

Our Compass Gathering

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Preacher: Tobin Miller

[0 : 00] Okay, and if you've done that, Watermark Kids, it's time for you to dismiss. But before the kids leave, I want to pray for you, okay? So let's pray. Father, we just thank you for this day.

We thank you for the kids that you've brought in our midst. We thank you that they are the future generations. Pray for the teachers and for this time that they would see your son Jesus and they would fall in love with him. We thank you for this incredible, incredible stewardship and blessings you've given us.

And we pray these things in your son Jesus' name. Amen. Watermark Kids, you are dismissed. Wow, that was two years ago. I think I'm still wearing the same shirt.

Don't say anything, okay? Maybe I need some fashion help or something like that. How are you guys doing? We are in for a neat time. You know, when we started with the church, one of the things we wanted it to be like was a family.

We wanted it to be a family setting where we got together and we discussed and we felt the freedom just to share who we are and what we are and be on this journey together and to ask questions.

[1 : 05] And I kind of envision it being like the dinner table at my house where the kids get around every day at night whenever we get a chance to eat and we eat and we talk and it's loud and noisy and chaotic, kind of like what you've already been seeing here.

And then we get to this point where we say, share your highlight for the day. And the kids will share something that was really important or exciting for them. And then we say, well, share your low point and they'll share something usually they didn't get, like a dessert or something like that. And so we wanted to think about this one-and-a-half-year celebration as kind of something like that. We wanted not to make this a business meeting.

So I've actually never seen this done before. This is the first time we're going to try it. But I love this church because we try everything for the first time and just see what God does with it. So we're incorporating our business meeting into this time of worship.

And so we're going to have some friends come up and share some testimonies of things that God has been doing it. We're calling it our Compass Gathering because we want to look back at where we've been. We want to look back right now where we are and then pray and project towards the future where we feel like God is leading this church.

[2 : 13] And pray a lot. This week has been a crazy week for me. As I've been on this journey, I'm thankful for my kids. My kids remind me of things.

They've reminded me of three important events this week. The first thing they reminded me of was it was my wife's birthday. So it's always good to have someone remind you of those things because, guys, that's a bad thing to forget.

So Christina was birthday on Tuesday, and she was 28 years old. And so we had a celebration for him, her. I love you, honey.

And then I was reminded that it was the church's one-and-a-half-year anniversary, so we have a celebration for that. And then one of my kids reminded me of a very important anniversary that happened today.

Remember what it is? April 15, 1912. The RMS Titanic was going on its maiden voyage.

[3 : 20] The Titanic took off, and at that time, people said the Titanic was unsinkable. And a little before midnight, the unthinkable happened, and the unthinkable ship hit an iceberg and betrayed everybody who hoped in it.

There was supposed to be 35 lifeboats, but there were only 20. And because of that, about 1,500 people died in the icy ocean waters of the North Atlantic.

Many of the lifeboats, they left, and they were only partially filled. Later on, they were going to talk about what the people were thinking as they heard the cries and the struggles of the people in the water, and as the people tried to get to the lifeboats.

What were the people in the lifeboats thinking? And they said basically this. They said, we can't let them get too close to us. Because if they get too close to us, they're going to upset things.

And they might tip us over. I thought about that. Sometimes I say that as I go through my day, and God brings people into my life.

[4 : 32] I can't let them get too close to me, because they're going to upset things, and my life might get tipped over. One lifeboat, though, chose a different path. This lifeboat actually went back into the darkness, because it was pitch dark.

And they listened for the cries and the screams of people, and they tried to save as many people as they could. The paper said about this lifeboat that they risked all to save some.

They risked all to save some. The passage today in your bulletin is about another type of lifeboat in Acts.

Today, the lifeboat is the church. You and I. Now, the passage doesn't just begin in Acts.

It actually begins much further than in Acts. In fact, it begins in Exodus 24. In Exodus 24, we're told that God sends Moses into the most powerful nation in the world, at that time, Egypt, to redeem and free his people.

[5 : 34] And he does these incredible miracles, and Moses redeems and frees God's people, and he brings them to the Mount of the Lord, Mount Sinai. And on this mountain in Exodus 24, we're told on the day of Pentecost, seven weeks, 50 days after their deliverance from Egypt, God comes to them, and he gives them the Ten Commandments.

He gives them the law. He gives them these sets of laws that is given to the people of God to show them what they must do in their own power to reach a holy and perfect God.

The day of Pentecost, Exodus 24. Now we come to the passage in Acts 2, and we have another day of Pentecost, seven weeks and 50 days after Jesus was crucified and Easter happened, what we celebrated last Sunday.

Christ has come into the world in much the same way that God sent Moses, but he sends his perfect son into the world to free his people.

Christ comes and he does battle with the greatest and most powerful thing in the world, sin. And he destroys it. And in this passage, the people are gathered, and this time, God doesn't give them a law.

[6 : 53] God gives them his spirit. He gives them grace. He gives them mercy. He gives them power. And we see in this Acts passage that as he gives his power to the people and he sends them off into the chaos, which is the wrecked world, where people are screaming and dying and hurting and broken, that this lifeboat called us, the church, does amazing, amazing things.

They go out and they start to proclaim the truth of God and they start to rescue people. They start to rescue lost and drowning people. They start to change cultures.

They do incredibly countercultural things. And the passage you have in your bulletin, Acts 2, is probably one of the first gospel sermons preached. The gospel sermon of grace.

And we see there that after this message is given, what was 120 people turns into 2,000 people and then into 5,000 people.

And this message and this power and this hope that was in the people's lives when they heard the message, it changes everything. It changed families.

[8 : 13] It changed businesses. It changed communities. It changed cities. It changes culture.

When you look at the Acts passage, you realize that as the people of the church go off, that they're grounded in very special things, that their lifestyle has a very specific code of conduct that is governed by love.

They have a common set of learnings. They have a common set of fellowship. They have a common set of worship experiences. They have a common set of outreach experiences. And through all these things, God uses the lifeboat of the church to rewrite history and to rewrite people's stories.

I've asked several people today to come up who've been a part of this lifeboat as a church. And I just want them to share what God has been doing in the ministries that the Lord has given them.

Now, there'll be time for questions afterwards. We're going to have Q&A; time after we eat. No one's going to get out that door. We're locking that door. You can't get out that door. You got to go this way because we're going to have this massive buffet lunch.

[9 : 26] There's a lot of food we prepared for this celebration time. So you have to go that way. And we're going to eat. And if you have questions, you could ask us there in the tables. There'll be staff at each table.

But for this time, we just want to think about what God has done and praise him. Hi, I'm Eric Scott. I'm the youth ministry coordinator here at Watermark Church. I got here in September and started the youth ministry.

Basically, we started from the ground up. I got here and we didn't really know if there were any youth or who they were. And so we said, let's just start meeting with them and see who comes. So we did that and a few kids came at first and then eventually they sort of started bringing their friends.

And we keep meeting now, getting to know the kids, getting to figure out what their stories are, what their passions are, and sharing the gospel with them as we do. Here at Watermark, we have what's called the sandbox.

And in the sandbox, you can see it in your compass booklet if you look through there later on. But it says that our goal is to help people take the next step in becoming fully functioning followers of Christ. Christ. And so in the youth ministry, that's one of the things that we really want to do also.

[10 : 33] And we have a few ways that we are specifically trying to do that. One of those ways is by equipping parents to raise their kids. Ultimately, we believe that what we are doing has an impact on the kids.

Otherwise, we wouldn't be doing it. But we also believe that ultimately, what the parents do at home is going to have a much greater long-term impact on how the kids grow up and how the kids love Christ long-term.

And so one thing that we want to do as the youth ministry is equip parents, train them, and help them in raising their own kids. Another thing that we want to do is give kids a place to belong. Sociologists today say that this generation, in reverse to other generations previously, needs to belong to a group before they will believe that group's faith story.

Basically, you need a group. In the past, it was basically you believe in Christianity and then you come in and you can join the church and be a part of the group. But sociologists say that today, people need to belong before they will accept that what you say is true.

[11 : 39] So we want to give the kids a place where they can come in, where they can be accepted, where they can see the difference that a gospel makes in people's lives and that they will say, hey, I want that. I want what you have.

And we've seen this already. There was one kid back in November. He just started coming on Friday nights with a friend, met some people there, kept coming, eventually started coming on Sunday mornings, comes from a non-Christian family, didn't have any background in the church or anything, but just found a place where he belonged, saw something that was different in this group and kept coming back and kept coming back.

And now he's told me that he has believed and that he is a Christian because we have this place where he was able to belong and see the difference that the gospel makes in people's lives. So that's another thing that we're trying to do.

And then the third thing is we want them to be connected to the church as a whole. We want it not just to be, oh, we got the youth dude over here and maybe some volunteers and the kids go off with them, but we really want them to be integrated into the church and to be a part of this family and this body.

And so at the youth ministry, we want to help kids take the next step in becoming fully functioning, fully functioning followers of Christ. And those are some of the ways that we are trying to do that.

[12 : 54] Hey, good morning, Watermark Church. My name is Joshua and I've helped to oversee community groups here at Watermark Community Church. You'll notice that community is our middle name.

You heard Tobin read a passage or talk about a passage this morning from Acts 2.42 and we see a church that is completely passionate for God, passionate for each other and passionate for the world around them to know Christ.

And we believe at Watermark that that's what God has called us to be. We see the church in Acts operating that way and I want to tell you some things that I've seen. We started off with a very small group of people and with a conviction that we didn't want to just gather in groups of people just like us in the church.

We were convicted that God has called us to make an impact in the communities where we live and that's where we need to start. So we started gathering with other people from Watermark that live in our neighborhoods.

Here's what I've seen just over the last year. I've seen groups that study the word and that are growing in the word together. I've seen people who have come closer to Christ because of what you're doing in your groups.

[14 : 11] I've seen groups broken and praying for lost friends and those friends coming into this room after they've heard the gospel in their workplace from you.

I've seen groups who have gathered around families that have new babies and support them in their time of trouble. I've seen that personally in my own life several times.

I have seen groups that will go to the doctor with a friend in their group who hears the news about cancer. I've seen groups that will weep with each other when someone in their family passes.

I've seen groups in here who will go out and who will plan and pray how to reach their neighborhoods. I've seen groups in here that remind me so much of what we read about in Acts.

But we're not finished. We live in a city of seven million people. Most have still never heard the gospel and are still waiting. So in the year to come we want to tell you that however long you're here for no matter what you think has brought you to Hong Kong that we believe that God has brought you here for such a time as this.

[15 : 36] So in the year to come we want to see however long that time in Hong Kong or in this life is that you make the most of it. Most of it when you're alone in your workplace, when you're together with your community here.

The most of it when you're here in this church. God has called us to not do this journey alone but to do it together as a community. I look forward to hearing the great things that God does through this church and this community.

Hi, my name is Melanie Case and I work with Watermark Kids as the director. Hi, I'm Natalie Mann and I am the Children's Ministry Coordinator. We just want to take a moment to tell you guys something about Watermark Kids this morning.

We began with about four ladies meeting together in a clubhouse function room in 2010 just to come together what do we want this thing to look like and we came out after a few coffees and a couple hours with several key points.

One, we want to share the gospel clearly. Two, we want to help these kids see how their lives and their stories can intersect with that gospel story. And three, we want to do this all in a fun way in community together.

[16 : 48] So that was our mission and that's what we've kind of gone forward with and that's what we're doing now. So we began with about 26 kids in October of 2010 and we now currently run about 70 kids in five different age groups.

So God is growing us and we see him beginning to redeem families. One example of that is a family a few, well about one year ago a lady called the office and she said I would like to bring my girls to your Sunday school.

Do you have a class for kids or a program? So I said yes we'd love to have you. And she said well you know I'm not a Christian so I don't know is it okay if we come? I said yes we really want you to come. We'd love to have you so please come next week and she did.

Since then her girls come faithfully and we're grateful for these parents for bringing their kids. They don't know Christ but it's amazing to see God doing that and to see God working miracles and bringing other people to the faith and using kids right to do that and these girls volunteers are really encouraged by them.

They bring notebooks to take notes and they really have a spiritual sensitivity and you can see God working in their lives so we're really grateful to see what God's doing and how he can redeem the family through kids and parents as well.

[18 : 00] This upcoming year the vision is to equip parents. We want to develop a partnership with the Watermark Parents so the Watermark Parents can help the Watermark Kids in their spiritual development and we know that's happening in a lot of homes already but we want to see that

happen in a greater way so we want to give parents resources we want to give parents ideas to help their children develop in their spirituality and also we also want to take some time with our leaders so thank you leaders if you're out there raise your hand.

there's no leaders in here the leaders most leaders are teaching today but we want to thank all of you and that's another area in which we want to look forward to is to equip our leaders better so they feel more comfortable in the classroom to help our kids as well so thank you for your time today.

My name is Mike and this is Katie my wife and I just wanted to share a couple of stories that happen in lifeboats in universities and so one thing why the whole university ministry journey has been exciting for us is because God both put that burden on us to come to Hong Kong to reach students that are lost and drowning on the campuses here Katie came from the US I came from Germany we met here and we got married here as a part of the watermark journey so it's worth getting in lifeboats you may meet someone there that you want to marry another thing is that when people think about what is it worth to get in lifeboating people think oh missions happens in unreached people groups and in places of poverty or HIV orphans in Africa we really have to help there but a lot of people don't think that Hong Kong U one of the most prestigious universities in the world is a big place of ministry but seeing the lostness of students over the years the loneliness the pressures the fears of life this is where we feel that we need to get on a lifeboat and go back and identify with what's happening out there on the campuses so just something that has been really amazing for us joining Watermark has been to see all these volunteers that came alongside us and feel the same burden and passion ministering to students and just placing that hope in their lives statistics say that more than 80% even of Christian students that step on a university campus will lose their faith in the journey of being at university so I think it's an amazing calling that

God has placed on this church to reach Hong Kong U and impact these future influencers and leaders of society and that will have a trickle effect into so many businesses and medicine and law and wherever they will go out later on and so we're just really grateful so as we look ahead we just wanted to also just say thank you to all of you who have been a part of this and who have been resourcing this ministry and just as a little glimpse of what's ahead we have a couple of students that are now joining the baptism class for the May baptism and they're actually three students from three different continents and so we just wanted them to stand up real quick so that you can see who they are and so later on after the service when we are at the tables out at the lunch and when you go out this way they will be sitting at the table as well so if you are still in the journey of asking what does it mean for me to be baptized and to follow Christ and they will be there with us they may just share their story and you can ask them about their story or if you have questions feel free to talk to us and we're just amazed by what God has been doing and how he is building up this ministry on this campus thanks brothers and sisters my name is Kelvin and I'm the husband of Cindy

I serve on the transition oversight board for our church and before our group of elders are in place and this is Jovi my name is Jovi and like many of you I'm a volunteer and I serve in the transition oversight board so professionally I'm an auditor which means my purpose of existence is to make the lives of accountants really miserable and that includes the one I married okay jokes aside I'm here to share with you my testimony of God's great amazing provision for this church and his love for this community in Matthew 633 Jesus said but seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all this will be given unto you as well and that's I believe because he loves us so what did this church start out with in reality I think we start out with nothing but I would argue that we start out with a pastor who really truly loves God and the second thing we started with was potluck on the 27th of February 2010 we attended a first ever potluck dinner meeting of the church planned launch team hosted by our pastor and his wife

[23 : 25] Tobin and Christina that night 45 of us were all given a booklet this one area 15 and we were called to go and serve the Lord they unreached in the west of Hong Kong Island and in Tobin's words the rich the poor the community God's people we were all told that we are doing this because Jesus is alive we are doing this because Jesus is alive we are doing this because Jesus is alive so over the following six months we talked about vision value and purpose we did bible studies on what it means to be great and how does God want us to bless others I was taught for the first time ever that praying the praying body is the most important part of the church not the finance manager and not the production of Sunday morning service so sorry Cindy and sorry Charles we did not talk about money we did not have any paid staff well except Tobin as we kind of needed him

everything was done by volunteers and subsequently we brought Chris Tang on board as the second full time staff so how has God provided us financially well love offering of 1.8 million was received from Iden ECC before Watermark even existed since then we've received another 500,000 as for the community centre that a lot of us have come to enjoy we had a renovation fund and for that over 800,000 cash was received on top of a whole variety of furniture equipment and professional services such as interior design and architect services that has come on board now what sort of tithing then have we been giving as a church well for the

March 11th tsunami in Japan we've given 100,000 the future church planting fund of 1.5 million has now been set aside and additional to that we have 300,000 of neighbourhood watch fund which is set aside to serve the local community so we're giving away all these big sums of money are we as a church family financially healthy then well the more important question that we really should ask is are we spiritually healthy as Pastor Tobin often talks about money being one of our biggest idols we have way under budgeted for a lot of things to be honest and none of us have planted churches before we did not plan to have a community centre especially definitely not in the first two years we had no idea how much sound equipment costs this stuff and God presented opportunity many of them for us to outreach to our local communities that we never ever imagined and some of them took place in

Cyberport and Baku Villa despite our own shortcomings I've personally seen God sufficiently providing for his work without any disruptions if you refer to the page 31 of your booklet or the chart that's shown up here the audited financial statement not by myself but by an external auditor for watermark the first financial year ended August 2011 shows the general offertory which came from this congregation received 7.2 million Hong Kong dollars and the operating expenditure was 5.1 million excluding depreciation we believe offertory is an act of worship we've never passed an offering bag around and we want to continue this step of faith for as long as possible as God leads his people us onto this journey there will be countless that we won't know and cannot plan for and as we know we have now experienced that and as we seek his kingdom first and his righteousness and he does provide for us to take care of our little steps of faith and he is an example of how God has led abundantly and provided for us through the Watermark Community Center which we use to serve this congregation the unreached and community around us so brothers and sisters what we have seen so far is the mighty work of our mighty God in the past 18 months and 18 months only isn't our God an awesome God we are we are humbled by the church's continued generosity in tithing and you know we would like to submit to you the operating budget for the next 18 months in your booklets you've got these pie charts which I'm not sure are we going to have them no you have these pie charts which show yes those ones how the budget is planned for the next 18 months and you will see a number of 6.3 million Hong Kong dollars for 2012 and 8.3 million for 2013 you will notice a 22 percent increase year on year from 11 to 2012 and a 33 percent increase from 2012 to 2013 now these high growths of budgeting reflect that the church has grown much faster as we had all anticipated when the church opened its doors 18 months ago and the budget and you'll see the various breakdowns will reflect the continued investments in the core ministries of the church and that's namely the university where we continue to invest in equipping leaders in these communities second would be youth and church third would be the Sunday services and as well as discipleship now because we are a community church where we are fueled by the energy of the volunteers you will notice that in the budget most of it is variable cost increases what does that mean that means that the cost increases because there are more participants that also says that the fixed cost proportion is minimized and what we mean by that is that the support staff continues to be the same there is probably the addition of one church planting pastor and Tobin is going to talk about that in the next couple of months and this is in keeping with the vision that we want to be a church that will be a bridge for other church plants in the community so that's the budget for the next 18 other things to say here is that we can't plan as those of you know we can't really plan without a lot of fine tuning going down the road but what we have here is basically a guide and with anticipation for

[30 : 22] God how God will use these blessings and resources we're excited on how he would multiply these and magnify these in the way he transforms lives so while these numbers look big they're actually quite small compared to the way the Lord transforms lives in our communities and you've heard many stories previously and you know there's hundreds of stories that are untold so thank you so have you seen one of the requirements to be on staff is you have to be able to cry

when you think of lost people and that is a requirement we want people to never forget what it was like before they knew the Lord you know we were drawing up and praying about starting Watermark we knew that the west side of this island had a massive amount of people in it and very few churches our church and acts a church that believed and acted a very specific way the motto then and is still today is for the glory of

God and for those not in church this Sunday for the glory of God and for those not in church this Sunday we wanted to create a church for the unchurched the de-churched and the church we wanted to create a church where people could come and they could take their next step in their spiritual journey of God no matter where they were this vision drives everything that we do and I'm confessing to you right now that sometimes we don't get it right sometimes we do not get it right even after being one and a half years old and we're still learning and experimenting and trying to figure out what does it mean to honor the Lord but we you should go to Watermark I know that is true because there's several of you who are in here right now that your friends invited you here and they don't even come here some of them go to other churches and some of them don't go to church at all and that's what we dreamed of that people would be a part of that and see this as a church of a life and to serve in their parents church that's why the kids are in the service some of us think it's crazy and it's chaotic but statistics and everything show that kids leave their faith because they don't understand why their parents worship they don't understand why their parents take communion they don't understand why their parents or how they do these things and so we figured as we dreamed and prayed about this church that this is what we needed to do incorporate our kids allow them to serve allow them to see all these things that their parents do and their parents do not do if you're my kids you're reminded of that often you said this how come you're not doing that and so but we felt like this was a place where kids loved to come to church and they were willing to bring gospel centered where people who didn't necessarily agree on our thoughts or ideas could come and they could engage with us that's why often in sermons

I just stop and I say okay questions we have question and answer times in our sermons because we want people to be able to explore and go on a journey and ask questions we want people even after they've asked the questions and they realize I they're real they're authentic there's no mask that they're hiding behind but I think I can go back there and continue this journey and ask questions even though I didn't get all the answers I feel accepted by them we wanted to be a church that connected people to the community of people around them they could go on life journeys together they could be an authentic community that's why we say here all the time the only thing I say when you leave this door you can't leave that door you gotta leave that door but when you leave that door the thing I'm going to say is get in a community group life happens in community groups are you in a community group because we believe that's where God is going to transform and change the church we wanted to be a community at its core that we believed in all the one another that

Jesus talked about in scripture he said love one another forgive one another accept one another serve one another we wanted to be a church where people understood that they were not here on a mission to use Hong Kong often people come into Hong Kong and they say I'm here for a while I want to make a lot of money I want to be a church that was different so that when people came in here we realized that we're here to bless the city that God put us in the city to pray for the city not to use it that's one of our models you'll see it in a bulletin it says the first person plants a seed and the next people benefit from the shade we wanted to be a church where people understood that for the time that God has you here even if it's three weeks that you can plant a seed and that seed is going to be shade for someone else's life so we wanted to be a church that was different and we didn't use the city we kept asking ourselves the question what would it look like to make this city great for God what would if all of a sudden somebody came in and killed us all off that's a terrible thought isn't it we would go to heaven though that's great hopefully but if that happened what would happen to the city would the city be worse off because we weren't here would the community be worse off or would they just not recognize it we wanted to be a church that was on a mission to make this city great we wanted to be a church that believes that the best way to reach people and transform communities is by planting churches we believe that with all of our heart if you want to reach people who are pre Christian they don't know how to come to Christ the best way to do it is plant a church statistics play that out and so we wanted to be a church that talked about planting churches and moved in that direction always we just started a church planting fund we have 1.8 million dollars into

it and from this point on everything that you tithe on

[36 : 54] Sunday a percentage of that is going into that church planting fund a percentage of that is going into the neighborhood watch fund because we want to be a church that gives back and understands that the best way to give back those communities and impact them for the glory of God an amazing thing is right now we have on our scope the potential to plant two churches within the next year we have a Filipino pastor coming as soon as we get his visa and he's going to start scouting out areas where there's large Filipino communities and we were really excited about him I did a training for church planters in Manila two weeks ago Mike and I went and God just brought this guy in our door and so our hope is he'll come in and he'll be with us and understand our DNA and be who we are and he's going to go out and plant a church maybe in the community center we have a guy who's a Mandarin speaker he's a pastor he's a Mandarin from mainland China his wife is Russian and he's heard about what we're doing and he wants to be a part of that and so he's going to bring his wife and they're going to come and basically do a vision trip and look around and see can

I plan a Mandarin speaking church and what would that look like as I live in this community and go up into China and train future pastors and all of these things are happening because of the funds and I think it's happening because God is just blessing what we're trying to do but we're taking steps of faith and trusting him but there's a potential that we would be planning two churches of different languages within a year and I don't know if that's exciting to you but to me that's amazing I thought we'd probably do another English one first but then God just keeps bringing people to us who speak all these different languages if you know a church pastor who wants to plant church in Hong Kong send them to us because we want them to be a part of what we're doing our hope is to have 10 churches connected in Hong in different languages ministering to everybody we wanted to be a church that reaches out and trains up future leaders in Hong Kong and beyond on the campuses and in the school places and in the market places we have big aspirations for marketplace ministry we're hoping that God would allow us to open up doors and we're talking about starting a training center in the community center so I in that direction and trusting the Lord for what that looks like we wanted to be a church that cultivates a culture of health spiritual health in individuals and families we wanted to be a church where people who are not healthy can come and be healed and be made healthy right now there's several people who are getting together and they're praying and talking about what would it look like for us to start this bastion of wholeness and healthiness where people from all over this area could come and be healed and understand the gospel understand their identity in Christ and to be healed if you want to be a part of that please contact us because we're looking for people who have that on their heart to be counselors and who've been trained because we have about five already and we're needing more guys girls getting our act together I think I don't know we want to be a church that calls people to something bigger than themselves

I mean I realize even as I share this I hope you don't hear that we're saying that we're a perfect church we're not a perfect church I mean I'm your pastor so you know right away we're not a perfect church because I am not a perfect pastor as I said before I feel like I'm probably the most broken person in here but we want to be on this journey on this mission and so we're taking steps of faith to move in that direction and the question is is this the type of church that you believe God wants you to be a part of is this what God has called you to be here because if he has go to another church and bless that church with your presence I mean two months ago a guy came up to me and said I really love your church I think it's great I want to become a member but I have some stipulations I go I don't want to serve I don't want to tithe

I don't want to be bothered I don't want to be any kind of role and I only want to come when it's convenient for me and I said I think you got the wrong location the cemetery is over there you need to go to cemetery because if you want to come to this church we've said from the very beginning that everyone's committed to serve we've said from the beginning everyone's committed to tithe and give we said from the very beginning everyone's committed to be a part of the family and be in community and so if this is what you want to be and this is what God is calling you to do we want you here because this is where God is leading us and we need you to be with us we don't want to have you jump out of the lifeboat as we keep moving along you know if this is what God has called you to do and this is the church he's called you to be about I need to doing that we become Pharisees or we become religious people but I need you to think about and pray about and do

these four things and they're on the back of your bulletin in the points to ponder the [42 : 31] I invest we need you to invest in people in your world we need you to be out in the marketplace and sharing with people the journey that you're on we need you to grab people and talk to them we need to tell them about Christ in your life we need them to tell you about the gospel and how it's transformed you we need you not to be with a lot of other Christians ten times a week we need to be with non Christians people who are starting their journey that's why we're trying to be simple in our scheduling because we want you out there investing in your neighbors and in your families and we want you to share with them the message that God has given you the hope that you're changing and we want you to take them into your community group and let them meet the community of Christ there and ask questions and then we want you to bring them to church but we need you if you to be part of what God is doing in church to invest into people's lives because that's why we're here for the glory of God and for those not in church today today we need you to volunteer the

V we need you to serve I mean it's been amazing to me on this journey to see how people in our church have served so many people have served I had a guy here who's a pastor and a leader of a Bible college and I told him the percentage of people who are serving in our church and he said wow you have a very healthy church you have a very healthy church and I'm like praise the Lord because it's nothing that I did but you see and you understand as you're on this journey and this mission that this is what God wants you to serve and volunteer and so we need you to volunteer and do amazing things because just because we're doing good now doesn't mean we'll do good a year from now and we believe with all of our heart that if you're not volunteering you're not being the person that God has called you to be we believe with all of our heart with all of my heart we believe that if you're not volunteering you're not becoming the person that God wants you to be because only in volunteering and serving other people do you turn your arrows from inward to outward and in our first gathering as a church thing we said we want to be a church that always has our arrows outward focused outwardly not inwardly and if you don't volunteer your arrows are focused inwardly and we want you to focus outwardly we want you to focus on we need you to give we need you to give you know we need to give your money and

I hope you hear my heart here because it's not your money it's the money that God has entrusted to all of us we don't need your money really God has cattle on a thousand hills God can do everything that he needs done but he wants you to join him on this journey and worship with your money do you know that's what you do when you tithe you're worshiping God in fact God says in some ways that worship is even greater than up here singing praises to him because for most of that money is an incredibly strong pull and idol in our life and we need you to give for what God is calling us to do as a church because it's going to take a lot of money to plant churches to reach Hong Kong U students to change and support communities to change cultures to reach people in the marketplace it's going to take a ton of money and we need you to go on a journey with

God and ask him what do you want me to do with these resources you've given me am I tithing enough that's a question I don't ask myself often am I really giving what I should be giving but we need you to think about that because that's what it's going to take the minute you walk in and you see a number on the bulletin or you see something and we look really cool and everything is going good and you go they don't need my money I'm going to give it I'm going to some place else you are probably right but what you've done is you've missed the heart of the mission of this church you've missed the heart of why God has called us here you've missed the understanding that we're called to plant churches and reach lost people and change communities and go into nursing homes and fix nursing homes we've talked to the local government and we said we want five things that you guys cannot do five things either by finances or manpower give us your five top five list and we as a church we want to be about fixing those things but to do those things we need you to give and worship the

Lord and finally we need you to pray that God would be glorified in the journey that we're on as a church because in some ways as we said before we're still learning and we're taking baby steps and we're making mistakes and some of the things we've never seen done in this culture before some of the things we look for models and role models and we're like we don't know who's done that before what does it look like I don't know the only thing I've said is after we do it make sure we write it down so we can show somebody else in the future we need you praying for the leaders we need you praying for the church we need you praying for the future elders we need you praying for

the staff we need you praying for the volunteers we need you praying for the vision we need you praying for what God has on your heart because I realize even as we share these things there's things in your heart and you're like well they didn't share my passion they didn't share what God has brought me here for and we need you to pray about that and we need you to come and share with the staff what is your passion because you're part of the body and you need to be doing those things you need to be helping those things we want to help you and we want to be a part of those things and chances are if you have a passion right now there's probably 10 other people in this church right now who have that same passion but they're afraid to say anything but we need you to share what God's putting on your heart and we need to pray about that as you think about that we need to pray for the elders

[48 : 18] I've said that we need to pray for me please pray for me but most of all pray for Christina my wife I drive her crazy and we need you to pray for her we need to pray for her all the time and my hope is you're praying for all the elders and all the staff and all the leaders all the time that we would walk with the Lord that we be humble we have compassion and we be gentle those are the three things I ask you to pray for me all the time humility compassion we need to do that we cannot forget what it was like before we do that we become arrogant and we put the arrows inward pray for the leaders pray for your community groups pray for everybody we need to pray for that we need to pray that God's power would fall mightily in his church we've been talking about prayer a long time we keep talking about we keep praying pray that God's spirit would fall upon us and just knock us off our socks with how good and merciful he is in response we just worship him pray for the little seeds that are planted in the communities and people's lives pray that

God would do amazing things pray that Jesus Christ would be glorified pray that Hong Kong would become a great city pray that people's lives would be changed pray that eternity would be different pray pray pray invest volunteer give and pray if you want to come on this journey with us that's what we need you to do because it's going to be integral to whether we do what God's called us to do why did we start this church for the glory of God and for those not in church right now can you repeat that with me for the glory of God and for those not in church right now for the glory of God and for those not in church right now for the church for the unchurched for the de-churched that's why God has watermark here and that's what we're going to trust him for as we keep moving on let me pray for us father we just thank you for this day we thank you for your goodness in our life we thank you that you just overwhelm us with your love and your mercy and your grace and we are just humbled by your goodness in our life and father we think about the lifeboats and the lifeboat that pulled up beside us and our friends and our friends and our friends and our friends and our grandparents shared with us and our grandparents shared with us about Jesus and then we were pulled into that lifeboat to go on a journey and we pray Lord that we would be lifeboats even as we leave here that we would send us out into our workplace and into our community and into our schools and wherever you have us living and working and glorifying you and that we'd be beacons of hope.