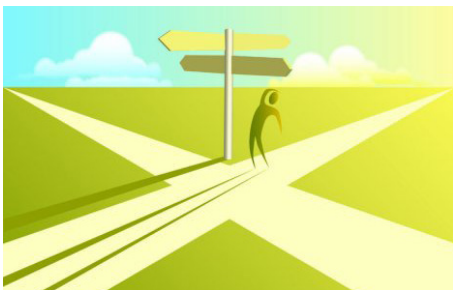


At the Crossroads

This is a church with such rich history that has impacted many for Christ throughout its 153 years of existence. A church does not last this long unless it is making a difference and people continue to be a part of it, year after year. For 153 years there have been people coming to this church to hear God's word and grow closer to Him. This is a testimony to God's work in this city!

With such an amazing history, so many changed lives, and so much hope for this church, we now find ourselves at a crossroad. We find ourselves at a place where church attendance is low and diminishing. We find ourselves at a place where kids are no longer running around the building and young families are no longer entering our worship service. This is something you all know much better than I, but it must be clearly spelled out so we understand the crossroads in which we stand.



Standing at the crossroads, there are two options, and we must choose one. But keep in mind that this choice is not a choice we choose once or twice. It is a choice we choose daily, a choice we choose seriously, and a choice we stay committed to.

The first option is the easy one. It is to continue in what we have been doing. It is to enjoy the people God has given us until our congregation slowly diminishes and this church is forced to close its doors. I say this is the easy option because it won't involve change, it won't involve people doing what is uncomfortable, and it won't risk our time and money on something that may not succeed. This is the first option.

The second option is the hard one. I will not skirt around this so we all know what we are getting into. The second is the decision to do everything possible so that Christ will be made to look glorious in this city. This means that nothing we do now is untouchable...everything we do can be changed if that would mean more people coming to know Christ. This second option will involve sacrifice - sacrificing my preferences for the sake of Christ, sacrificing my comfort for the sake of Christ, sacrificing my time and money for the sake of Christ. Most of us will never come close to suffering for Christ in the way that Peter describes it in 1 Peter 4, but we are still called to put aside everything for Christ. Christ left his heavenly dwelling to take on flesh and live a life where he would suffer and die so that others may live. So we must decide if we are willing to die to ourselves, our desires, our preferences, our tradition, our anything if it would

make Christ's name known. That is why this is the hard decision. It is uncomfortable and unnatural...but it is right.

So the decision is yours. It is clear by my interaction with the member of this church and the action to hire an evangelism



director that you have decided to pursue the second option. For that I commend you, for it shows you are ready and excited to see things happen here. But as I said earlier, this is not a decision that was made when I was hired, but a decision that each of you make daily. We have jumped the first hurdle in creating this position, but many more hurdles await us as we will have to do things to suffer for Christ. Will you be willing? Will you join me on this venture? I am willing to get in the trenches with you, but a one man army is no army at all. With you, this will be a war against evil spiritual forces (Eph 4:12), without you this will be a suicide mission.

So if you are in, take up your armor (Eph 4:10-20). This is war, and war isn't easy.