

The Next Chapter



05.14.23

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to another weekend of *The Next Chapter* for Prairie Lakes Church! Back in January, Pastor John introduced us to his succession plan to “switch seats” and make way for a new Lead Pastor. Then in March, he shared the Elder Board’s vote to recommend Jesse Tink, PLC’s Executive Pastor of Leadership, as a Lead Pastor candidate. This past weekend - as we enter a potential season of transition - Pastor Jesse had the opportunity to share three “God-patterns” he’s watched PLC follow in the past that we will need to remain committed to in the next chapter.

DISCUSSION

- **God-Pattern #1:** We keep out of trouble by **keeping our focus on Jesus and his mission.** We often contextualize this mission to love God, love your neighbor as yourself, and make disciples of all nations by saying we’re going to “Reach Iowa by launching No Matter Churches which launch No Matter Followers of Jesus.”
 1. *What’s at stake if we take our focus off this mission? Who’s at stake if we take our focus off this mission?*
 2. **Revisit and read the story of David & Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 11.** The mission might feel dangerous at times, but it’s far more risky to get off-mission. When you find yourself leaning away from God’s mission and into your own plans, what becomes risky or unhealthy for you? What patterns do you notice?
- **God-Pattern #2:** We **keep in step** with God’s Spirit.
 3. **Revisit and read 2 Samuel 7:1-11.** Imagine remodeling someone’s house without first asking their permission or getting their input. You can imagine how they might respond or the questions they may ask of you. Do you have any examples of jumping into a project that went poorly because you didn’t seek input first?
 4. We keep in step with God’s Spirit by creating room for God to speak. “We don’t just go charging ahead, and we don’t lag behind, either.” Before beginning your day, connecting with your kids, creating new plans, or countless other examples, how are/can you create space for God to speak to speak and define your plans?
- **God-Pattern #3:** We **keep the main thing** the main thing.
 5. **Revisit and read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 & 1 Corinthians 8:1.** While we are allowed to hold different convictions and preferences, we are never allowed to be divisive for their sake. Love is the one thing that binds and unifies us – lived out and expressed in the ways Jesus modeled and taught. How have you seen divisiveness infiltrate your Little Iowa (friends, families, co-workers, neighbors, etc.)? What’s at stake when non-essential issues become more important than God’s love? How can you consistently protect yourself to keep the main thing (God’s love) the main thing?

APPLICATION

- **Make time for God’s voice.** Carve out specific time each day to be quiet and hear from God to remain in step with His Spirit and be reminded of the main thing (His love for you and your Little Iowa).
- **Keep praying at 5:25.** Based on Galatians 5:25, whether in the morning or the evening (or both!), say a prayer for PLC’s succession process, including Pastor John and Pastor Jesse. It can be as simple as, “God, continue to guide PLC in your will in the succession process. Give Pastor John and Jesse energy, clarity, and wisdom in this season. Amen.”
- **Vote.** If you are a Member, be sure to vote when ballots go live this week.