



LIVE BOLDLY

ONE HEART – ONE PURPOSE





And I will give them
**ONE HEART
&
ONE PURPOSE**
to worship me forever,
for their own good and
for the good of all their
descendants.

Jeremiah 32:39 (NLT)

Table Of Contents

Introduction	2
Jim's <i>Live Boldly</i> Story	8
Week 1 Devotionals	9
My Bold Steps: Discipleship	15
Carlos' <i>Live Boldly</i> Story	17
Week 2 Devotionals	18
My Bold Steps: Serving	24
Pam & Eric's <i>Live Boldly</i> Story	26
Week 3 Devotionals	27
My Bold Steps: Giving	33
Practical Strategies	34
Investing in the Future	36

LIVE BOLDLY

“It’s all over.” Those were the words on the lips of the people of Jerusalem as they looked over the city walls at the Babylonian Army. With the invasion, they’d lost family members, their livelihood and their freedom.

But in the midst of the despair, a prophet named Jeremiah was led by God to buy a once productive field located far beyond the city gates, perilously behind enemy lines.

Why make such a seemingly foolish purchase? Because even in the midst of the heartache, God was working. He was inviting Jeremiah to invest in the future. “Yes, fields will once again be bought and sold—deeds signed and sealed and witnessed . . . The Lord said, . . . For someday I will restore prosperity to them. I, the Lord, have spoken!” Jeremiah 32:44

In the midst of generational adversity, God was at work preparing the future, and that future was a worthy investment.

I see so much of Jeremiah’s experience in our world today. We’re coming through a lifetime event with the pandemic and it’s easy to fall victim to the tyranny of the moment.

But God has been working throughout the hardship. Now is the time to invest in the future He’s prepared. God is calling us to plant and strengthen churches across north Florida and beyond, to train up a new generation of church leadership, engage a lost world with the Gospel, to love our neighbor in tangible ways, and He’s calling us to prepare for the growth of our own congregation. To do so, we need to take bold steps in our discipleship, our ministry and our generosity.

There’s life and hope beyond the walls. It’s time to invest in the future God has for us.



Beginning back in 2016, Celebration began structuring its ministry around a two-year, comprehensive initiative. This initiative asked the simple question, “Where is God leading us over the next two years?” We prayerfully sought to answer this question by looking at what steps in discipleship, serving and giving we’d need to take collectively as a body as well as individually as Christ Followers. Christ has placed each one of us in a symbiotic relationship with our church. We can’t go anywhere as a church if we’re not growing as individual Christ Followers and we can’t grow effectively as Christ Followers if our church isn’t intentionally thriving. Here is a look at what we’ve accomplished in the last two years, and where we want to see our church grow.

CHILDREN’S MINISTRY



*Family Pastor, Tommy Hendricks, baptizing Noah Sousa.
In August, Celebration held special Baptism services
in pools at church members’ homes.*

Prior to Covid, our ministry to children had grown so dramatically that we had to split Blast into K-2 and 3-5 groups to accommodate all the children coming to grow and learn.

Of course, 2020 changed everything. During lockdown, our children’s ministry kicked into high-gear to continue to serve our families. Because of your giving, Celebration Kids was able to make weekly videos to teach children from toddlers through 5th grade about Jesus and the Bible and gift bags that were delivered to homes.

Now, we are excited about all the ministry that we can do post-Covid. Since returning to in-person worship, we’ve seen the number of children steadily grow. As part of a new church-wide discipleship plan, our Children’s Ministry has begun writing their own curriculum for Sunday mornings. This is allowing them to tie what the children are learning in BLAST to what their parents are learning in the Worship Service and providing tools for parents to better disciple their children at home.

STUDENT MINISTRY

Nationwide, kids who grew up in the church are turning away from their faith in record numbers. Celebration is dedicated to turning the tide of this trend.

Celebration made the decision to invest in the future of our students by hiring a Girl's Ministry Director to serve alongside Pastor Aaron Sheffield. Kaitlin Harper now fills this position and is serving with passion to see the young women of Celebration invest in their own faith everyday.



Students gather outside for lunch at Dnow 2021.

When Covid struck in 2020, Celebration Students began making videos so our students could continue to learn and grow together. Zoom Hangouts became a weekly event to keep the students connected to each other.

Now that Covid is passing, we are looking excitedly to the future. This year, Celebration is partnering with over 20 churches for United Weekend (Dnow) and looks forward to partnering with many more in the years to come. These churches will be working together throughout the year through United Nights to help our students see the connectedness of the Body of Christ and know they aren't alone as believers in their schools. We will be offering many new opportunities for students to grow in faith and leadership over the summer of 2021 and beyond.

ADULT MINISTRY



Joe & Trish Eldridge participate in their Conversation Group with their newborn daughter, Paisley Rae.

Groups ministry is built on connecting people to grow in their faith together. Covid lockdowns made those connections difficult.

Group leaders took a crash course in technology and took their classes online. Home groups sprung up of people that were quarantining together. Both allowed discipleship to continue and showed us exciting ways for us to move forward.

In the Fall of 2020, we piloted Conversation Groups- small groups gathering to do a Bible study based on Sunday's message. Volunteers gather each week to write a personalized study just for Celebration and our video team creates a series of videos to support the message. Our goal over the next two years is to launch 40 new Conversation Groups in homes.

T-Groups are an essential part of the discipleship journey here at Celebration. These small groups of three to four people provide accountability and training for believers as they grow to be more like Jesus. Since 2011, we have had 730 people go through a T-Group and currently we have 77 people participating. By 2023, we want to see 90 T-Groups meeting at once at Celebration- that would be more than 270 people engaged in active discipleship!

One part of Group life that has survived and thrived is our Wednesday night and Weekday Training Groups. We have been able to train believers in important areas: marriage, parenting, Bible knowledge, prophecy, gender and sexual identity issues, spiritual warfare, spiritual and physical health, authentic manhood, prayer, finances and much more! In the next two years we want to strategically mature disciples each semester with 16 Training Groups by May 2022: and 24 by May 2023.

WORSHIP MINISTRY

Celebration has been live streaming worship services since 2017 but with Covid, we had to take our game to a whole new level. As church went online only, our Worship and Tech teams made it possible for us all to continue to worship and learn together- even while we were physically apart.

Then we were able to purchase airtime on Fox49, which meant we now needed to produce a weekly television broadcast along with all of our regular live streams and videos. We saw the Lord's provision at work in the hiring of our first full-time videographer, Jessica McNeil. Jessica and her growing team film our Sunday services every week, Live stream every Sunday and then edit it for our Fox49 broadcast- now reaching more than 4,000 every week!



The Celebration Tech Team overseeing filming of the Tallahassee Christmas Eve special. Broadcast on Fox49, this special reached over 26,000 households.

MISSIONS

Tallahassee is home to over 25,000 native Spanish speakers. In 2019 we launched a Spanish-language Worship Service- Celebration En Español- with Pastor John Lizarazo. CEE has grown greatly over their first year and are now meeting in the Loft at 1:15pm on Sundays. Over the next two years, we will be fully integrating CEE into the life of Celebration.



Volunteers from Celebration worked with the Florida Baptist Convention to distribute food to families in Quincy, FL.

Focus 2020 also provided us the resources to purchase the property along Centerville Road formerly known as Woodland Hall. That building has now been converted into the Mission Training Center. Pastor Scott Carter has been hard at work building partnerships that will help Celebration become a reproducing church. We will partner with the North American Mission Board, the Florida Baptist Convention and the Florida Baptist Associate to host a cohort of church planters at the Mission Training Center.

Your gifts during Live Boldly will also be used to develop an online campus. We will then be able to develop our online and TV viewers into groups all over the Greater North Florida region.

The Celebration family has been hard at work serving our local community too. Through backpack drives, Season of Compassion, food distribution, our benevolence ministry and more, our church family has provided basic needs for hundreds of families.

It's exciting to be a part of a church body that regularly enjoys seeing God at work, but our body can't grow if you're not on your own spiritual journey. Each one of us needs to take personal steps to grow in our discipleship, service, and giving.



JoAnn Kirkland helps load donated backpacks full of clothes into a Leon County Schools Social Workers car for delivery.

Throughout the rest of this magazine, you'll find specific ways to grow in each of these three areas of our walk with Christ. We encourage you to join us in 21-Days of Prayer starting on April 11. We've included devotionals here to guide you and will be publishing a podcast on our app each day.

What steps will you take to grow as a Christ-Follower during Live Boldly?

21-DAYS OF PRAYER



WEEK ONE: DISCIPLING

JIM'S LIVE BOLDLY STORY

Jim Moller has served as the a Group Leader for the Next Chapter Group for many years. When Covid lock downs began in March of 2020, he faced a new challenge. Jim shared, “Our plan was built around us coming to Sunday School and sharing there. But those techniques really weren’t working... with the church closing for a period of time as a result of the COVID-19, we had to change our plan a little bit.” With the help of Pastor Doug Bedgood and his assistant, Jerri Chesney, Jim and his group were soon able to meet online via Zoom.

“The one thing I really learned from it is each and every one of us are going through something in our life,” Jim said. “Some things are more important than others, but everybody has something that is going on. And what happens is it makes it easy then to talk to that person because you know more than, ‘Hey, my name is Jim,’ but I actually know more about that person.

“You know, we’re an older group, and so initially technology kind of whipped on some of us. But we powered our way through it. We’ve now learned how to Zoom, how to share screens, how to interact with others. And I think just seeing everyone’s face brings joy to us. I have to laugh before we start the official start of the class. Each of us, you know, gets to go around and say hello and stuff. You know, people hold up their dogs. And at first I thought, ‘That’s kind of crazy.’ But you know what, it’s not. It’s adding the human element to communication.”

What started as an emergency move online is showing us what the future could hold. Pastor Doug said, “Every time God’s people were restricted or limited in how they could meet, the kingdom of God grew.”

Celebration is excited to see how God uses this technology to continue to grow his kingdom. “I’d like to see our group ministry continue to grow in the online community because that to me, is a new frontier and a new way that we can continue to do that,” said Pastor Doug.



The Senior Adult Bible Study Group meeting online via Zoom during the Covid Quarantine.

DAY I

He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Matthew 22:37-39 (CSB)

Upside Down

by Doug Bedgood, Pastor of Christian Living

Though he was young and fresh out of seminary, Lawton looked the part as the new leader of the burgeoning youth group. Lawton did a lot for me in those formative years as a teenager. It was what he did not do for me, however, that made the greatest impact. As any good Youth Pastor would do, he engaged us in a busy Youth program with all the bells and whistles. Lawton took us on annual Mission/Choir Trips to places around the country. We even went to an old castle in England for an international Youth conference. We loved Lawton and his charisma and passion, but I sensed I was missing something.

Then my world turned upside down; literally I found myself upside down in my car that had just flipped. With the engine still racing and gas fumes building; I crawled out, with adrenaline pumping, unaware of the amount of skin and muscle I had lost on my arm. I killed the engine and then looked up and said, “God wanted me to preach, and I said, ‘No.’” In that moment, the wall of denial of God’s call on my life crumbled. My pride and self-determination took a big blow, and complete surrender to His will and ways took over.

Lawton was helpful in steering me in my call to the ministry. However, what was missing? Why were we, as a church, so busy, but not practicing what Jesus commanded? Seeking God’s way set me on a journey to move beyond programs to authentic relationships with God and those people He has placed in my path.

Take a personal inventory of how much you have fallen into the trap of emphasizing church activity over a vital relationship with your Creator and disciple making relationships with others.

Ask God to reveal to you greater ways to love Him and greater ways to love your neighbor.

My Response

DAY 2

“Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me.”

John 15:4-5 (CSB)

Spiritual Fruit

by Doug Bedgood, Pastor of Christian Living

Paul Johnson was an intimidating figure, He had red hair, large build and a way of smiling one minute and then the next venting his anger to exert his control. Paul, also, was the Chairman of the Board of Deacons at the first church I served at after seminary. Being “called on the carpet” at a Deacons’ meeting to reveal who I was talking to about teaching our Senior Adults did not seem like a big issue, except that I had promised confidentiality to the person who was considering taking the role.

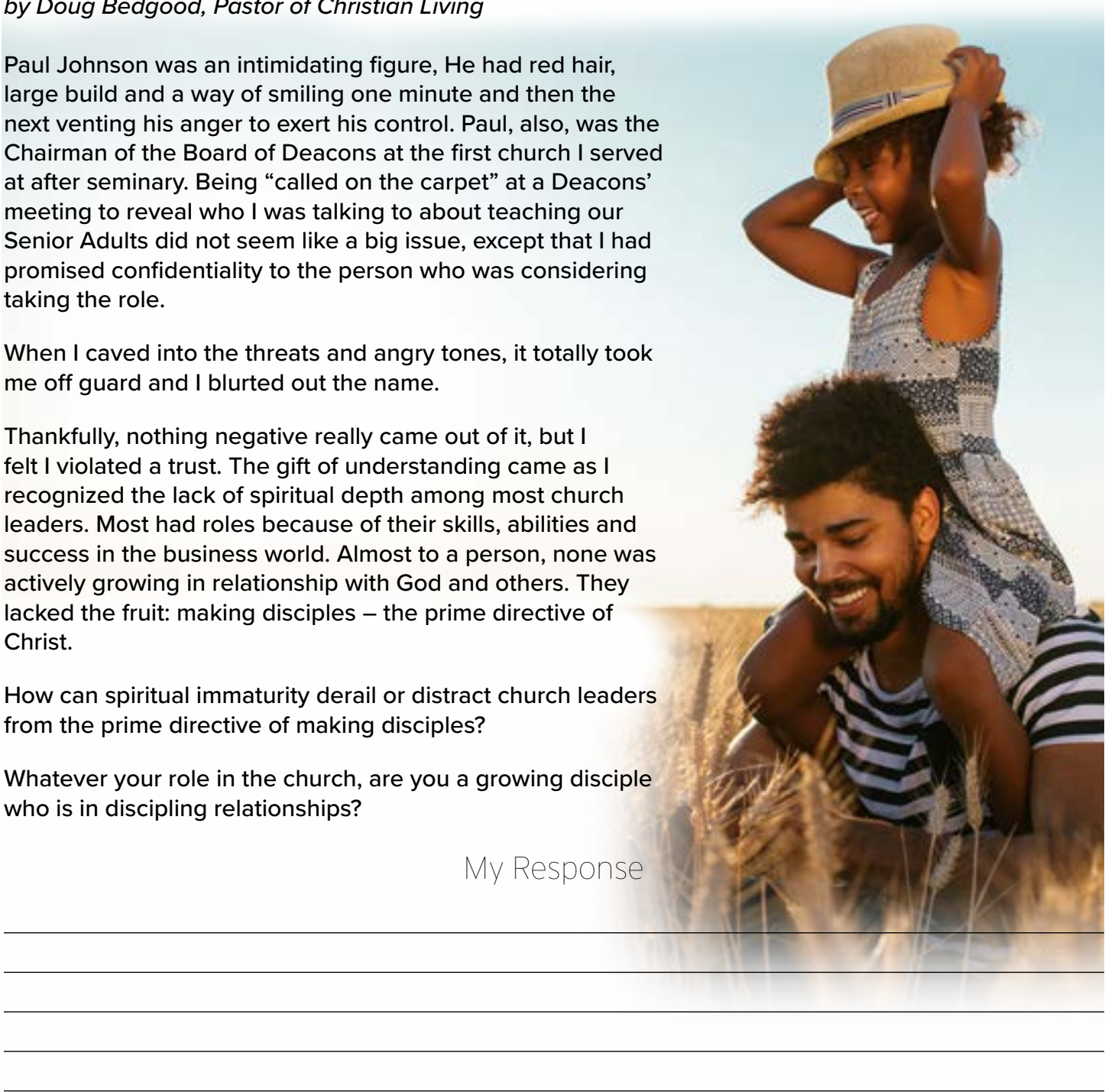
When I caved into the threats and angry tones, it totally took me off guard and I blurted out the name.

Thankfully, nothing negative really came out of it, but I felt I violated a trust. The gift of understanding came as I recognized the lack of spiritual depth among most church leaders. Most had roles because of their skills, abilities and success in the business world. Almost to a person, none was actively growing in relationship with God and others. They lacked the fruit: making disciples – the prime directive of Christ.

How can spiritual immaturity derail or distract church leaders from the prime directive of making disciples?

Whatever your role in the church, are you a growing disciple who is in discipling relationships?

My Response



DAY 3

You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

2 Timothy 2:2 (NLT)

A Tale of Two Churches

by Doug Bedgood, Pastor of Christian Living

A tale of two churches: The one is in rural Kentucky, the other is in rural Ethiopia.

In Kentucky, I find myself alone, sitting on the cold, hard railroad tracks under a starlit sky, crying out to God in frustration. Ironically, what drove me to this was being awakened by the smell of sweaty men and the cavalcade of snoring that reminded me of a steam train! It was our annual mission trip to build a church building. I wrestled with why a good thing (building a church building) was keeping us from the best thing (building a spiritual family).

In Ethiopia, the rich aroma of freshly made coffee was the only thing familiar as I sat in the crude church building made of eucalyptus logs and a thatch roof. Several hundred young, eager church leaders sat on log benches no more than six inches wide for three hours to hear us teach how to use New Testament stories to teach their congregations how to be the church and carry out the command of Christ to make disciples who make disciples.

How focused are you in fulfilling the command of Christ to make disciples, who make disciples?

Ask God to bring to mind those He has placed in your world that you need to be in a discipling relationship with. Then prayerfully obey!



Barry Webster (far left) and Pastor Doug Bedgood (far right) with Ethiopian church leaders.

My Response

DAY 4

You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:1-2 (CSB)

Trials Turned to Gold

by Aaron Sheffield, Student Pastor

Have you ever gone through a hard time that seemed to have no good reason?

When I was twenty-seven years old, I underwent chemotherapy for cancer. It was not a fun time in my life, but my twenty treatments passed quickly and soon I was cancer-free. Shortly thereafter, I found myself trying to justify why God had allowed me to go through all of it. It was hard to come up with lasting benefits.

That was until a close friend was diagnosed with the same type of cancer and was facing the same treatments. Only then did I understand that God had uniquely gifted me with not only wisdom and experience in navigating the trial, but also empathy to walk with my friend to help them understand God’s purposes for the circumstance.

This is what we are supposed to do as disciples. As we walk with others through life using the Bible as a guide, we can lovingly point them to Jesus. This, in turn, will help them to grow to be more like Christ and equip them to be able to minister to others in the future. Do not ever waste a trial in life that God can turn into golden wisdom!

My Response



DAY 5

We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

Romans 8:28-29 (CSB)

Refiner’s Fire

by Aaron Sheffield, Student Pastor

Have you ever wondered why God allows us to go through hardship in order to grow us deeper in Christ?

Soon after getting engaged, my future wife and I lived almost three hundred miles apart for almost two years. As this was before the time of text messaging and social media we had to connect using long-distance calling cards over the phone. The relationship truly became long-distance. It was painful. We both thought about each other all the time, longed to be close, and swore that we would never take our proximity for granted in the future. Our lives were encapsulated in the Beach Boys song “Wouldn’t It Be Nice” especially the words:

You know it seems the more we talk about it
It only makes it worse to live without it
But let’s talk about it...

God taught us to never take each other for granted-- and though sometimes we still do, our relationship is stronger and deeper because of that hardship.

In like fashion, the valleys of life are used by God for good in deepening our love and appreciation for Him. However, He doesn’t stop there. Those hardships are often fires that Jesus walks with us through in order for us to become more like him. This is why discipleship is important. Discipleship is walking with Christ- even in His suffering- to become more like Him.

My Response

DAY 6

We proclaim him, warning and teaching everyone
with all wisdom, so that we may present
everyone mature in Christ.
I labor for this, striving with his strength
that works powerfully in me.

Colossians 1:28-29 (CSB)

The Power of the Word

by Aaron Sheffield, Student Pastor

Before I took my first youth pastor job, my wife Allyson and I decided to attend services and join a Sunday school class at the church that I had applied to. Having felt a calling into ministry since the ninth grade, I was confident that God was opening a door but nervous about being ready to adequately teach the Bible. Confessions of a bored Bible reader I guess, but even though I had grown up in a church with solidly Biblical preaching and teaching, I felt that I had not paid enough attention to possess solid enough doctrine to disciple teenagers.

Boy, was I about to get an intense refresher in God’s Word. The Sunday school class for young adults was led by a teacher who rigorously walked us line-by-line through the Bible starting with the Old Testament. They even made us take turns reading each line before discussing it! I had never studied anything this intensely in my life! But something else happened -- I began to enjoy reading and studying the Bible. This helped me to realize two very important things: 1. The more you read God’s Word, the more you start to enjoy knowing more about Him, and 2. The more you know about God and what He has done through Jesus, the less you want to sin. The best first step to growing with God is to read about Him in His Word!

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and I am completing in my flesh what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for His body, that is, the church. I have become its servant, according to God’s administration that was given to me for you, to make God’s message fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to His saints. God wanted to make known among the Gentiles the glorious wealth of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim Him, warning and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. I labor for this, striving with His strength that works powerfully in me. Colossians 1:24-29

My Response

DAY 7

MY BOLD STEPS: DISCIPLESHIP



Pastor David’s Challenge

Not only is growing in our faith a biblical expectation for any Christ Follower, it’s also the surest way we can ensure a generational shift toward the gospel in your own family. Think of the impact you’ll have on your sons and daughters, parents and neighbors if they can visibly see you embracing a stronger faith walk. During Live Boldly, consider one or more of the following faith steps:

Maybe you’re a new Christ follower and you haven’t taken the step of being baptized. Take a step. Make your commitment to Christ public and influence your friends and family to join you in your journey in faith.

Maybe you only come to church occasionally. Take the biblical step of committing to attend church regularly. (Hebrews 10:25) Set a goal to attend 50 weeks this year! But don’t come alone. Use your influence and bring your entire family with you.

Get involved in a group and join with other Christ followers who are committed to studying the Bible together. There you can encourage one another to live for Christ daily.

Take a step further and join a T-Group where you’ll spend each week in a highly accountable group of just 3-4 other believers where you’ll share in the opportunity to lead and have a chance first hand to make disciples.

Prayerfully ask God which steps are the right fit for you and become a more influential disciple during Live Boldly.



“With anything, as you get into a routine of learning or a routine of growth, there is that spillover into the rest of your life. I see that in my family time- I’m learning about how to develop another disciple and also learning how to develop a son or a daughter.” – Michael, on being in a T-Group



21-DAYS OF PRAYER



WEEK ONE: SERVING

CARLOS'S LIVE BOLDLY STORY

by Kimberly Prutsman

Born in Puerto Rico, Carlos Rodriguez and his family came to the United States when he was just five-years-old. By age seven the family relocated to Tallahassee, Florida. He even attended our Vacation Bible School as child.

He and his parents attended a small Spanish church prior to the pandemic. Carlos provided tech support for his church. Once the lock downs occurred, Carlos and his family begin seeking other ways to worship on Sundays. That's when he discovered our broadcast on Fox49.

Carlos says that each week he listened to Pastor David's message he felt the teaching was directly to him about things he was experiencing. He said it felt great to be able to focus on worship and soak in the God's Word each week.

When Carlos' church reopened his parents decided to return to live services. At that point Carlos knew that he wanted to check out Celebration. He describes his first experience as one where he felt very welcome. People greeted him and said hello made him feel like he was already a part of the family.

The first Sunday in January Carlos visited the Team Celebration Tent and asked how he could get involved in serving here. He filled out his Volunteer Application and received Team Celebration Training. He is now a regular volunteer in our technical ministry on Sunday mornings.

We are so blessed to have someone like Carlos serving with us. He loves the Lord and desires to serve Him with his gifts and talents here at Celebration. When you see Carlos be sure to say hello!



Carlos manning a camera at Celebration En Español's first service in the Loft in February 2021.

DAY 8

*The Lord said to Abram: Go from your land,
your relatives, and your father’s house
to the land that I will show you.
I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you,
I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.*

Genesis 12:1-2 (CSB)

Go Follow
By Scott Carter, Mission Pastor

I have a question for you...if God was to call you to leave what you are doing and where you are, are you ready to follow Him?

As a young single adult of about 22 years of age, the Lord used a series of events in my life at work and church to disrupt the pattern and direction of my life. I was a fresh college grad working in banking in Nashville, TN and very active in my home church there. The Lord led me to go on a mission trip to Scotland. During the preparation for this trip and the trip itself, the Lord affirmed in me my spiritual gifts and used the trip to turn my life as I knew it, upside down. Over the course of the subsequent weeks and months, I knew I was not going to be where I was, doing what I was doing, for long. Through this very intense period of prayer, Scripture, and seeking godly wisdom from other believers, the Lord called me to leave where I was and follow His call on my life.

God used Genesis 12:1-3 to guide me to missions. I am no Abram, and the Lord was not establishing a covenant people through my family lineage. However, the Lord used these verses to lead me to follow him in faith to a foreign land, for the sake of the gospel.

My Response



DAY 9

*Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has
been given to me in heaven and on earth.
Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the
Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe
everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am
with you always, to the end of the age.”*

Matthew 28:18-20 (CSB)

The Great Commission
By Scott Carter, Mission Pastor

So at 23 years old, I found myself making a career change, and I landed in the City-State of Singapore, where I served as the youth pastor at International Baptist Church of Singapore for two years. Singapore is a fascinating country, very multi-cultural; a crossroads of Asia and the world. These couple of years afforded me the opportunity to travel all over Asia and experience different countries and cultures. Absolutely the best thing I could have done with these two years of my life.

One time in particular, I was sitting on a bench one morning at the Baptist camp in Port Dickson, Malaysia overlooking the Straits of Melaka, the body of water separating Peninsular Malaysia and the Indonesian island of Sumatra. A fellow missionary came up, sat by me, put his arm around me and asked, “You see the horizon? That is Indonesia. There are 225 million people in that country who have never heard of Jesus Christ. Will you give your life to serving the nations and seeing that the unreached of the world have the opportunity to hear the gospel?” In that moment I knew my life and ministry would be given to that task. Over the last 25 years, though the pathway and how that ministry is carried out has changed, the mission has remained the same.

The call on all of our lives as followers of Jesus is to make disciples of the peoples of the world. It may look differently for each of us, both in vocation and location, but the mission remains the same. How is God calling you to be a part of the Great Commission?

My Response

DAY 10

So, then, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole building, being put together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you are also being built together for God’s dwelling in the Spirit.

Fellow Citizens

By Scott Carter, Mission Pastor

Ephesians 2:19-22 (CSB)

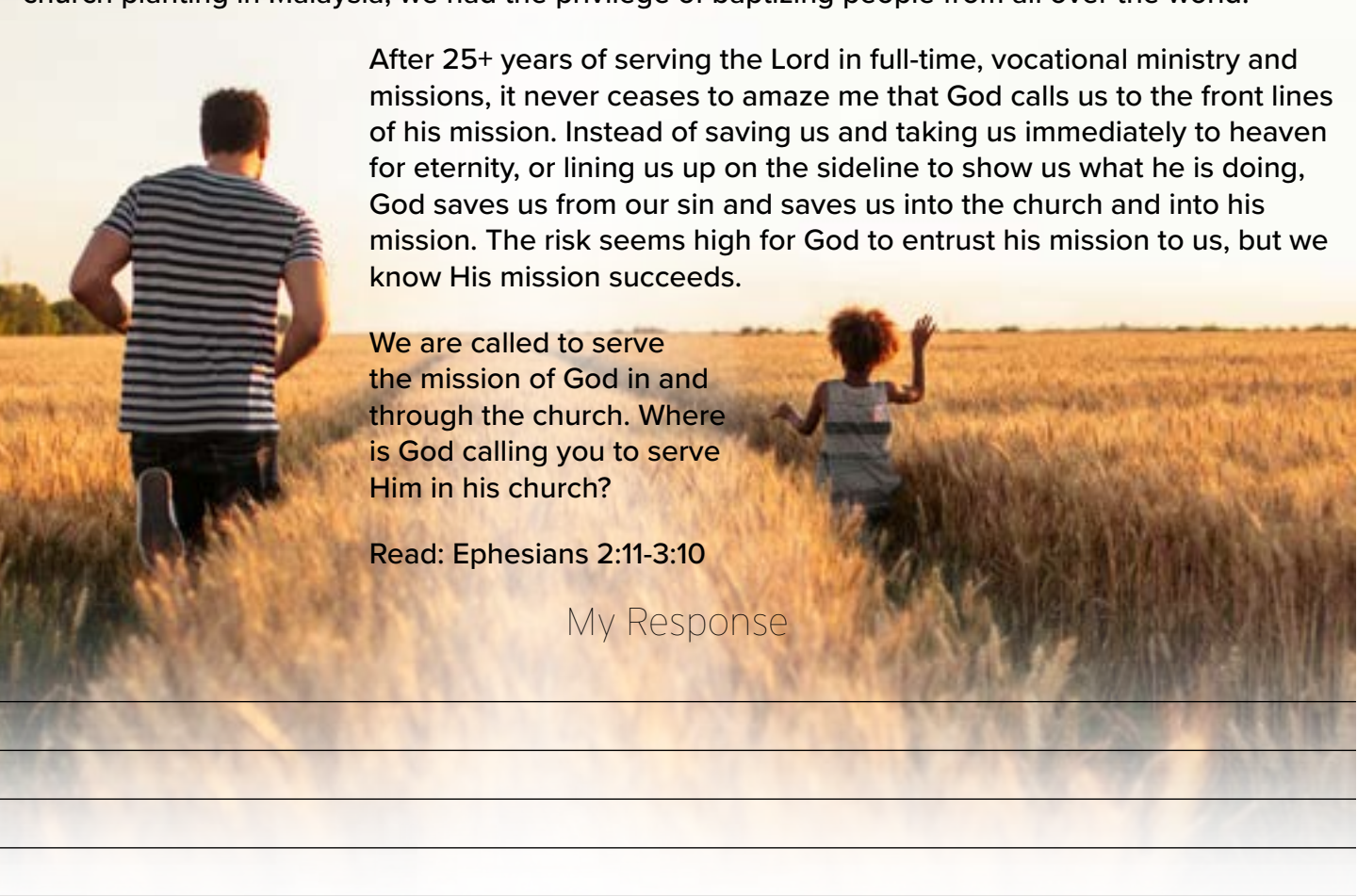
Fast forward 15 years and our family was living and serving in Malaysia planting churches. One of the groups we started early in our time there was a house church group in our neighborhood area. Through this ministry we had the privilege of leading an older Chinese couple, Uncle Koh and Aunt Rose to Christ. When it came time for baptism, we did not have a place to do the baptisms. Our house group decided to travel to the town of Port Dickson. I was able to obtain permission to do the baptism in the ocean on the beach of the Baptist Camp I mentioned yesterday. During the moments we were on the property, the conversation I had been a part of in 1996 on the bench overlooking the ocean came rushing back to my mind. I realized that my call and years in ministry had come full circle. In the same spot where the Lord opened my eyes to the nations, I had the privilege of baptizing Koh and Rose. It was a very surreal moment that I will never forget. During our years of church planting in Malaysia, we had the privilege of baptizing people from all over the world.

After 25+ years of serving the Lord in full-time, vocational ministry and missions, it never ceases to amaze me that God calls us to the front lines of his mission. Instead of saving us and taking us immediately to heaven for eternity, or lining us up on the sideline to show us what he is doing, God saves us from our sin and saves us into the church and into his mission. The risk seems high for God to entrust his mission to us, but we know His mission succeeds.

We are called to serve the mission of God in and through the church. Where is God calling you to serve Him in his church?

Read: Ephesians 2:11-3:10

My Response



DAY 11

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 1:8 (NIV84)

The Call

by Tommy Hendricks, Family Pastor

I was just a few weeks from my college graduation and I was excited about my next phase of life. While all my buddies were getting married or finding jobs, I had signed up to be a semester missionary and planned to serve the next few years around the country. I had no idea what was in store, but I was ready to travel and explore ministry opportunities.

I had found out about mission opportunities through my college Baptist Student Union. I had been serving at a local church and had been on many short term mission trips, but I looked forward to this new adventure and leaving Oklahoma.

I was sitting on the couch in the BSU at the University of Central Oklahoma waiting to hear the response from our Home Mission Board. I had the opportunity to select a few areas and types of ministry I was interested in, but my assignment that I got was not even on the list. The phone call came and I learned I had been assigned to a small church in Waterloo, Iowa, in a very unchurched area.

I packed my bags, bought some cold weather clothes, and took my very first airplane ride from Oklahoma City to Waterloo, IA. We had one layover and my second flight was a very small passenger plane. The kind where you can see the pilot and there were only about 8 people on the plane. We flew through a snow storm and I quickly discovered why the little white baggie was placed in the seat pocket in front of me. Let’s just say I filled up the bag and praised God when we finally landed. I would have kissed the ground when I got off, but there was about two feet of snow. The guy who picked me up was a friend of one the church members and was chosen because he had a big truck that could safely deliver me back to the church. I would only see him one more time in the next five months. But I was glad that I had answered the call and I was ready to serve in whatever I was asked to do.

Have you ever thought about short term missions? Taking a mission trip? What would you say that God is calling you to do to answer the “call?”

My Response

DAY 12

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

Proverbs 3:5-8 (NIV)

The How
by Tommy Hendricks, Family Pastor

My friends back home wondered how I would make ends meet and if serving like this would be worth it. I was paid \$60 per week and was supposed to be provided food and lodging. I ended up living in the church. They set up a bed in one of the Sunday school rooms, brought me weekly groceries, and I had access to the baptistery as my personal bathtub. I’m happy to admit that I never bathed in the baptistery, I ended up getting a gym membership at the local YMCA and that is where I took my daily showers.

My first Sunday we only had five people and it was about 5 degrees outside. I would discover that this was the average attendance and temperature at Waterloo Baptist Church. I led the worship, the pastor preached, we had a paid pianist, and then one couple, David and Carolyn Newcomb. We sang, took an offering, and the preacher preached. It was like being in the twilight zone. During my time I would serve as the worship leader, youth and children’s pastor, and the janitor. David and Carolyn were more than a blessing to me and took me to the local buffet every Sunday to make sure I was being fed well.

After Iowa I was moved to Charleston, SC and San Diego, CA. I ended my third year serving with a traveling creative arts mission team based out of Atlanta. With Missions USA we lived on the road for one year driving from event to event and just about every day did shows at churches, colleges, schools, and anywhere that would have us. We spread the word about missions and encouraged people to sign up for mission opportunities.

I can honestly say that God more than provided for my needs during these years. I slept on couches, hotels, host homes, and even churches. There was always food to eat, a little money in my pocket, and I never really lacked for any basic needs. It was time spent trusting God for my daily provisions and meeting people that would change my life from one journey to the next.

What is holding you back from serving? How has God made it possible for you to use your gifts serving in our local church?

My Response

DAY 13

Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?”

Luke 9:23-25 (NIV)

Why sign up to serve?
by Tommy Hendricks, Family Pastor

I was single, adventurous, and was ready to travel and see where God would take me. I got the experience of a lifetime, skills I would use in ministry, and even met my wife. I have challenged each of my seven children to take trips and adventures to serve in various ways. There is no doubt that serving at home and abroad helps shape your worldview.

I knew that God had called me to minister and serve, and during these three years God not only provided, but equipped me for the next season of my life. I have now served 25 years in the local church and those three years serving as a missionary gave me the experience and foundation I’m still building on today.

We are all challenged to serve as believers in Christ. Sometimes that could mean moving or taking a trip that will change our lives. But it could mean serving in our local church and making a difference right where we live. I challenge you to take a step of faith and find your place of service in the local church or even as a missionary. Whether you’re single or married, life is too short to miss out on the adventures that God has in store for us. Sign up today to serve in your Jerusalem, Judea, or even Waterloo, IA (uttermost parts of the Earth).

Are you ready to sign up? If you are already serving, thank you for sharing your gifts with the body.

My Response



Pastor David’s Challenge

Jesus invites all Christ followers to serve so that we can experience the joy and purpose that comes from being an integral part of His Body. Challenge yourself during Live Boldly to serve with greater intensity, using your giftedness and celebrating the way that God made you. Maybe one of the following action steps is right for you.

What if you took a first step into the world of serving by helping out with our annual Car Show or helping out during Adventure Week?

Make a commitment to extend a friendly smile on the runway each week. With each greeting you’ll help someone feel a part of the Celebration family.

Maybe Blast Jr. is the place for you. When you hold a baby or care for that darling 3-year-old in the nursery, you’re allowing a mom or dad be discipled while also showing the Father’s love to a child. Like coffee? Why not join the Brew Crew? When you serve a cup of coffee you’re extending biblical hospitality to someone who may be quite lonely.



Serving isn’t just a way to meet a momentary need. It’s also a critical way of influencing others. The Bible tells us we should “. . . think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.” Hebrews 10:24 (NLT)

Imagine what your participation in a mission trip to Ethiopia could mean to an unchurched coworker next to you at the workplace. That’s influence!

Maybe you’re burdened by the needs of those right here in Tallahassee. See what opportunities are available by serving in local missions.

Maybe God is calling you to take the bold step to become a ministry team leader and take on the task of leading (scheduling, recruiting, etc.) a ministry team here at Celebration.



21-DAYS OF PRAYER

WEEK ONE: GIVING

PAMELA & ERIC'S LIVE BOLDLY STORY

A member of Celebration Baptist Church since 2017, Pamela Patton along with her husband, Eric, and their two children have proven to be essential members of our church family. One of the ways in which they serve Celebration is their continuous giving to the church. Pamela says that they choose to serve the church by giving because they are being obedient to what the Bible teaches.

The pandemic has proven to be a time of great uncertainty for all of us. However, during that time, the Pattons’ devotion to giving remained intact as they chose to support their church. Pamela explained that from an early point in their marriage, she and Eric made a commitment to remain faithful in their giving no matter what. She says that in remaining faithful to this promise, they have seen God provide for them through every single circumstance

Pamela explains giving as being an act of Obedience to the Lord. She maintains that in being faithful to the promise of giving to the church, her and her family’s confidence in God has grown, as He has shown that He remains in control of their lives and has proved to be the ultimate provider. Their giving has led to an emotional connection to Celebration Baptist Church, as they feel the desire to join with the church in our ministries to the cultivate spiritual growth and awakening amongst believers and non-believers.

In setting out on a journey of giving, Pamela encourages all to remain faithful in prayer, and to merely set a goal for giving, either as an individual or a family, and to always remain faithful to this goal. Over the course of time, life changes may occur to where this goal can be raised, but starting off with an always achievable goal is the right place to start. She thinks that many will see God remain faithful to them in return, as we practice obedient stewardship in what we are given.

It is such a blessing to have the Pattons as members of the Celebration family. They continue to serve the Lord, and as a Church we are eternally thankful for their place here at Celebration.



Eric & Pamela Patton with their children, Olivia Grace and Colton.

DAY 15

*And do not forget to do good
and to share with others,
for with such sacrifices God is pleased.*

Hebrews 13:16 (NIV)

The Gift of Grace

By Warren Halstrom, Worship Pastor

When I became a Christian as a senior in high school, I faced the rather unpleasant reality that I had some considerable deficits in my character. I really didn’t care about others... at all.

My orientation toward the idea of forgiveness came suddenly and unexpectedly because right around the time I accepted the Lord, my dad left my mom. I vacillated between self-righteousness and the truth that I had just been given the greatest gift anyone could receive, the gift of grace. Of course, grace comes with an obligation, to forgive others, just as I had been forgiven. That was hard, especially for me at that stage of my life. I carried much of my self-centered worldview into my new life in Christ.

Then I married Shelly. Her family background is replete with selfless “others-centered” people with a track record of helping others as long as life itself. As I observed her heart for others and consistent acts of kindness, I became aware that you’re, at the very least, supposed to notice others, observe their needs, and seek to do your best to help out, even at the expense of your time, comfort level and money.

While the journey was to be long, my first steps had begun. Are there first steps regarding Christian character that you need to take? What has God revealed to you about areas in your life that need change? Take some time now to ask God for the wisdom to see an area of shortcoming in your own character, and the willingness to take strides toward Christlikeness, that you may be a greater witness for Him.

My Response

DAY 16

Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!
Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name;
bring an offering, and come into His courts!

Psalms 96:7-8 (ESV)

The Generosity Connection
by Warren Halstrom, Worship Pastor

I am a worshiper. Lavish expressions of worship particularly through worship music are second nature to me.

As I grew in my walk with the Lord, it became apparent I needed to understand the connection between worship and generosity. Surely they are connected. Wouldn't a person with the greatest passion toward Christ also excel in generosity? While it was a new realization, it was obvious that if I was to grow in my relationship and walk with Christ, I absolutely needed to become generous, regardless of how unnatural it felt.

A funny thing happened to me along the way to understanding and practicing generosity. My perspective on prayer took on a whole new meaning. Diverse areas of my spiritual life began to improve and I became a better person. I am certainly still on the journey, but without question, my personal investment in the understanding and practice of generosity may be the wisest thing I've ever done.

Have you ever taken the time to seek out training on being generous? Sounds kind of funny but there may be uncharted territory in your life ready to be unlocked if you're willing to turn a light on this part of your life. Take a few minutes to do an inventory on your own passion for generosity and willingness to have God lead you in this area.

My Response

DAY 17

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:7-8 (NIV)

Make Generosity a Habit
by Warren Halstrom, Worship Pastor

I started out self-employed. A young musician is not often burdened with the responsibility of income. It was fairly easy, therefore, to skirt over the issue of giving for me. My pay was always irregular, and never for sure, so my pattern of giving was inconsistent.

Then I began my first full-time Music Pastor job. Ten percent of the pastor's salaries were deducted and given to the local denomination as a matter of policy in this church. I didn't have a choice but to become a tither. In some ways, this was good for me and good for the body of Christ. It wasn't, however, developmental in my understanding and heart toward giving.

As I moved from that position, I was then in the more common position of receiving all of my net pay and consequently faced the responsibility of tithing 10% plus giving. While I had a heart to give, the reality of a low bank account balance and a growing family often overcame my good intentions. At times, I built up a rather hefty amount of money owed to God. Over the years, I was constantly trying to pay the tithe that I owed.

Then, in the midst of my research into generosity, I made a strategic decision. I would go back to something that had worked quite well for me. I arranged for my giving to be automatically deducted from my salary each paycheck. This time, however, it was not forced upon me. It was my intention to make sure that my heart to be generous toward God not be thwarted by unforeseen expenses. The decision to automatically pay my tithe first brings me great joy. This way I know that the first fruits of my income are His and in the hands of His church before I could even think of spending it on a dishwasher or on Disney.

I still have plenty of room for growth and do earnestly look forward to following God's direction in taking new bold steps in generous giving. Are there steps toward habitual giving that you could take? Take a few minutes to pray for the courage to take bold steps toward becoming the kind of giver that doesn't find themselves "behind" in their obligations toward God.

My Response

DAY 18

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the Lord Almighty.

Malachi 3:10-11 (NIV)

Test God?
by Natalie Thomas, Business Administer

When I was in college I made the decision to test God with my tithes. I didn’t have much money in college. Like most college students, I had limited income to cover my bills. My pastor at the time would go to Malachi each Sunday during offering to remind us about what God said about giving your tithes and to test God.

Malachi 3:10 is a unique verse in the Bible, for in it God grants us permission to test Him in regards to tithing. Since I was a college student I knew all too well what a test meant, which was very interesting to me, the choice of words. One Sunday I decided to test God and have been testing him ever since.

It’s really been a test for me as well, particularly in the hard times. It was in those hard times, like when the economy took a dive in 2008. My husband had to change jobs because no one was buying cars, but we continued to tithe. God provided for us in those difficult times, not just financially, but with good health, peace of mind, and unspeakable joy. To this day we are still testing God with our tithes and his word has not returned void.

My Response



DAY 19

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Luke 6:38 (NIV)

Taking the Next Step
by Natalie Thomas, Business Administer

My husband and I had joined Celebration the summer of 2016 at the start of a church stewardship Initiative. During that time, the congregation was challenged to increase their giving. Pastor Emmert used a ladder in his presentation and asked everyone to take a step up the ladder. He encouraged them to make that first step on the ladder and give something. If you were giving, but not regularly, he encouraged you to take the next step to become a consistent giver.

Since my family was already tithing, our next step was going beyond the tithe. Pastor Emmert asked us to really pray about what God was calling us to give, so we did just that. We prayed and felt that God gave us an amount. This was the first time that we gave above our tithes on a monthly basis. Sure, we gave to special offerings, but were never intentional in giving beyond our tithes on a regular basis. God was true to his word and opened up the floodgates, which ultimately made room for us to go beyond.

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “**and see** if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the Lord Almighty. Malachi 3:10-11 (emphasis added).

My Response

DAY 20

“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

Matthew 25:23 (NIV)

Trusting the Supplier

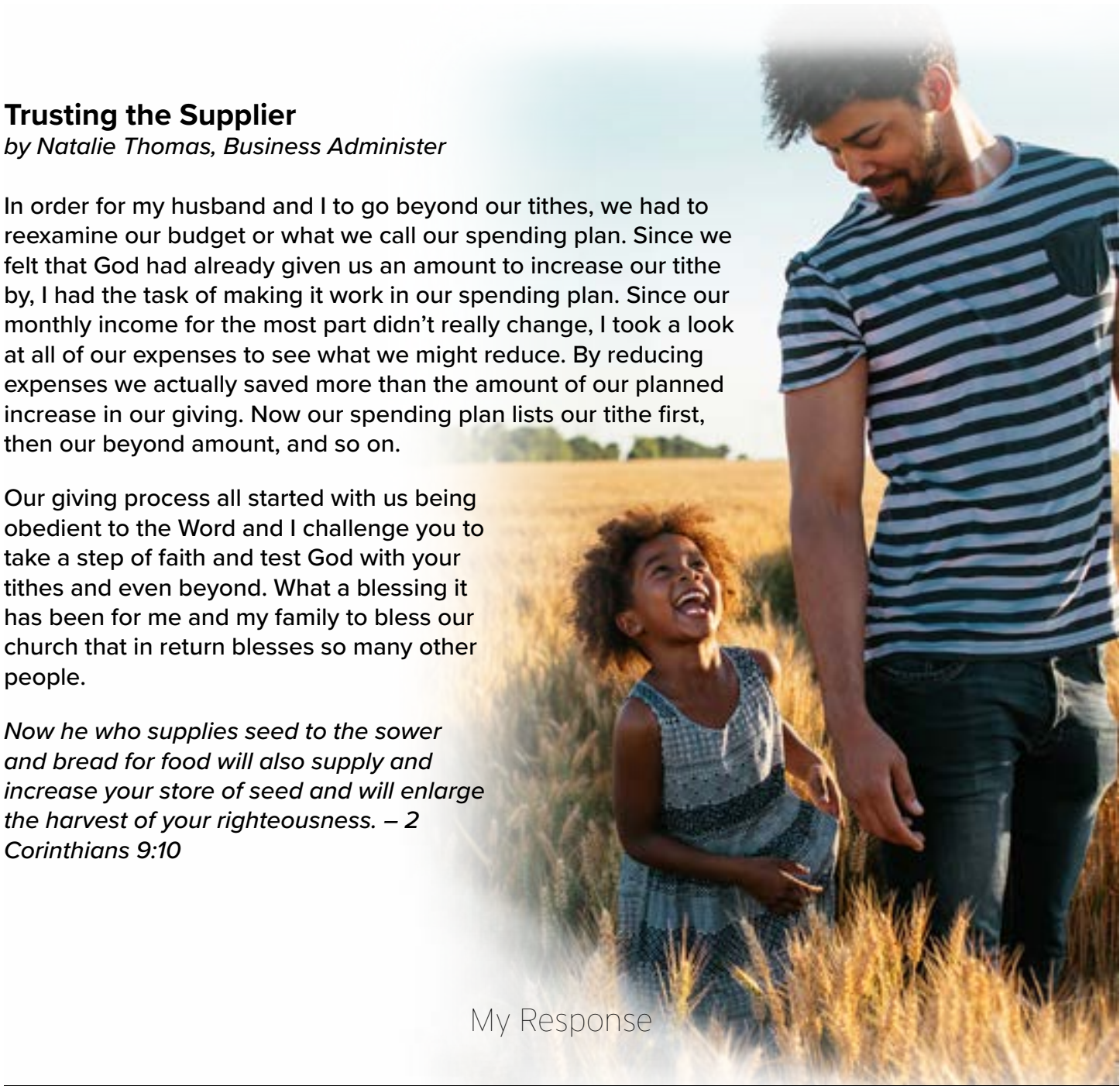
by Natalie Thomas, Business Administer

In order for my husband and I to go beyond our tithes, we had to reexamine our budget or what we call our spending plan. Since we felt that God had already given us an amount to increase our tithe by, I had the task of making it work in our spending plan. Since our monthly income for the most part didn’t really change, I took a look at all of our expenses to see what we might reduce. By reducing expenses we actually saved more than the amount of our planned increase in our giving. Now our spending plan lists our tithe first, then our beyond amount, and so on.

Our giving process all started with us being obedient to the Word and I challenge you to take a step of faith and test God with your tithes and even beyond. What a blessing it has been for me and my family to bless our church that in return blesses so many other people.

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. – 2 Corinthians 9:10

My Response



DAY 21

MY BOLD STEPS: GIVING



Pastor David’s Challenge

A few years ago, Pam & I decided to change our lifestyle so that our budget would be oriented toward giving rather than spending. We downsized our home, eliminated some hobbies and made other changes that freed up our income. The end result was a greater level of giving than we ever thought possible. As always, Jesus is right when he said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35) As you contemplate your own growth in giving during Live Boldly, consider the following steps.

If you’ve never given to your church before, making a first time gift is an obvious place to start. Say you give occasionally- set a goal to give consistently.

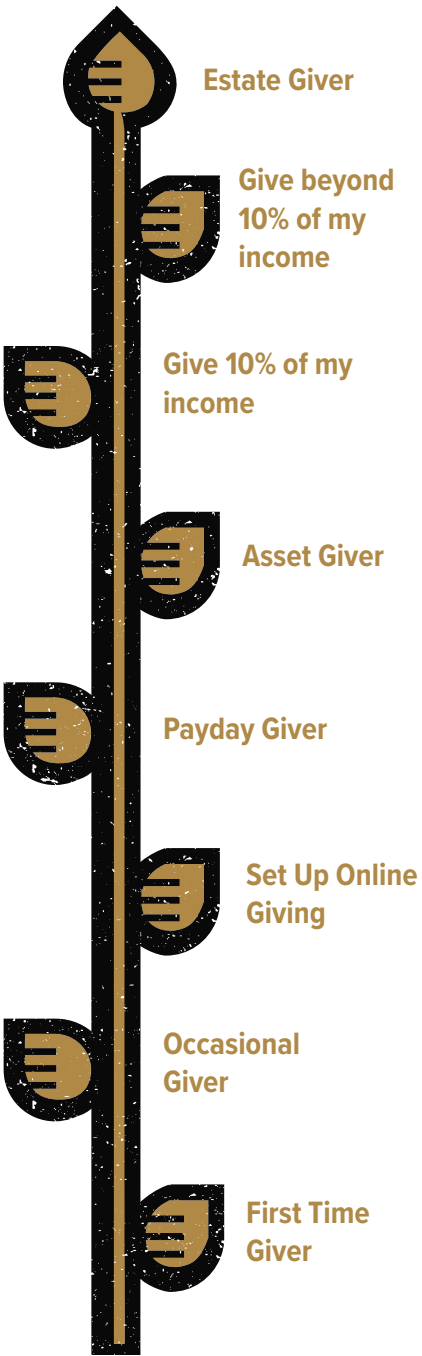
Ready for another step? The Bible talks frequently about giving of your first fruits. That’s farmer-speak for giving the first dollars from each paycheck. Think of the impact you could have if you started giving electronically each payday!



How about setting a goal to give 10% of your income by the end of Live Boldly. Imagine the influence on your own children as they watch you rearrange your priorities to make tithing a reality in your home.

Maybe you’ve experienced a financial windfall. It could be a modest amount like a favorable tax refund or a large amount like an inheritance. Think of the influence those resources might have both here in Tallahassee and around the world.

“I think giving has been really wonderful for our marriage because we have a common goal that we are working towards. There are sacrifices that we’ve had to make in order to give sometimes, but that’s okay because we see the impact.” -Jennifer, on her family’s giving journey



PRACTICAL STRATEGIES TO FOLLOW

PRACTICE PRIORITY BUDGETING

Many families may choose to rearrange their financial priorities. By identifying “unnecessary or less important” expenses that are currently in the budget, the family may free up funds that can become part of their giving goal.

REDIRECT PRESENT EXPENDITURES

Some families have short-term expenditures or loans that will soon be settled. Once these expenses are paid off, the funds, which are already a part of the Budget, can be redirected to Live Boldly.

INCREASE GIVING WITH INCREASED INCOME

Sometimes a family may be aware of an expected bonus or an upcoming increase in income. These families can choose to plan to include these increases in income in their total goal.

DONATE ASSETS

Some families may have stocks, bonds, or other securities that have appreciated. These assets can be included in their goal. There are potential tax advantages to this type of transaction, but there are also potential penalties. Therefore, before making a contribution of this type, we encourage you to consult your CPA, tax attorney, or financial advisor.

WAYS OF GIVING

AT CELEBRATION

You can drop your gift off in the giving boxes at each exit from the building on Sundays or drop them off in the church office during the week.

ONLINE CONTRIBUTION

Visit icelebration.org/give to set up a recurring or one-time gift through our easy, secure, online form.

TEXT TO GIVE

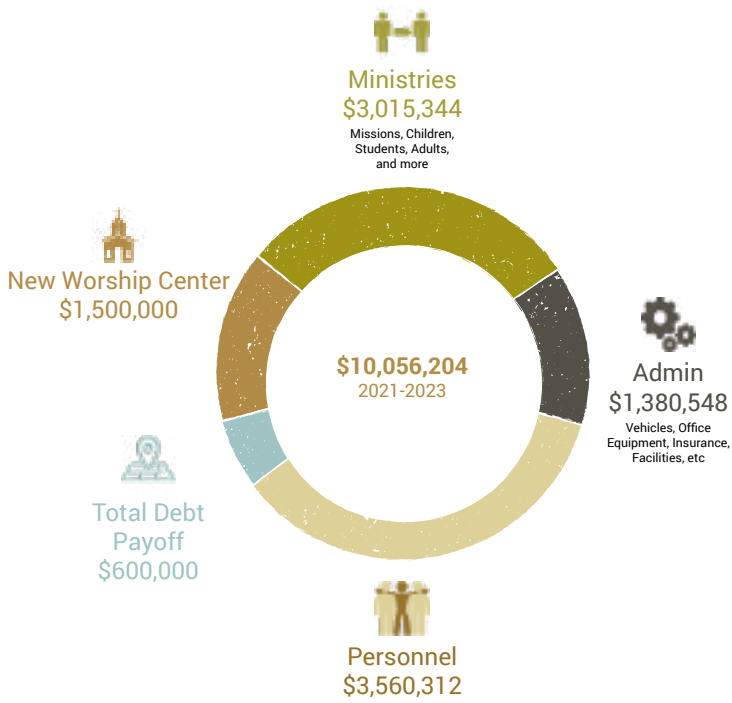
Text (850) 426-4483 with the amount you wish to give. You will need to fill out a brief online form your first time.

ONLINE BILLPAY

Schedule a regular payment to Celebration through your bank’s online payment system.

For helpful video tutorials and to learn more visit icelebration.org/give today.

WHAT WILL IT TAKE?



Gifts Needed	Monthly Gift (24 months)	Total 2-Year-Gift	Total Gift Level
3	\$8,333	\$200,000	\$600,000
6	\$6,250	\$150,000	\$900,000
10	\$4,167	\$100,000	\$1,000,000
11	\$3,125	\$75,000	\$825,000
21	\$2,083	\$50,000	\$1,050,000
24	\$1,500	\$36,000	\$864,000
30	\$1,000	\$24,000	\$720,000
46	\$750	\$18,000	\$828,000
70	\$417	\$10,000	\$700,000
89	\$250	\$6,000	\$534,000
Other Income (Afterschool/Summer Camp, Preschool & Misc. Fees)			\$2,035,204
Total Budget			\$10,056,204

STEPS TO SET YOUR GOAL

The answer to the question, “What’s my giving goal to Live Boldly?” is a personal one. No one can make that decision for you. As you approach the decision, we encourage you to:

1- REACH OUT TO GOD

Prayerfully seek God’s guidance as you set your goal.

2- EVALUATE YOUR RESOURCES

Truly consider everything God has put under your stewardship.

3- NAIL DOWN THE SPECIFICS

Determine specifically how your resources can be used to compile a generous contribution.

4- EDUCATE YOURSELF

Consider “out of the box” ways that you can increase your contribution.

5- WALK BY FAITH

Set your goal and trust God to help you successfully fulfill it.

CREATIVE IDEAS

- Sell some collectibles that you’ve had for a while.
- Consider simpler vacation or remodeling plans.
- Consider using overtime pay to increase your contribution.
- Turn a hobby into a source of revenue.
- Consider taking a fast from expensive coffees, sweets, or dining out.
- Take Financial Peace University or another financial education course.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

In just a few short years Celebration Baptist Church has seen God move in tremendous ways. Lives changed, commitments made, the gospel shared, people fed and a new church planted. God has so much more in store for us in our new ministry initiative, Live Boldly.

In Live Boldly we will continue the expanded ministries begun in Focus 2020 and begin preparing for the next steps in our journey as a church family.

We're on the doorstep of the largest housing expansion in Tallahassee since the construction of Southwood, the Welaunee Expansion. Our church is about to be located in between two huge neighborhoods, each with thousands of homes.

When we were developing Focus 2020, we saw this coming so we laid the foundation for a new worship center when we purchased Woodland Hall. When God made a way for us to buy Woodland Hall, He opened the door for us to invest in our own future in a way that the church has dreamed of for nearly 40 years. The three acres included in that purchase make it possible for us to build a new worship center that will face the intersection of Centerville and Killlearn.

This new worship center will give us capacity for just under 1100 people in worship, almost double our current capacity. We'll also be adding much needed parking so our campus may accommodate a larger capacity in worship. It will allow us to prepare for the additional growth we'll experience as our new neighbors move in.



This is a huge challenge for us, because it is so easy to be swept up in the tyranny of the moment. It's so easy to look around at our worship center and see the social distancing, see the masks all the while knowing that there are a number of people that haven't been to church since the pandemic began a year ago.

But we need to remember that this won't last forever. We're seeing our church family and guests return to church. I am convinced that God has a future for us. I am convinced that we'll go far beyond anywhere we've ever been before.

This construction will help the whole church. When we have that new space, we'll be able to upgrade our worship center to better serve our student ministry on Wednesday nights. We'll also use that space as the new home for Celebration en Español on Sunday mornings.

The majority of the Live Boldly ministry plan will be focused on continuing our current ministries and launch the new ministry shared in this magazine. We'll also pay off all our current debt and start setting money aside for our new worship center. We're going to save 1.5 million dollars or about 15% of the total budget, toward a new worship center in anticipation of the day that we can move forward in building it responsibly.

We can't predict the future. But I can tell you this, we should never be afraid of the future just because we can't predict it. What should we do? We should invest in it. We should buy the field and trust that one day, God will bring about a harvest on it.



UPCOMING LIVE BOLDLY EVENTS

APRIL 11 - MAY 1

21-Days of Prayer

MAY 2 (GOAL SUNDAY)

Two Services at 8:30 & 10:00am

Outdoor Celebration Picnic at 11:30am

MAY 26

Church Business Meeting at 6:30pm

JUNE 6

Launch Sunday



celebration

BAPTIST CHURCH