

JAMES A. MEEK

612 Laurens Drive • Anderson, SC 29621

864-353-0782 (cell)

jim@onegreatstory.com

PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY

Purpose. The church exists to exhibit and extend Christ's kingdom in this world. It does this by

- *enlisting subjects* who accept Christ's offer of amnesty in the gospel and submit to his lordship as members of his church who live lives of worship, obedience, and service;
- *engaging and equipping servants* whom it deploys into the world on his behalf; and
- *extending Christ's influence* in lives, communities, and the world.

Bible. The Bible is the primary means by which God directs his church and people. Teaching must be biblically based, Christ-centered, and focused on application. Our goal is not merely knowledge but lives changed by the gospel. The church's teaching is effective when people grow in knowledge, character, obedience, and love, and as they begin to learn from Bible for themselves and teach others.

Gospel. The central message of the Bible is the good news of God's grace in Christ. The church must proclaim the whole gospel, that Jesus died, rose, ascended, rules, and will return, so that our sins might be forgiven, hearts changed, relationships (with God and others) restored, and the world renewed! Believers need to hear this gospel as much as unbelievers, because it is the means (and the only means) by which Christ's power comes to work in our lives.

Relationships. We communicate the gospel most effectively through relationships. We influence others more by who we are and how we live than by what we say. Students become like their teachers, so we seek to model the love and the life of Christ by loving, shepherding, and mentoring those we teach, and by developing congregations that are true communities characterized by reconciliation and renewal.

Worship. People who genuinely know God cannot help but admire, love, fear, trust, and obey him—that is, worship him. And, our worship (individual and corporate) promotes further growth in admiration, love, fear, trust, and obedience. Leaders must plan and lead times of worship that enable and encourage people to respond to God both emotionally and intellectually. We should draw regularly from the church's rich heritage of worship, but the language, music, and style must always be suited to the worshippers.

World. The church must always look outward. We are called to make disciples and extend the church throughout the world. We must teach believers to live out the lordship of Christ in their work, priorities (time, money), and relationships. We must engage them (train, support, and encourage them) in serving others, not only in the church, but also in workplaces, coffee shops, and kitchens where they are in contact with the world. We must also live out the lordship of Christ together, demonstrating the power of redemptive relationships as we live in community with one another and pursue justice, mercy, and peace in our own communities and throughout the world.

Leadership. Leaders first of all must lead by example, showing by their lives and service what it means to follow Christ. Leaders teach, guide, counsel, correct (when necessary), and encourage others to grow as followers of Christ. They prayerfully set overall priorities, and then enlist and support members who work together to accomplish them. Finally, leaders continually identify and develop additional leaders for the church's expanding ministry throughout the world.

Excellence. God often uses the weak and broken to accomplish his purposes, but this is no excuse for offering God less than our best. Christ's honor demands that we pursue excellence. Achieving excellence requires commitment, careful planning, consistency, thoughtful evaluation, and continual improvement as we seek to extend Christ's kingdom throughout his world.