



Vision 2.0

January 14, 2017

In a time before TV, the internet, or Social Media, Jesus went viral. For three years, wherever Jesus went, crowds followed. Matthew records an interaction Jesus had with his disciples as he looked over the growing crowd.

*³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸ therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." – **Matthew 9:36-38***

Jesus is not looking at random people. These are people coming to see and hear Jesus. As the crowds grew, Jesus does not say we need to build a building, get organized or develop a strategic plan. Jesus asks the disciples to pray that God sends workers to the people who are "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."

In Matthew chapter 10, Jesus gives the disciples His authority and sends them out to tell the people the Good News. The news that the Messiah has come. This reminds us that the disciples were the answer to their own prayer, just as we are the answer to that prayer today. We are called to labor in the harvest, to tell people the Messiah has come and that through Him we can have life to the fullest.

It is hard to believe that three years ago, Calvary was a struggling church. A church with less than 80 people in attendance. A church with few children, teenagers or young families. A church with a small, committed and exhausted group of men and women doing everything possible to keep the doors open. A church praying for and trying to understand God's plan for this family called Calvary Baptist Church.

In early 2014, Calvary began gathering monthly to prayerfully consider where God was leading us. For several months, we met as a church family to pray, dream, discuss and seek God's direction. Out of those meetings, God revealed His mission, core values, vision and first

steps for our church family. For the last two years, these have guided the direction and decisions of our Calvary Baptist Church.

What a radical transformation God has brought about in that time. Our average attendance is over 270. We have dynamic ministries to children, teenagers, young adults, families and senior adults.

The number of people serving in our church continues to grow. Currently, there are more people serving in various ministries than attended the entire church three years ago. Our giving has increased from \$13,600 a month to over \$34,000 a month. We are close to breaking ground on a new building that will provide more room to disciple children, teenagers and adults.

God has allowed us to baptize 37 people in three years. Many are finding healing and a renewed faith in our church family. It is overwhelming to watch as lives are being transformed as people discover and grow in the depths of a relationship with God. As if that were not enough, Calvary is a fun church to be a part of. We don't fight, we try new things, we seek God's best, we care for each other and we love to laugh.

It is obvious God is doing a great work in and through our church family. While we want to celebrate all God has done, we know he is not finished with us. There are thousands in our community who are "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd," with many more moving in every day. We are called to go and tell them the Good News.

This is the mission God revealed to us over two years ago. God commands and empowers Calvary Baptist Church to DEMONSTRATE His love, DECLARE the Good News and DISCIPLE near and far. As we look to the future, God is leading our church family to focus on three areas:

Build A Movement Of Reproducing Disciples

*¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." – **Matthew 28:18-20***

We are called to make disciples. We do this through baptism, including people in our community of faith and teaching that shows people who God is and what He wants for our lives. Making disciples has always been important to Calvary, but God is leading us to be even more intentional about and focused on developing disciples who are able to then develop other disciples.

This will be done through a mentoring process where one person invests in the life of another person. The mentor will give the disciple the information, tools and opportunities to

grow in their faith, so they will be able to disciple another in their time. Our mentoring process will be built around:

- 3 Actions = Demonstrate – Declare – Disciple
- 6 Values = Word – Prayer – Gospel – Disciple – Belong – Worship
- 3 Involvements = Worship – Small Groups – Serving

Ultimately, it is Jesus who grows the church. Our job is not to make our church larger. Our job is to make disciples. If we grow as a church, even becoming the largest church in our community, and do not make new disciples, we fail.

Our first step in building a movement of reproducing disciples will be to hire a new staff member who will focus on developing and implementing our discipleship process.

Release A Wave Of Small Groups

*²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. – **Hebrews 10:24-25***

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that we need each other more than we realize. We need to be part of a community that digs into God's Word, encourages us in our faith, cares for us and allows us to care for others. While our gathering to worship is important, people need to be part of a smaller group.

Currently, small groups are important to CBC. God is leading us to move from small groups being important to small groups being essential. As God continues to send people to Calvary, we also want to grow smaller through groups that provide community, teaching and encouragement.

There will be groups that meet on our campus, in homes, in coffee shops or any place people can gather. They will meet at various times throughout the week. Some will meet once a week, and some will meet every other week. Different groups will have a slightly different emphasis, but all will have a:

- Leader who is responsible for organizing the group and getting people involved.
- Teacher who teaches the lesson during the meeting.
- Care Leader who coordinates follow-up and meets the needs of those in the group.

Our first step in releasing a wave of small groups will be training enough leaders to at least double the number of small groups at Calvary. To do this we will begin a six-week training event on February 8, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Develop A Network Of Congregational Communities

*² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. – **Acts 13:2-3***

*⁴⁸ And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. ⁴⁹ And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. – **Acts 13:48-49***

The result of Barnabas and Saul being sent out is that an entire region heard the word of the Lord. We currently have people attending CBC from Del Valle, Cedar Creek, Smithville, La Grange, Elgin, McDade, Paige, Red Rock, Rosanky, Dale and every community in our county. While we are thankful for every one of you, God does not call us to see how many people we can get to COME to us. God calls us to GO to as many people as we can. For us, that means planting Congregational Communities across the region.

Each congregational community will be unique; based on the people involved and the community they are reaching. At the same time, all the congregations will be united around the mission, values, strategy, structure and leadership of CBC. Our current, and expanding facilities will host multiple congregations, while serving as a central location for ministries to children, teens and adults, as well as a place to train leaders and provide central offices.

Each congregation will have a pastor who teaches and leads that congregation while working with the other pastors to prepare sermons and cast vision. Some of the congregations will have their own building, but most will meet in schools, office buildings, warehouses or any other place they can find space. Our staff will work with all the congregations to develop ministries needed in a community.

This is an opportunity for us to GO: to go into communities across our region and plant strong congregations that will spread the word of the Lord. It will allow us to develop and send out disciples and leaders who God will use to transform lives of people.

Our first step in developing a network of congregational communities will be starting a 3rd Sunday morning congregation April 2, 2017.

There are two reasons we are starting with this step. First, we need space. Our second service is consistently full. Second, and more importantly, is that we want to develop congregations that feel like family. Before we can send a group out to do this, we believe we need to have at least three in our current location.

What a joy it is to look at the journey on which God has taken us and where He may be leading us. We realize this journey included in Vision 2.0 will push our faith and challenge each of us to seek what God is leading us to do. We serve a big God who calls us to a big vision.