

Who We Are

Intown began in 1983 with about 50 people passionate about God who possessed a longing to make an eternal difference in Atlanta and beyond. That was 27 years ago. In some ways, because our culture has changed so radically, we are asking the same question again. Who are we really? We welcome that question because it's an eternal question that arises in each of our hearts, and it's a question to which our current church culture provides many answers. There are so many things we could be about. A church about political reform, a church about social service, a church about happy families, a church about programs, a church about being bigger and better. The list is endless in our consumer oriented culture.

Intown is not trying to be a church in that list of consumer options. Rather than be a church for consumers, we desire to be a church of the consumed! Like those who established Intown in its early days we desire to be a people increasingly consumed by the love and life of God given to us in the gospel of grace. We don't see grace as something that provides only an entry point into knowing God, we see it as a steady stream of His life that builds us up into all that He wants us to be.

Church is not about getting God to do something for us or give us some specific blessing. It's something that begins with the life of God in our hearts, and it continually expands and grows leading us to participate in that life with others. The expansion and growth of the life of God in our lives is what we seek to capture in our vision slogan, "*Renewing Hearts.*" We think it's what our church most desperately needs now, and we think it resonates with a central longing in our current culture, the longing to find our identity. Perhaps more than any other culture before us we are experiencing the loss of our identity.

Who are we really? Cultural critic, James Twitchell, wrote, "*Tell me what you buy and I'll tell you who you are and who you want to be.*" It seems that our entire consumer culture is built upon this scramble to be somebody. The reason this works so powerfully is because of something God has put in our hearts—a nagging dissatisfaction with the old, and a never ending desire for the new. As the old wisdom writer put it, "God has set eternity in our hearts." Only God's ongoing renewal of His life in our hearts will ever satisfy our deepest desires. This gives our vision a powerful voice and relevant message to our world, and it all begins with God, the God who wants to consume us with His love and move us toward loving others. A true eternal identity and hope for this world.

