.

I'm exploring my faith at Oakbrook.

I'm getting closer to committing to Jesus at Oakbrook.

Why did I bring this up? Aren't I just talking semantics?

How we talk about church defines where we really are with our faith.
How we talk about church reminds ourselves where we really are with Jesus.

And this is important because I don't want us to think that attending *somewhat* often, and not serving and not being in a group, is what it means to be part of a church.

In lots of churches, we can be on their membership roles, and not attend regularly,
not be connected relationally,
not serve and it's ok. But that's NOT the play we're running here.

Listen---if you're not Sunday+2 yet--that is OKAY! This is a place where you have the freedom to check it out and see if God can be trusted and if you want to be part of Jesus' story!

But know that where we hope you're headed-- is Sunday+2!

We need to know that when we follow Jesus to the point that we attend regularly, commit to some kind of group, and serve somewhere--that's when we cross the line from observing to *participating*.

And it's when we are *participating* in the life of a church--that's when should say, "*That's my church!...Oakbrook is MY church....I am Sunday+2!*"

So when someone says, "Do you have membership at Oakbrook?"

Say, "No--we're not about names on a list. We're about:
Being there on Sundays,
Doing life in small groups,
Serving.
We're about Sundays+2!"

(SELAH)

Let's talk about Sundays.

This Value says that consistently coming to church on Sundays is a priority. It's a big deal.

But sadly there is a Christian trend in our culture where Sundays are super-optional. Sundays are no longer the entrée; they are the dessert, the appetizer...

But get this: Forever--God has been into His people meeting together. The "togetherness of God's people," is simply *everywhere* in the Bible.

The idea of God's people meeting together being optional, is 100% the way of the culture-*optional church* is not the way of Jesus.

I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters.

I will praise you among your assembled people. **Psalm 22:22 NLT**

Assembled people means coming together. That was written around 1,000 B.C. (Not even the oldest example.)

And this idea of optional-church isn't new--it started in the 1st century. That's why in Hebrews it says"

"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another..."

Hebrews 10:24-25 NLT

God says, "Do not neglect our meeting together." God says this is a priority.

So many of us want to excel at being a follower of Jesus

We want to find our place of impact in the world

We want to hear the Holy Spirit more clearly

We want to know Jesus better.

We want to live life better.

(all BIG things)

Listen--victory in those "bigger things" of the spiritual life, rides on the seemingly little things of the spiritual life--like making Sundays a priority.

Just like the Bible says in Luke 16:10,

"If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones."

Luke 16:10 NLT

(SELAH)

20 years ago I started attending Oakbrook knowing barely anything more than who Jesus is.

But today, when I look back and think about how much I know now about Jesus, the Bible, what it is to practically live out a God-honoring life---it's unfathomable how much God has grown me through 1,000 hours of church services.

It's unfathomable the things God has done through me in the lives of my family and friends because of what I've experienced in 1,000 hours of church services.

And you may be thinking, "1,000 hours of church services--that's a lot." But over 20 years it's really not.

In a year, if we're 100% attendance, we'll have 52 hours of church. In a YEAR.

How many hours will we work this year? (2,000 on the low side.)

How many hours will we spend at kids sporting events this year?

How many hours will we spend exercising this year?

How many hours will we spend recreating this year?

How many hours will we spend online this year?

In a year, there are ONLY 52 hours of church services.

They're valuable.

There's a limited supply of them.

SO MAKE 'EM COUNT!

(SELAH)

I posted on FaceBook this week: "Why do you attend church?" Here are some honest answers, mostly from people in this room:

1. Re-charge my eternal batteries.
2. It's my happy place.
3. Take 1 small hour of my week to give back to God in worship with no outside interruptions.
4. Because I know the Holy Spirit will meet me there.
5. Worship alongside other believers and continue intertwining my life with my church family.
6. Same reason I go to the wilderness, to be with GOD.
7. Reminder to be who God wants me to be because sometimes jealousy & personal gain get in the way.
8. Because it has become one of life's virtual habits.
9. ☺ To pick-up chicks!! Oh wait..was that only me?

10. Do you want the Jesus answer or the truth? Let's be honest, mostly for selfish reasons--what can I get out of it?
11. Be re-energized and inspired by fellow Christians!!!
12. Helps pick me up, dust me off & send me back out when I feel like I failed.
13. Remind me that I'm wonderfully and beautifully made and loved by my Great Heavenly father.
14. Be taught, challenged, stretched, grown and refined.
15. "Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion of rich, healthy blood to a sick man." -DL Moody
16. (☺) So Natalie can give me some coffee, I can hear great music, shake hands with a stranger and give some money. ☺
17. Cynical me says, "To wipe my conscience." Inspirational me says, "To love my God and learn to be like Him!"

There's truth in all those responses.

Regardless of which ones you resonated with, the truth that trumps all others is:

The church is God's idea and plan. And God does not want us to neglect our meeting together.

God designed church to be critical to following Jesus.

Look in your NOTES:

Sundays are a priority in my life. I'm usually in church 3 Sundays or more per month.

a.) That's me.

b.) That's not me because_____.

c.) That's not me, but I want it to be, so I'm going to_____.

I'm going to give you a minute to answer that honestly, pray if you feel like it.

((((time to fill out))))

(SELAH)

That was the "Sunday" part of our talk, now let's do the +2 part.

To help us talk about GROUPS, I want to invite up Bob & Lorraine McCool.

(Q&A with couple that nervously have agreed to get in their 1st Oakbrook small group-- mine ;-) This illustrates that normal people are nervous and fearful of getting into a small group)

((((time to fill out small group card))))

To help us talk about the SERVING value, I'd like to offer up a couple great volunteers: Kurt Dove and Slater Young.

(Q& A with two normal guys, high schooler & senior citizen of what they do, how they got started and why they do it.)

(How to get serving in your notes.)

(Setup communion)

For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for you.*—Do this to remember me." In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this to remember me as often as you drink it." For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again. So anyone who eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily is guilty of sinning against*—the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ That is why you should examine yourself before eating the bread and drinking the cup. **1 Corinthians 11:23-28 NLT**