

S1:E3 Confessions of a Pastor

What are we talking about today?

What we have learned in 10 years of starting a church.

Today's Topic: Confessions of a Pastor

-I want people to hear the raw, authentic battles of pastoring, leading MYSELF and how it as affected the church, those around me.

#1. I Don't Grow a Church

- I think this is best said; "I don't grow THE Church". Sure, personalities can draw numbers, but I don't grow God's church.
- I used to put so much pressure on myself to grow the church.
- It's incredibly refreshing to not have to carry that responsibility. Instead, my responsibility is to follow Jesus well, live with integrity/character, love my family, and allow what God is doing in ME to reflect in my leadership and teaching to our church. As I grow, so does the church...DEEPER, not just WIDER.

2. Substance is Greater Than Style

- We used to be so gimmicky with how I thought people would come to church.
- What I've realized over the years was what I already knew as a teen/young adult in my own experiences with church. People don't want style or perfection, they want AUTHENTICITY.
- It's not about music, stage, pulpit, altar...at the core of people's dysfunctions, arguments, etc. was the idea that church feels fake. You put on the church face on Sunday, then went about your normal lives the rest of the week. That kind of faith experience turns people away from the Gospel.
- The gospel doesn't need my help! It needs my faithfulness to preaching it as my primary focus!
- The Kingdom is attractive on its own, it's why the most broken people flocked to hear Jesus....it was so upside down and counter cultural to everything they had ever known.
- This is also why I believe character trumps talent all day long. I don't want the best talent, I want the most teachable.

#3. Simple and Quiet is Better Than Complicated and Loud

- This is the "purpose" conversation. People think having purpose in God means doing something that gets noticed.
- A simple, quiet life filled with faithfulness and love will grow the Kingdom of God.
- It's why Jesus said that the first shall be last and the last shall be first.
- Some of the most impactful people in my life are not the ones who preach on stages, but are the ones who live lives of simplicity, love their families/spouse well, and live a life of prayer.

#4. Prayer is VITAL

- It is truly amazing at how the church as a whole neglects teaching on prayer.
- Prayer is not just a PART of our spiritual existence, it's PRIMARY.

#5. Discipleship is NOT a program

- People always asked "what do you do for discipleship?", which normally means "what curriculum, class, small group, etc. do you have?"
- Again, due to the nearly 3 decades of evangelism culture, pure discipleship got lost in the shuffle.
- It's a way of life, not program you finish.
- It's done with Jesus, in private, and with others.
- We are so process oriented and relationally shallow. Not too many people want to commit to living out their lives in community and discipleship long term. We want to move on to the new thing.

#6. It is my responsibility to disciple my family

- Not Youth group, Kids ministry, etc.
- They are a part of our tribe that comes along side of us, but WE are ultimately responsible for how we guided our kids toward a relationship with Christ.
- Talk about the "Year of Apprenticeship"

#7. Finding community as a pastor is difficult

- Some people want to get close to my position
- Some people want to be my friend, but won't allow me to be their pastor
- Talk about what a pastor's wife told Jess one time
- Even with other pastors, they are too busy for relationship.
- The older I get, the more I want deeper relationships that are DEDICATED AND PASSIONATE ABOUT FOLLOWING CHRIST AND BRINGING OTHERS ALONG, TOO.

#8. Leadership is Painful

- "Leadership Pain" by Sam Chand
- Your capacity to lead is only as high as your capacity to endure pain.
- Leading broken people while being broken is such an irony, right?
- Our most painful moments have come at the hands of our leadership--good or bad. We haven't always done it right, but even when we did, it didn't always turn out the way we wanted.

#9. I Was Emotionally Immature/A Broken Soul

- Narcissism, Co-Dependent, Comparison
- I wanted to be loved, affirmed, and the "success" of our church fed the evil beast.
- I would base my emotional well being on the comments, emails, numbers, money coming in
- I went on a journey to become a devoted follower of Christ, find healing, sabbath, solitude, prayer
- Within 2 years as I got healthy, the church began to take this shift.
- I hate that I hurt some people. I can never take it back. All I can do is have restorative conversations, repent and ask for grace.

#10. I Still Don't Know What I'm Doing

- But that's ok, I love it!
- It keeps me teachable and reminds me that God is faithful and will add people to His church in spite of me.
- But He wants to include me as well if I'll submit to Him.

3 Keys to Victory:

- #1. Devote Yourself to Becoming an Apprentice to Jesus
- #2. Give Grace to Yourself and Others
- #3. Remember that there's a "YOU" that you haven't met yet...I'm in process, too