

**2ND STREET COMMUNITY CHURCH - BECOMING MORE LIKE JESUS CHRIST  
BY LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE, AND SERVING OUR WORLD  
www.2ndstreet.org**

## **WHAT KIND OF CHURCH IS 2ND STREET BECOMING?**

When you and I, as followers of Jesus Christ, really begin to understand and embrace what Jesus Christ calls us to and requires of us, then the church will actually begin the process of **BECOMING WHAT THE CHURCH IS SUPPOSED TO BE**. Here is some of my vision for what the church **CAN** and **MUST BECOME** if it's going to make a difference in our lives and in the world ...

### **FIRST, THE CHURCH MUST EXIST AS A HOSPITAL ...**

A place for the sick, the hurting, the disenfranchised, and those with more questions than answers about God. In other words, for people just like you and me. The church must welcome people into the flock whether they appear whole or broken, and it must have discerning wisdom about identifying people's needs, and then come alongside them accordingly. I believe that the staff of a church can help foster this understanding of who the church must become by modeling transparency in their own life struggles, and victories.

### **SECOND, THE CHURCH MUST EXIST AS A WORSHIP GATHERING ...**

A place where people can learn the power of **PRAISE** (the ultimate experience) and **WORSHIP** (the ultimate relationship) to heal, convict, restore and prune. God has hard-wired every one of us (whether we're in a relationship with Him or not) in His creation for worship. Worship needs to be defined broadly, not narrowly ... including singing, silence, prayer, first-person testimonies, drama, video, poetry painting, instruments usual and unusual, and more. These are all paths we can travel to make worship part of our lives. Worship that doesn't lead to sacrifice is superficial at best, and false at worse, and must be avoided at all costs.

### **THIRD, THE CHURCH MUST EXIST AS A SCHOOL ...**

A place for those who want to learn more about who God is and how the truths of God's WORD are relevant to their lives. For this to happen, the equipping staff of a church need to teach and live out the whole counsel of God. When God's WORD is taught verse-by-verse, people are drawn into a God-directed desire to pursue and grow into the character of Jesus Christ, so that they can then live into the will of God.

Jesus, Peter, John and Paul all teach in *The New Testament* that in the last days false teachers will come into the flock to wound, steal and destroy believers. Pastors must remain very aware of this reality. Pastors can help their churches

grow in an understanding of **WHO** and **WHAT** the church is called to **BE** and **DO** by modeling study, the spiritual disciplines, and by teaching from God's WORD in ways that challenge, encourage, equip, prune, and lead the sheep of their flocks toward Christ-like maturity.

***FOURTH, THE CHURCH MUST EXIST AS A RETREAT CENTER ...***

A place where people can “come away from the world” and find safety, encouragement, community, and refreshment. Community Groups, Bible studies, prayer gatherings, retreats, and gathering together on Sunday mornings, are all parts of who and what a church needs to **BE** and **DO** if it's going to focus on how God wants to connect the healing, equipping, and vision God offers to transform us more fully into the family-likeness of Jesus Christ, so that in turn, He can use us as His followers to change the world.

***FIFTH, THE CHURCH MUST EXIST AS A SENDING STATION ...***

A place where people are sent out into the world to be the presence and the voice of Jesus Christ. Church staff members need to model this commitment to a **MISSIONAL LIFE** of outreach and service by participating in short-term mission trips, not just talk about them, and by supporting local missions with their time, money, and spiritual gifts.

Here are a couple things the **CHURCH IS NOT CALLED TO BE ...**

***FIRST, THE CHURCH CANNOT EXIST AS A COUNTRY CLUB OR A CHIT-CHAT GUILD ...***

A place where only certain people with the right education, the right job, the right income, or the right past, present or future can get in. The church is not to be a place where people gather to share superficially about who they know, what their great accomplishments are, how well put-together their lives and the lives of their kids are, and where their next whirl-wind vacation will take them.

Humility, honesty, and a Holy Spirit-led care for and attentiveness toward others must be guiding principles in our life together as the body of Christ, the church.

***SECOND, THE CHURCH CANNOT EXIST AS A PERFORMANCE VENUE ...***

A place where only “highly polished” people with the right “qualifications” or skills can participate. God is looking for **FAITHFUL** people more than He is looking for people who think they're **QUALIFIED** to do anything for Him.

There's an old saying that “There's no perfect church and that if you find one, don't go there, because you'll ruin it!” I like that. But I also have great hope

about the church ... and I believe with all my heart that God can use imperfect people to build His church.

In **ACTS 17:6** the Early Church is described as being “the people who were turning the world upside down” (**NEW LIVING TRANSLATION**). Friends, this is the kind of Jesus Christ-community I long to be part of.