

Overview of 2023 Annual Report Wednesday, January 31, 2024, CBC

1. Ski Trip—NEED signup for lift tickets today/tomorrow
 2. Life Financial Group coming on Saturday/Sunday, October 5-6. They are seeking to do what Crown Financial/Dave Ramsay, etc. doing. Offering services to Christians like Edward Jones, etc., but also looking to serve the church with helpful information. They have emails, podcasts, some very relevant things as I've just had to do a bunch with mother inlaw and children's money let alone my own. Tell what some of the seminars are—we feel that this is helpful enough that want people in our church to have opportunity free of charge. Other's who come in will need to pay for workbook and maybe small fee to help w lunch, etc. You will have opportunity to have session w someone about your specific situation—fill out forms. Still MANY pieces to work out—come with questions and comments, but glad for this opportunity. Good chunk of Saturday and Sunday.
 3. No Spring Adult Fellowship—2 weddings, how can you help, clear off calendar, prepare—housing for friends, relatives, meals, setup cleanup, etc.
 4. Clean church quiz—what do we use to clean the pews? Where are the rags? What do you do with them? Trash bags, toilet paper? How many rows for that side?
- Trust you got to read the Annual Report—think little bit on each report—**General thoughts as you read?**

Pastor Jahn's--Read highlighted sections—VERY IMPORTANT to recognize how God acted inside other periods of history—offering encouragement, but only seen as encouragement if trusted His word, His provision, His goodness. Many didn't—so wars, dissension on who should be listened to; background for today's Hysteria—eye roll at presidential candidates but still firm feelings—talks of war wider than what have; economy squeezes; gender mess; education problems—where is God's voice? Often muffled in church b/c of focus on entertainment (enjoy the experience) and emotional focus on healing/restoration rather than reverence that should come from being confronted w God who created us—reverence that allows Him to determine reality, relevance, **priorities—1. Standing of relationship with Him now and eternity 2. Appropriate focus for living—sanctification with image of God formed in us as goal of fellowship, nothing short of that; of corporate and individual discipleship, evangelism, spreading the glory of God instead of merely message of healing/restoration/love/acceptance/fulfillment** – Read **Here highlights** – look at God, His Word, **does this basic thrust fit within His character and will? If so, what would a healthy response include?** Read rest of report through this lens and will see God working AND opportunities for you to take ownership (instead of wondering whether all the kids should be in college or not, what is your role in their spiritual stability and current and future growth and service? Text, email, letter, call—listen, ask questions—encourage toward priorities of gospel—relationship w God and living in/for His service **What is the Why/What—how does it lead to the How**

Tim—starts w posture of worshipful exultation to calling others to that posture—what would that look like? What keeps you from that posture? What keeps them from that posture—same/different than you? **Key Statement: It is my unique privilege . . . praise-givers.” “As I've observed before . . . glory of their Redeemer.”** **What does/should this perspective do for all the “business” end/activity needed to keep this going?** Give reason for it—inspire us to join in the structure—signs of this taking place

Jody—encouraged, encouraging toward what aim? You see philosophy—goals—**raising children to be God-fearing, zealous for His kingdom, servants of the Most High God** – so many assumptions in this goal—think carefully, unpack (I would add that this is goal of whole church—**are YOU this? How are you growing toward this end?**) – there are not just problems presented, but a process, provision w tools—did you think about them a bit? THIS is where we are heading—**are you heading direction of these reports?** Read her women's fellowship report and you will hear her say signs of it appearing through the years—hear this in each report—do you look for THESE signs of growth/encouragement—**your Why/What determine the how—methods/what fill time w—where are you heading?**

--with this as background, **I too was thinking happenings through lens of proclamation**; So many passages could focus on; Two passages as I think of **gospel proclamation**. The first, from our 2018-2019 memorization work: "We **proclaim Him**, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ." Colossians 1:28 (NASB95) **What are goals, values, focus presented in this passage?** second, from our memory program ending in the middle of 2023, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; ³ seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. ⁴ For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." 2 Peter 1:2-4 (NASB95) **What are goals, values, focus presented in this passage?** These **passages present a treasured focus in God and in Jesus Christ, a purpose in proclaiming Christ as the means to a restored relationship with God, and provision for everything needed to keep that focus and complete that task. This gives me hope and purpose individually as well as the parameters for shepherding as an elder at Cornerstone.**

Couple sentences later, "What is presented in these two passages is a lifelong task—difficult, but worthwhile as it helps Christians do what we were saved to do—live pleasing to God (Eph. 2:10, 5:10). While the verses are in English and there is plenty we can get from just reading them, we must meditate on them inside their contexts. Failure to do this leads us to **DESIRE to proclaim Christ** but ending up proclaiming something/someone else, sending a mixed message to the world about the treasure of the gospel." Is this your desire to head in this direction? How are you doing? Growing toward these goals, values, focuses? **HOW?** Can you give me evidence of growth? One of the first things I've come to realize when we talk about a focus, mission, and source of provision is that to move in any direction, we must consider the alternatives or distractions to that direction. There are many voices clamoring for our attention and submission, there are many desires and needs seeking fulfillment, and there are many places to look for provision. What do you **WANT** to proclaim when it comes to focus, mission, and provision? What **ARE** you proclaiming? **How would you expose the difference between what you WANT to proclaim versus what you ARE proclaiming when it comes to focus, mission, provision, contentment, and satisfaction?**

1. Must identify specifically what you WANT to proclaim AND what you ARE proclaiming.

--perhaps jot down initial thoughts; but also think about what others hear from you—(ie. I WANT to proclaim the sufficiency of Christ and that living to please God is privilege w all provision coming from Him—as I go through transitional stage w death, family dynamic changing, upheaval mentioned in first section—think easy for me to proclaim that it is too much AND that need to SEE success in ways I/you value)

2. If we would proclaim Christ as the sufficient gospel, must take these thoughts before and under God.

prayer and study Scripture (not merely others experiences) for what HE specifically calls for w mission, provision, contentment, and satisfaction

3. Must do this IN the course of everyday life

Life won't stop for you to figure all this out; so as move from one thing to next, recognize all must fit (24 hours—need to sleep, eat, work); ALL put this together in different way (even with crisis or life changing situations like new baby, home, job) **our values will come to surface—how/where/when do we proclaim our values?** (think how this works across different personalities) **Can you think of what distracts and complicates? Can you think of alternative focuses—perhaps necessary and valuable, but ones that can take away from the focus, mission, and provision found in these passages and the Scripture as a whole?** (when identify, then need to not always eliminate, **but see as distraction, so call it that so that it falls into its proper place**—ie. Kid crying, should you always run to stop them? **What should come before that? What looking to strengthen/weaken in your/their lives? What looking to accomplish**—**the lack of clear mission makes every little thing large** (think about life in retirement home—can you imagine what burnt lunch does? Imagine what fire alarm does? Imagine what tv connection down for day) when bingo is the big event, then little mission; fears get magnified, hurt, sickness, lonely, etc. **USE chaos, competing voices in your/their head to think about relevance of gospel—NOT GENERAL talk—specific ie.** We must proclaim Him in context of war/conflict and death—what does this mean? Gospel

must not only be relevant, but a necessity—**HOW gospel relevant? What keeps it from being a necessity?** NOT wanting peace w God, but peace from the conflict; carrying the lack of trust and hurt from conflict/destruction into rights for not trusting God or anyone and protecting themselves (protection, prevention, security cameras, etc.) **but what do they miss?** God is light, bread, door, all I AM statements—ALL found in Him—**think about this w all pieces in abortion**--while a great victory in the fight to stop abortion took place in the overturning of Rowe, states voting to protect abortion rights reminded us that the fight for life runs much deeper than a court case. (just not killing not fix—purpose of sex, how to handle undesirable situations, how to handle other's opinions about life choices AND reality of choices that can't be undone—guilt, shame, which "rights" triumph over other "rights," do I need to live with consequences? how do you enforce, how do you talk about these things?) how does the gospel speak to these issues? **Are we digging through these, exposing them, and applying the gospel to them, or just beating the drum of abortion which is the culmination of these issues**

--same with identity issues underneath Transgender issues—comes out w restlessness revealed with covid—businesses not being able to retain younger workers. **How does gospel proclamation speak to and deal with these issues—are we making the applications in what we proclaim? Is it clarified for them or do they just hear noise or irrelevance from you?** People are more independent and isolated, blinding us to the reality of just how self-absorbed we've become. Because our thoughts and habits do not have to blend with as many people, we've become more demanding of our social and work environments and more confident of our opinions. We've made it easier to not have to submit ourselves to others and trust few to get close enough to question us. **you MUST draw lines b/n gospel and these issues; does your life proclaim Him as relevant/necessity? What else proclaimed that obscures the Most High God?** (helpful but not central—time management, post traumatic stress help, money help, depression help—**NONE of these should replace priority of growing relationship w God and seeking to accomplish His good will—need connection that Tim brought up from praiseworthy God to how we faithfully accomplish the mundane which is really the necessary** **a. Can you think of provisions God has given that He would have you make more use of?** Bible reading, study, prayer—keep in front of God knowing HE ALONE can bring real change, people of God not to replace God, but to help head in that direction—ie. Not full product—people I trust, know, etc. but where see areas of God focus, discipline, hope, life that you lack—**learn more about people** (ie. Women's Fellowship Testimonies provide little more window—**what did you learn about Nicole, Cindy that should provide more resources even as think how to care for their souls? How would you find that stuff out about others in church w/o waiting for public testimony**) (what ministries, outreaches could you support, find out more about, pray for, just get better picture of so think about corporate responsibility—don't commit to more than can, but can still become more aware) **b. All this looms large--Can you think of little pieces that would help that tend to get squashed when you think of growth because only looking at your present feelings or final product?** Must break down what find into achievable steps or general focuses—ie. What should I "at least" be doing more of/less of? Where do I think of these things throughout my day?

Don't get lost in the weeds of happenings both in your own life and life here at church and just go back to where you were—let these passages give perspective—they speak of transcendence—of higher purpose, of greater love and provision, of greater life, of One worth willingly yielding to—greater than the other treasures which vie for the Most High God's place; **We proclaim Christ! (if time, quote from Emblems) the kingdom of God and the kingdom of self will ALWAYS battle; so make use of the little moments, opportunities like these reports—read again and look for transcendent purposes, goals, values, provision and seek to head here—Let's Pray** Churches grow internally and externally when **proclaiming Hm** is our primary disposition toward others. **What are you proclaiming?** But outreach is not the root of **proclaiming Jesus**. We must be very careful with the gospel lived and given. The book, *Emblems of the Infinite King* by J. Ryan Lister has been very helpful in giving an elementary aged systematic theology in story fashion. After listing the first three marks of the church (the church is one, holy, and catholic [universal]), he comes to the last mark. The church is apostolic. "This characteristic answers the question, What does the church say to accomplish God's mission? In one word: Scripture—all of it from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from the book of Genesis to the book of Revelation. The church speaks the King's Word to the King's people in the King's world for the King's glory and the King's mission. The King builds his church on the words written by his Son's Spirit-led and faith-filled followers—men known as the Death Killer's apostles." "Their words—led by the Spirit and centered on the Son—are the voice of the true church. So as the church finds its life and breath in all of God's Words in all of the Bible, the church lives and breathes because the apostles proclaimed all of these Words to all the world. This is why the good news of Christ forms the center of the church—because the good news of Christ is what all of Scripture is pointing us to." P. 149 This is why we unapologetically center around the Word at Cornerstone.

This is just a small picture of happenings at CBC. What can you add? The real goals lie in us being knit together in love, growing in all aspects to Him who is the Head through our worship, study, and service to each other and then those God has placed in our worlds. While there are many distractions and alternate goals, there is plenty of evidence of God's goals growing in the lives of those a part of Cornerstone. May God continue His work in and through us in 2024.

Serving as a fellow member and as one of your elders, **Pastor Jahn D.**