


EXTENDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD...ONE PERSON AT A TIME

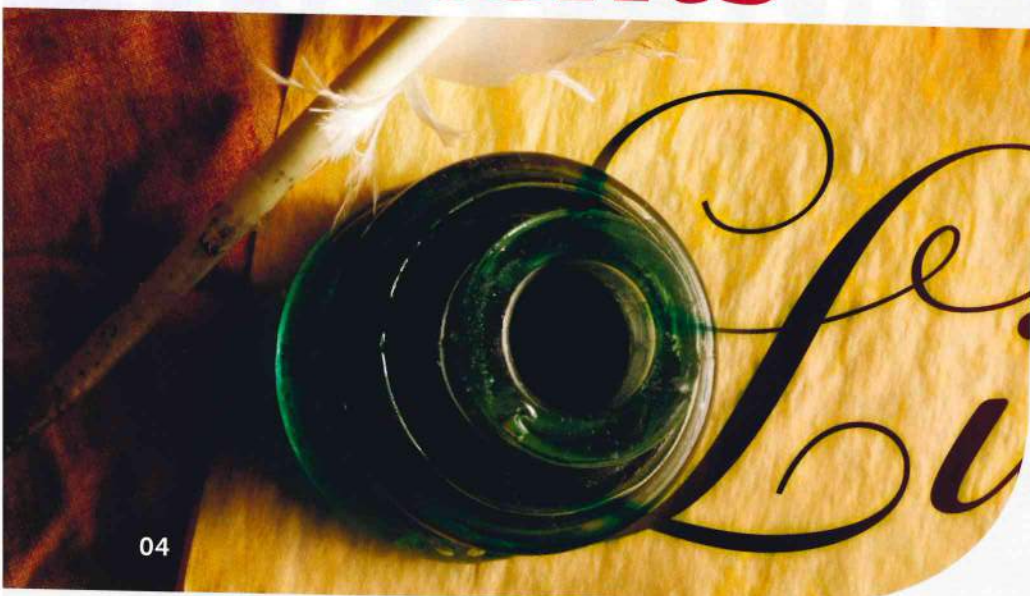
ONE-TO-ONE[®]

Autumn 2011

Liberty
AND
Justice
FOR
All

A quill pen and a small glass inkwell filled with dark ink are positioned on the left side of the page. The background is a piece of aged, yellowed parchment with a textured surface. The overall theme is historical and related to the American Revolution.

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from the editor

What Is God Saying?

How to find unshakable truth in times of shaking

It is a familiar question to the people that I pastor—whenever we are meeting or discussing issues, I inevitably ask, “What is God saying to you?” I am one of those weirdos who believes that God talks to people; I believe He talks to me, and He is talking to you as well. Don’t tell Richard Dawkins or Bill Maher, but I actually believe we can hear God and know His will.

Of course, this should not be a strange belief for any Christian, but sometimes we are intimidated by cultural commentators into thinking that perhaps we are odd if we can hear the voice of the Lord. In John 10, Jesus says that He is the “Good Shepherd” and that we are His “sheep”...part of His “flock”. Some today may consider those terms insulting: “*I am NOT a sheep!*” But when we understand the meaning of the word pictures that Jesus is painting for us, we begin to see the beauty and wisdom in them.

Jesus says, essentially, “I know My sheep and they know Me. They know (recognize) My voice; they listen to Me; they follow Me.” It is in hearing and following that we find “the still waters” and experience the restoration, protection, peace, and

provision promised to us in Psalm 23. Many years ago, I was on a late night phone call with a church member who was going through troubles. It was during a season when I was getting many such calls, late at night. Hours and hours were spent listening, praying, advising, and often repeating myself to some folks who were seemingly disinterested in following through on anything discussed.

On this particular night, I wrapped up the phone call and then went down the hall to check on my little girl, who I thought was fast asleep. It was, after all, way past her bedtime, and once more, I had missed the opportunity to pray with her and tuck her in for the night. As I tip-toed into her doorway, she sat up and said, “Daddy, let me ask you a question!” I was surprised, but I said, “OK, what is it, sweetie?” She said, “When you get all these phone calls from people, do you ever ask them if they have talked to Jesus first?”

Right then and there, the Holy Spirit wrote that one on my heart.

God is speaking today, but can we hear Him? Are we listening? Too often, we are not even expecting Him to speak. Or, He says something we don’t like ... maybe He shows us a way to go that we don’t want to go. Disobedience or rebellion will cause calluses on our hearts, our spiritual ears, and de-sensitize us to the voice of the Lord.

Another question: What are we doing with the last thing that God said to us? So often, we take a “cafeterian” approach to the word of the Lord. We want to pick “a little of this and a little of that” based upon our own tastes, rather than receiving all that God has for us. God doesn’t speak to us to give us goosebumps, but to edify us, to build His Church, and to extend His Kingdom.

Sometimes what we call the “Rhema” (now) word of God is really just a tickling of the ears given by someone trying to impress or please us. The Rhema word will never go against—and will always be confirmed by—the Logos (written) Word of God found in Scripture. Beware of anyone who tries to divorce the two in their teachings.

Isaiah 55 urges us to call upon the Lord while He is yet near. These are days to seek Him with our whole hearts, to repent of our own ways, and invite His Holy Spirit to restore and guide us in the right path. Shaking is happening and will continue, but His Word is forever settled in heaven, and upon this unshakable truth, we can find a place to stand. **121**



STEPHEN SIMPSON is the Editor of *One-to-One* and Senior Pastor of Covenant Church of Mobile.

The background of the page is a warm, golden-brown parchment. In the upper left, there is a dark, circular inkwell. To its right, the word "Liberty" is written in a large, elegant, dark red cursive script. Below the inkwell, the text "What is our mission, and how can we carry it far beyond the church walls?" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. To the right of this, a paragraph of text begins with a large "J". Below this paragraph, another paragraph begins with "I was recently reflecting upon our Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and these words: 'One nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all.'" Below that, a question is posed: "What do those principles mean for all of us and how do they relate to God's purpose?". This is followed by a section header "God's Idea" which is highlighted with a dark red brushstroke. Below this, a final paragraph begins with "Patrick Henry famously said, 'Give me liberty, or give me death.'" At the bottom of the page, a quill pen lies horizontally, with a small red ink blot on the parchment to its left.

keynote

What is our mission, and how can we carry it far beyond the church walls?

BY CHARLES SIMPSON

Jesus Christ is the Lord of all nations, and He has a purpose for "every kindred and every tribe." I am grateful for the heritage that I have and to live in the United States of America. In so many ways, despite challenges, we are a very blessed nation; in many ways, the most blessed in all of history. In spite of our faults, we are heirs of great foundations and principles that reflect the deep, spiritual truths held to be "self-evident" by our founders. For these truths, they gave their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor.

I was recently reflecting upon our Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and these words: "One nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all." Those words are rich with meaning: "with liberty" speaks of free choice and the right to possess; "justice" speaks of righteousness without partiality; and "for all" speaks of our mission.

What do those principles mean for all of us and how do they relate to God's purpose?

God's Idea

Patrick Henry famously said, "Give me liberty, or give me death." Those words could have been said by anyone of the thousands who *did* give



ND Justice FOR All

their lives then, and in the following years. Why was liberty as important as life itself? And where does liberty come from? To be sure it is not cheap or trivial. Since we have not lived under tyranny, it is difficult for us to understand its worth.

The idea of liberty does not come from government, politics, economics, or education; it is a *“God idea”*. It is part of our creation nature. From the very beginning, the ability to choose and the desire to do so was in our hearts. Later, Moses told Israel, “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land...” (see Leviticus 25:10). Isaiah declared that the acceptable fast was to set the captives free (see Isaiah 58:6). Later, Jeremiah recorded that Israel would lose

its kingdom because many refused to release the captives (see Jeremiah 34).

The idea of freedom is as old as humanity and is founded in the very image of God, Who gave us a free will to be exercised from the love of God and neighbor. His Law was the great social framework that would provide the foundation and boundaries of freedom.

Our spiritual enemy, on the other hand, seeks to enslave us by using our freedom against us. He uses our own desires to destroy us; freedom becomes license when we lose relationship to God. That *kind* of freedom becomes slavery to our own appetites and destroys both ourselves and others in the process (see John 8:34; John 10:10).

“The idea of liberty does not come from government, politics, economics, or education; liberty is God’s idea.”

Jesus and Liberty

Jesus is the Father's nature and will made flesh. He demonstrates the purpose of God. In John 8, He said that the truth would set us free. If He makes us free, we are free indeed (see John 8:23-36). The truth first sets us free from ourselves. It brings us repentance from self, and we receive the One who is true and the Spirit of truth who guides into truth (see John 14-16). Truth is impartial. Progress begins when we face the brutal reality of our own sin nature and turn to Jesus who frees us from it. While we cannot liberate nations politically, we can liberate people individually with the Gospel of liberation from self and entrance into His Kingdom. If we do that, political and economic freedom follow.

I'll offer an example: Zimbabwe was once prosperous and was

the "bread basket" of Africa. Then, they began to accept a "liberation" based upon Marxist dogma—no God. Now, Zimbabwe is in chaos and must import food.

There are other examples of nations who sought freedom without God, based upon some utopian, humanistic ideal. It has *always* failed. Why? Without God, there is no justice.

Justice

Liberty is the ability to make our own choices and have possessions. This was called "the pursuit of happiness". **Justice** is to do right without partiality. Often it is referred to as "righteousness". Justice is vital for many reasons, but primarily it preserves freedom. Once we use our liberty to act unjustly, we began to lose our liberty. Our form of government especially depends upon a moral people (other forms do as well). Our founders understood that and encouraged religion. Religious services were actually conducted in the United States Capitol and other government buildings.

History's Great Awakenings have been motivated by facing justice and judgment.

Where does justice come from? Justice is God's own nature operating in humanity—God is just (see Deuteronomy 32:4; Isaiah 30:18; Daniel 4:34-37). Without God, man is not just; we are depraved and selfish. Isaiah 9:6-7 says that the Kingdom will be established with justice (truth without partiality). History and the Word of God tell us that corruption and injustice destroy a nation, but righteousness establishes and exalts a nation (see Proverbs 14:34). God is not partial (see Acts 10:34-35). His blessings are available to all things through faith in Him. **Noah** was just (see Genesis 6:9). **Simeon** the priest was just (see Luke 2:25). Mary's husband **Joseph** was just (see Matthew 1:19). God takes note of the just and the unjust. There are consequences to both.

Justice comes before mercy (see Micah 6:8). The just have received justification by faith in God's mercy. Therefore, the truly just show mercy. The unjust do not.

James 2:1-9 tells us not to show partiality or simply act upon our own self-interest, but to do what is right regardless of appearance or station. If we do, then we receive mercy and mercy overcomes judgement (see

ZIMBABWE ON THE BRINK:

Large orphan population

AIDS 16% (Among highest in Africa and the world)

Rampant Corruption

Massive Debt

95% unemployment

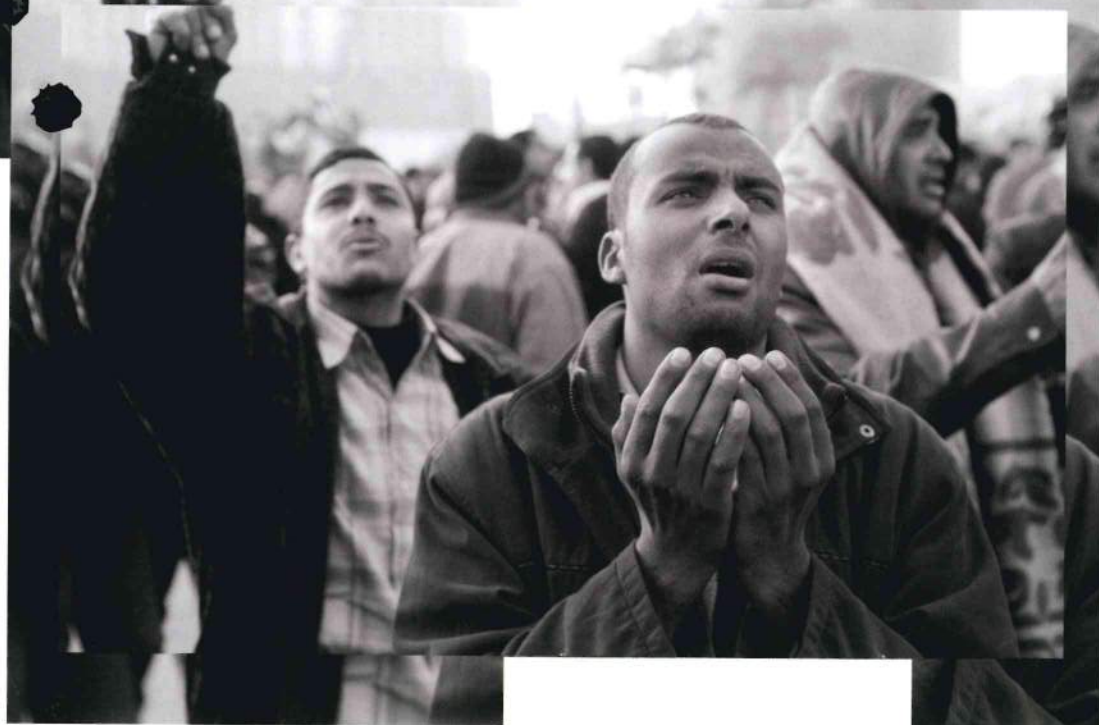
Majority of population depends on international aid

Life Expectancy: 37 years

James 2:13). Jesus said simply, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." If we comprehend the true meaning of justice and mercy, we will *love* justice and *give* mercy. Justice is good, for social reasons and it pleases God. Understanding God's just nature will cause us to cry out for mercy. We deserve justice and judgement, but God offers mercy when we realize that. All of history's Great Awakenings were motivated by facing justice and judgement.

Jonathan Edwards and others in the Great Awakening spoke of the awful consequence of facing the justice of God. People literally called out for mercy through Christ. Justice motivated mercy. When justice and judgement are removed from the message, there are no standards, no consequences, no Hell, no mercy, and no Gospel.

In Psalm 51, David acknowledged that his sin was against God and God only. He realized that what He had done was not only a violation against Bathsheba and her husband, Uriah, but God Himself and His justice. In that realization and confession, he found mercy. When we remove the consequence from the message—fail to warn against misuse of our liberty—we promote destruction. Love without truth results in enabling disaster. We



are stewards of both love and justice, and they are given to us—for all.

For All

Israel's great error was in forgetting that the blessing of Abraham was for all nations (see Isaiah 42:6). They were chosen to be a light to the Gentiles. In the end, they tried to proselytize instead of evangelize. What they kept to themselves, they lost. This is the error of many Christians. The Gospel of liberty and justice is for all. Jesus made this clear in His Commission to the apostles—the "sent forth ones" (see Matthew 28:18-20).

God created the world and has always had the entire world in mind—"whosoever believes" (see John 3:16). That was not a new thought in the New Covenant, but dates all the way back to creation (see Genesis 1:28; 12:1-3; 18:17, 18; 22:16-18). The prophets spoke the same message (see Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 42:1-4; Isaiah 60; Joel 2:28, and so many more).

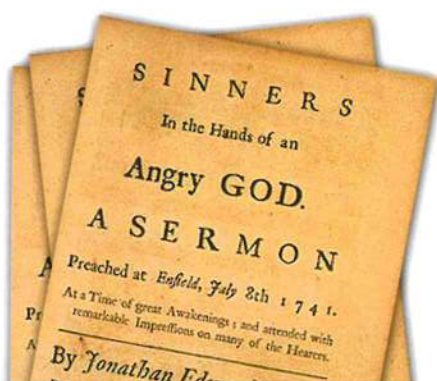
Jesus often referred to His purpose for the world. The angels

Ask those who live in tyranny: Do all roads lead to liberty and justice?

announced it at His birth, "To all people" (see Matthew 8:11; 24:14; 28:18-20; Acts 1:5, 8). When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, Peter announced that the promise was for all (see Acts 2:39; 8:4-8; 9:15). The Gospel quickly spread because the early Church took the "*for all*" seriously. Acts 19 is another chapter that tells us to preach the Gospel to all people, everywhere. They used their liberty to liberate in the face of fierce persecution from idolators

What Happened?

If you visit those areas in the Middle East now, you will find the tyranny of either Islam or secularism. Why? How did a once "for all" liberty and justice become contained and culturally impotent? How did the spreading



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“That’s My Wife!”

An unforgettable lesson in honor

by Stephen Simpson

At age 12, I was so much smarter than I am now. Having discovered, at that age, cigarettes, beer, *Playboy*, and chewing tobacco, I had become a debonair man of the world; a seasoned adventurer with little time or patience for such mundane tasks as “obeying parents”, “doing chores”, or “studying”. In short, I was well on the way toward earning my PhD in Cocky Brattiness, with a specialization in Foolhardiness.

Surprisingly, my parents were unimpressed with my achievements or knowledge in these fields, and were working and praying hard to assist me with an attitude adjustment. In our home, we had lots of love, which was not only expressed through hugs, kisses, words of affirmation, and pats on the head, but also through discipline and clearly expressed expectations. “Sparing the rod” was not a philosophy embraced by the elders in the Simpson community.

Having run afoul of this troublesome aspect on more than one occasion, I was honing my skills as a slick and devious operator; a sneaky opportunist looking for the merest crack into which I could slither. I

was becoming a 1970s version of “Eddie Haskell” (see also schmoozer, playa, deceiver). These burgeoning skills seemed to offer the tantalizing prospect of continuing in my wicked ways while also preserving my hide.

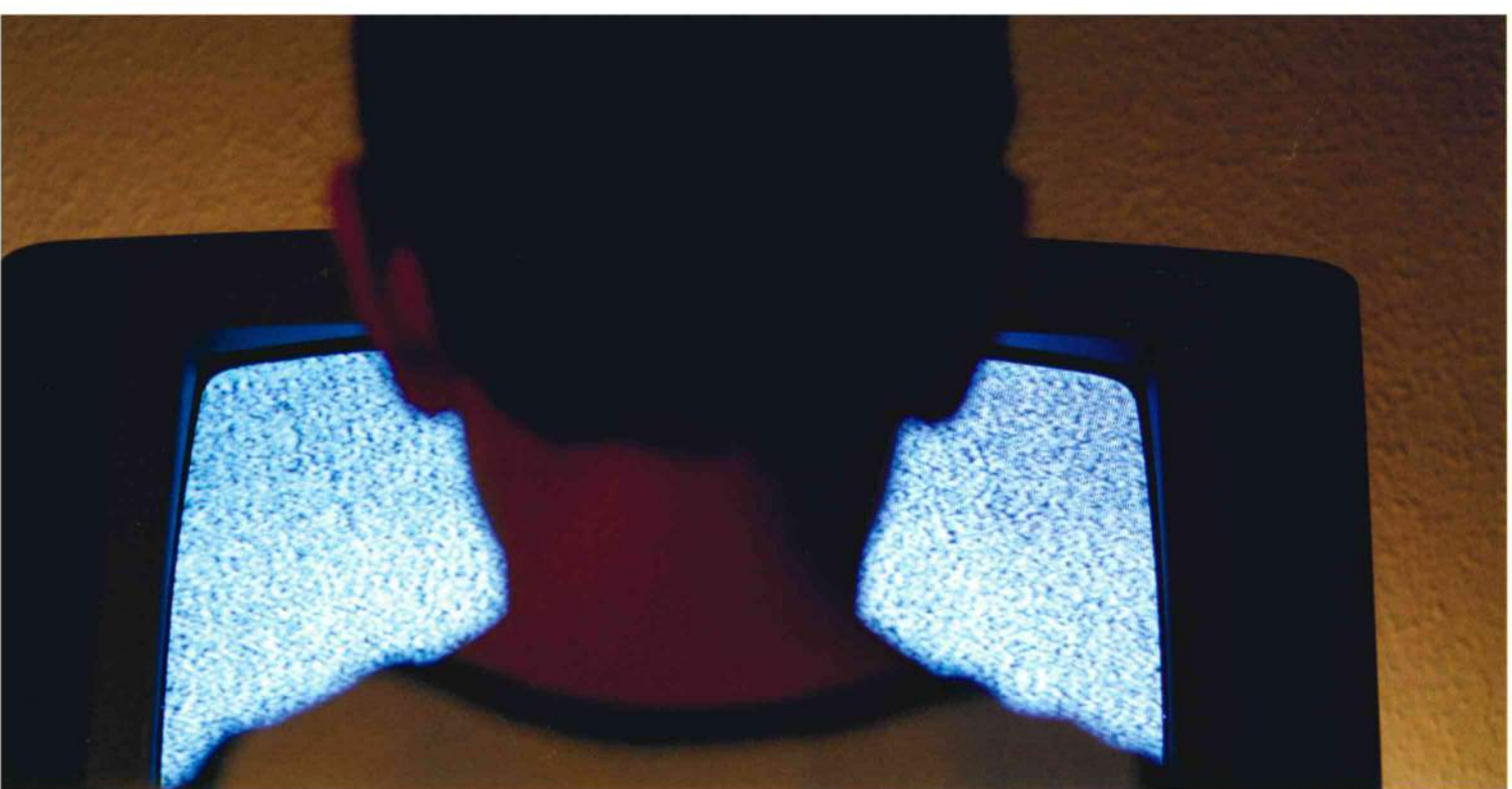
First Things First

Now, among the expectations in our home were a few cardinal principles outlined for yours truly. To wit, each day when I returned home from school, I was expected to first handle my household chores and do my homework before I went outside to hang out with my buddies or ate a snack or watched television. Because my Dad was usually at work when I arrived home from school, my mother was the enforcer of

these rules, and she was adept at carrying them out with much grace and humor, backed by a Ninja-like knowledge of employing an Azalea bush switch on my backside. And of course, I was always expected to respect my Mother. Knowing this, I had been meticulous in holding to the code, day-in, and day-out.

One day as I was biking home from school, a notion—surely born in the lowest regions of hell—wafted into my brain: it was time to challenge the old order. ***The times, they are a-changin’! Talkin’ ‘bout a revolution! Power to the people!***

When I arrived home, I noticed that my Dad’s car, as usual, was not in the garage. My mother was about



to face the dragon alone. I parked my bike, tossed my school books in the garage, walked inside the house, poured myself a large bowl of delicious cereal, and plopped down on the floor of the den for a serious bout of prolonged cartoon watching.

Irritatingly, only a few moments passed before my Mom appeared, and she was perplexed. "Stephen, have you done your chores already?" "Nope!" "Stephen, have you done your homework?" "Nope!" A pause, then quietly: "Stephen, you know what you're supposed to do first when you get home."

Something within me arose. It was similar in spirit to the creature that burst out of that guy's chest in the *Alien* movie. I turned to my sweet mother and said defiantly, "Don't give ME any of that ---" and I used a word that I had never used before (or since) around her. About the time that last consonant was spitting out of my teeth, I noticed an ominous shadow in the doorway.

"I turned to my sweet mother and said defiantly, 'Don't give ME any of that ----'"

It was Dad. He was not happy.

I was not on the Titanic when it slipped beneath the waves. I was not on the Hindenburg when it blew up. But suddenly, I understood how all of those people must have felt.

Dad simply said, "Come with me." My knees were jelly. The Bible tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and I was wising up fast.

"Sit down," Dad said. In a quiet voice that was strangely reminiscent of Clint Eastwood, my Dad ... who had suddenly become 15 feet tall ... said,

"Son, that's your mother you were talking to in there, but that's also MY WIFE. And nobody talks to my wife that way!"

Then he said, "Son, you're getting too old to spank." Suddenly, the sun burst through the clouds! The bluebird of happiness began to tune up, ready to sing "Zip-a-dee-doo-dah!" "Son, you're getting too old to spank ... pause ... pause ... so this is going to be the last time that I will spank you." The heart sank, the sun fled from the heavens, and the bluebird packed his bags and headed to Cancun.

"Son, this is going to be the last time that I spank you ... pause ... pause ... but you will never forget it." And I never did.

Afterwards, Dad reiterated a few points:

- **Cockiness and rebellion bring destruction and grief**
- **It's impossible to honor God while dishonoring godly parents**

continued on page 14

marketplace exchange

BLESSING YOUR CITY

An Interview with Kevin Miller, Administrative Pastor, Foothills Christian Church

> JONATHAN SIMPSON

Foothills Christian Church, just outside of San Diego, CA, is an unusual church by today's standards. I don't know of many other churches that are so creatively and effectively reaching youth and, indeed, its entire community.



How many churches do you know are a member of their community's Chamber of Commerce? Sounds odd right? Well, for Foothills it was

another step into their Marketplace Ministry which has a stated value that "God's Church is called to bless the city where we live and work."

Kevin Miller is the Administrative Pastor at Foothills Christian Church and also directs its Marketplace Ministry. We met one another in Gatlinburg, TN, at this year's CSM Leadership Conference. This interview with Kevin is one that I believe will inspire your vision for how we "the Church" can bless the city where we live and work, and also participate in the advancement of God's Kingdom through the Marketplace.

—Jonathan Simpson

Kevin Miller and Jonathan Simpson >

Q: How did Foothills Christian Church become a member of the Chamber of Commerce?

A: I came on staff full-time in 2008, with 30+ years of business experience, much of it in our own community. I knew that we needed to take a more prominent position of leadership and service to our city and the region where God had planted us.

The Chamber of Commerce is a strong organization in our area,





> Chamber of Commerce Meeting

representing more than 800 businesses in eight surrounding cities. Because I had long-time friends that were in leadership there, it seemed like a good place to launch from.

“In the long run, people only care that your walk is consistent with your talk.”

We really believe that when God speaks of us “ruling” in Genesis, that He meant it as a call to expand His Kingdom into all of our spheres of influence. He has really shown us this lesson in the Education and Government arenas. What were once long-term fields of battle are now led by a majority of Bible-believing Christians. Business seemed like the next area that God was calling us to spread His influence.

Q: What was the response by the folks at the Chamber to your membership interest?

A: At first confused, skeptical, and a bit guarded. Two things really helped overcome this initial response.

One was my long-term reputation in the business arena. People who may not have known about my Christianity at least knew me to be a moral and ethical man. Your reputation really does catch up with you—for the better or for worse. In this case, I had some people who could vouch for me.

Second was my calm response to their question “Why is a church a member of the Chamber?” I *love* that question! (My own Senior Pastors were asking the same question quietly to themselves at first.) It really gave me an opportunity to share our heart to serve the city that God had placed us in.

Q: How did the relationship develop with the Chamber and other members?

A: In the long run, people really only care that your walk is consistent with your talk. When the members of the Chamber saw our church bring more than 100 people to a neighborhood clean-up, invest money in corporate sponsorship of the chamber itself, and almost twenty business owners joined the Chamber during the membership drive—and as we offered the church’s resources to important community projects—the Chamber became believers in what a church can mean to a city.

Once they trusted us, the lid blew off, and we could really get to work. The President of the Chamber invited us to pray for God’s blessing over the businesses in the area. About 100

“Folks packed the Chamber offices and cried out to God.”

folks packed the Chamber offices and cried out to God.

For the first time in the 100-year history of the Chamber their monthly Chamber breakfast was hosted on the campus of a Church. Pastor Mark Hoffman got to share some of God’s views on business and how He cared about their businesses.

Recently, the President of the Chamber and the CEO asked me to take a leadership position on the Chamber’s Board of Directors—co-chairing a 20-year-old event that teaches Ethics in Businesses to 150 high school seniors.

God has opened doors and poured out His favor.



> FCC Ethics Conference

Q: Foothills Christian Church is known for reaching young people. What is your strategy for them as they enter the workforce?

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Would you like your business listed in Marketplace Exchange?

Contact Jonathan Simpson at:
(251) 633-7900, or via e-mail at:
simpsonjonathan@bellsouth.net

A: We have a mentoring program at Foothills called "Get a Job". It connects members of our BOSS (Business Owners Scriptural Success) ministry and high school students. We teach them how to find a job, how a Christian works, and give them an opportunity to shadow business owners in different types of businesses.



> **Mark Hoffman, Charles Simpson, and David Hoffman at the Sacred Assembly in El Cajon**

We are committed to teaching Christians, young and old, that the Church spreads far beyond the walls of an institution. They *are* the Church in their school, work, and neighborhoods. They are catching the vision and amazing things are happening.

God is calling us to bring our lights to the lampstand and bless the cities where we live and work. His method for each of us may be different than what others are doing but be encouraged that His power is available in His calling. 121

> **For more information on Foothills Christian Church, visit them: foothillschurch.org**

JONATHAN SIMPSON

coordinates Marketplace Exchange for CSM and provides management assistance for the Hidden Treasures Costa Rica ministry. You can email Jonathan at simpsonjonathan@bellsouth.net

FAMILYGRAM continued from page 11

- **He and Mom would always stand together as one when dealing with me**
- **Being part of a family means everyone doing their part**

I haven't forgotten that, either. In later times when those lessons would become a bit dusty and distant in my mind, the Lord was always good to remind me and call me back to the right path.

As parents, we need to honor one another in the way that we deal with our children. They need to know that "divide and conquer" is not a plan that will work in the house. They need to see parents who love one another and will stand together no matter what. I'm sure my parents had disagreements, but they never aired those disagreements in front of me or my sister and brother, and certainly not to their friends.

"That's my wife!" Dad said to me. Even as those words frightened me that day, they also comforted me. To know that there were some things in life that could be counted on to endure and stand, especially the love and honor that my parents had for one another, was an unspeakably precious gift.

What are the lessons we want to pass along to our children and to their generation? What are the things worth standing for? It's not always easy, and it won't always be popular with our children, but if—by God's grace—we can instill these values and principles in them now, then they will serve as a treasured compass for life. **121**

Stephen's Simpson's new audio message, "The Courage to Change" is now available! visit csmpublishing.org for info.

KEYNOTE *continued from page 7*

kingdom of God become the cloistered church? That is a relevant set of questions because it is now happening in the Western world.

My answer may be overly simple, but here it is: it came to be about *"our church"* instead of *His Kingdom*. We developed a professional clergy upon whom more and more responsibility was placed. It became about us instead of the world. The sacraments become the province of the clergy. The Great Commission was no longer a personal responsibility. We exchanged justice for affirmation and self-esteem. The missional Church became the fortress Church. The world was left in a vacuum of darkness—which the enemy filled.

Once the "for all" Church becomes the "for us" Church, we are like the Israel of Jesus' day. Power and purpose are gone. Do the message of God, liberty in Christ, and His justice really matter? Ask those who founded our nation and gave their lives! Ask those who live in tyranny. Do all roads lead to liberty and justice? Do all roads lead to Heaven? A casual look around the globe will answer that question. Are all ideologies of equal value and consequence? That notion is foolish, a deception, and destructive.

Is the Church in the West and in the US in danger of following the path that was walked by the Church of the Mediterranean and Europe?

I believe that it certainly is. Why? We seem to have more believers, more churches, and more of most everything...except understanding the personal responsibility to bring liberty in Jesus to others. Many believers still leave that to the staff and the Sunday meeting. Churches function more and more like a business; less and less like disciples on a mission. And, we are having little impact on our culture.

Meanwhile, there is an enemy committed to erode liberty and justice and to enslave the uncommitted in self-serving, deceptive philosophies, and mere creedal faith. Too many Christians are embroiled in relational disputes, sectarian squabbles, and petty preferences while the personal mission to bring liberty and justice to all suffers. Those who hear what the Spirit is saying will be blessed with a great harvest. Those who do not will lose what they "seem" to have.

I have great confidence in God's earth purpose and His power to perform it. What I long for is to see His people rise to His calling—on a personal level. Let's move beyond "surrogate evangelism" and the focus on good meetings and good preaching that tickles our ears. Let us move on to a mission in the power of the Holy Spirit. God will work with us to liberate others and establish our lives with justice if we keep the "For All" in mind. **121**

CHARLES SIMPSON is Editor-in-Chief of *One-to-One Magazine*. He ministers extensively throughout the United States and among the nations.



Charles Simpson

Ministry Itinerary

October 14-16
St. Louis

Christ the King Church
Michael Peters / 314.963.1278

October 21-23
Bettendorf, IA
River of Life Church
Jim Tully / 563-332-9154

November 11-13
Houston, TX
Christ Covenant Church
Dennis Jamison / 281.463.6600

November 4-6
El Cajon, CA
Foothills Christian Church
David Hoffman & Mark Hoffman
619.442.7728

December 2-4
Mission Viejo, CA
Saddleback Covenant Church
Kevin Davenport / 949.770.0291

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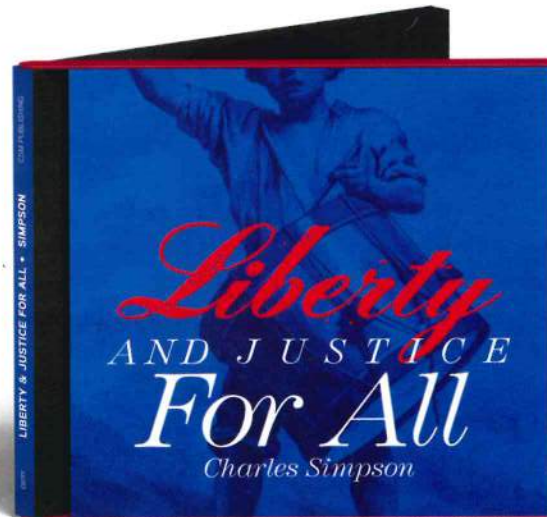
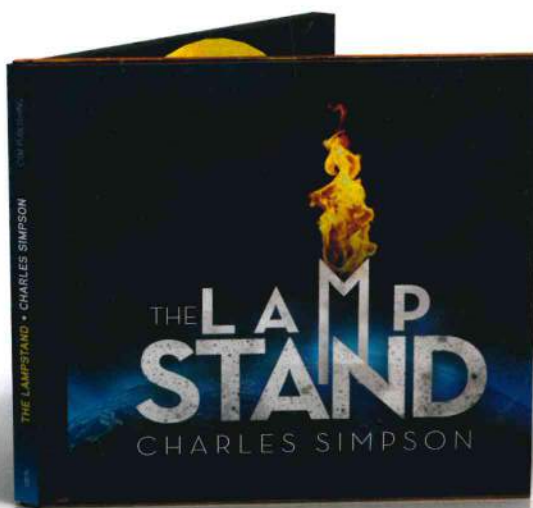


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These messages are also available to download online.....\$6EA

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