

PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY



A philosophy of Ministry is a foundational building block in ministry that should go beyond just our convictions and beliefs and be ingrained into how we live. Similar to the difference between orthodoxy and orthopraxy, our philosophy must be what we actually live and do; not just what we say we believe.

The core ministry philosophies that have shaped my expression of ministry and life have both a broad view as well as a personal, specific view.

THE BIG PICTURE

The Local Church: I have a firm conviction that the local church is the hope of the world and is God's plan to reach people far from Him and help people grow in their relationship with Him (Acts 2:42-47). To this end, we know Jesus is coming back for a glorious and victorious church that the gates of hell can not stand against (Matthew 16:18). The local church will take on many different forms and express itself in unique ways but together will proclaim and demonstrate the love, presence, and power of God to the world (Ephesians 3:10).

In our church, I have expressed our philosophy of ministry priorities this way:

A Place to Believe → Where we can know and love God. Where people who are separated from him come home and can explore and experience a personal relationship with him. Then those who love God grow in their relationship with Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Pet. 3:18.)

A Place to Belong → Where we love people and help them get rooted and established in community together. We believe we were made to be in relationship– not only with God but also with each other. We grow best in community, and are better together. (1 John 1:3; Hebrews 10:23-25). To love God and love people (Mark 12:30-31).

A Place to Become → Where we discover who God created us to be and fulfill His plan and purpose for our lives. Ultimately to reach the world through the gifts, talents, and calling God gave us–bringing hope, healing, freedom, and salvation to all as we show and share God's love (Colossians 2:6-7).

Equipping People for Ministry

A primary responsibility in my philosophy of ministry is equipping people and the church for the work of ministry and inviting them to join in the ongoing story of God's redemptive work (Ephesians 4:12-16). We must equip and empower people to use their gifts to serve and minister to people. Effective ministry requires a strong sense of teamwork and collaboration. We know that God has gifted each of us to accomplish His purposes that He prepared in advance (Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

Next Generation Focus

From my first days of ministry, I have had a conviction that we must focus on the next generation—not just as a side note, but as a priority. Whether this is young adults, youth, children, or next-level leaders, the next generation has to be on the forefront of our ministry (Psalm 71:17-18; 78:4-7). My ministry has included 15+ years in youth ministry, followed by family ministry (overseeing infants through college and dozens of interns), and now also includes a ministry of a Christian school with nearly 450 children hearing and growing in God's Word daily.

Raising and Releasing Leaders

Creating a philosophy of raising and releasing leaders is a bittersweet venture as you invest and pour into those you want to see fulfill their calling. When leading a multi-staff church with full-time pastors and leaders, you must hold on loosely and submit to God as you release them to His purposes (Timothy 2:2). Seeing three of our recent staff now serving as Lead Pastors of other Open Bible Churches is one of my greatest joys, but it also takes intentionality and sacrifice.

THE PERSONAL

In addition, there are a few philosophies of ministry principles that have formed my faith and ministry on a personal and practical level as well:

Being faithful in little (Matthew 25:21). I learned this principle during my very first ministry experience after graduating from Bible College. I went to work at a church in Colorado Springs as the Junior High Youth Pastor, but what paid my salary was being the janitor and groundskeeper. On the first day while I was unclogging a toilet, I thought about how my Pastoral major and Greek minor degree hadn't trained me for this. In that moment, I felt God tell me that if I would be faithful in little when no one was watching, He would use my life and open doors and bless me in ways I could never imagine. After all these years in ministry, I have seen this promise come true. As a church today, we want to be faithful with the few, understanding that everyone counts. Whether it is caring for individuals, being good stewards of limited resources, or starting a ministry from scratch, we will be faithful with where God has placed us and what He has given us.

Next, **always chase the call and not the carrot** (John 2:23-25; 6:26). What matters is God's call on our lives and what He is specifically calling us to. For me, this meant that it wasn't about title, position, or salary; it was always about what God has called me to. We lived this specific principle prior to moving to Concord to plant Life Church. My wife and I and our 6 kids left the comfort and security of a growing, healthy church with a stable income in Colorado and moved to California. It was a huge risk. We would be taking a pay cut to move to a city that cost twice as much to live in and planting a church with no team initially, no home to live in, not knowing a soul. It seemed risky, but in reality, it was only another step in a journey of trusting God's plan and seeing how He is "able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask" (Ephesians 2:10).

Finally, **ministry is always about people, not programs** (Mark 3:14 John 3:22). In ministry we often focus primarily on pulling off a service, a big event, or an outreach. We always want to do everything with excellence, making it memorable and impactful.

Although doing things well is important, we must remember that we are called to reach people and love people—connecting with people so they can connect with God. Ministry is all about people, and I want what we do to count for eternity.

Ultimately, I believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1:16), and that our ultimate goal is to make Jesus known to the world through the power, presence, and working of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20). I am committed to living out this message in everything I do as a minister in any capacity I serve (1 Corinthians 9:16-17), and to leading by example (1 Timothy 4:12). Having grown up in Open Bible and being able to serve in so many different capacities, I have a passion and heart to see us unite together, dream God-sized dreams, and fulfill the destiny He has for us.

**“NOW ALL GLORY TO GOD,
WHO IS ABLE, THROUGH HIS
MIGHTY POWER AT WORK WITHIN US,

TO ACCOMPLISH INFINITELY MORE
THAN WE MIGHT ASK OR THINK.”**

EPHESIANS 3:20 NLT