

Introduction: Pg. ____

PRAYER FOR OUR NATION.

**“2021 Vision: 1,000,000 Minutes”
Mark 1:9-15**

One of the greatest joys in our home these days is listening to our 2 year old, Titus, learn to not only speak different words but to put them together. Just two nights ago, after bath time and getting his cup of milk before bed, I took him upstairs to brush his teeth, and when I sat him on the counter, he went for the soap dispenser.... I proceeded to brush his teeth and then as we walked into his room, he said: “Look, raisins all gone. Soap did that!” lol... Hilarious stuff!

He’s also mastered various types of commands regarding the kind of food he eats, games he plays and show he watches on TV.

But his favorite command is: “SIT DOWN.” “SIT DOWN, MAMA. SIT DOWN DADDY. SIT DOWN PARKER.”

WHY? Even a two year old knows when he has your full attention. We may be trying to get dinner ready. His sisters may be doing homework, but all of that is irrelevant to Titus, because he wants our full attention. SIT. DOWN! The longer we delay, the louder he gets. SIT!! DOWN!!

I believe those two words are words God is speaking to us for 2021. He’s calling us to SIT DOWN. He’s calling for our FULL ATTENTION. He’s calling us to a deeper relationship and friendship with him!

I want to take you to Mark 1:9-15 as we consider our 2021 Vision today.

Mark 1:9-15 (text displayed)

I want to share three truths with you from this text as I share our Vision focus for 2021!

I. Live from your identity (1:9-11).

Verse 9 seems backwards! Should’t Jesus should be baptizing John? We know John felt the same (from Matthew 3:14-15), but Jesus tells him that “it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.”

This moment MARKED Jesus not only because it launched his public ministry, but it empowered him in an undeniable way! Look at verse 10.

Anointed by the Spirit

- The words “TORN OPEN” come from the Greek word *schizo*, a graphic word that means “tearing in two.” The only other time it is used is in Mark 15:38 when the veil of the temple is torn in two and a Roman centurion makes the same confession spoken by God the Father in verse 11: “Surely this man was the Son of God.”
- What happens when the heavens are torn open? The Spirit descends on Jesus like a dove. OT truth and imagery abounds.
 - #1) Isaiah 64:1 pleads for God to “rend the heavens and come down” to bring restoration to Israel. God did that in sending his Son and filling him with the Holy Spirit!
 - #2) Just as the Spirit hovered over the waters when God created the world, as we learn in Genesis 1:2, now the Spirit descends to mark this new age of salvation coming in the presence and work of Jesus Christ. Just as each person of the Trinity worked together in creation, now they work together in redemption!
 - Again, this was the mark of the coming Messiah. Isaiah 11:2 “And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.”

- Jesus, the Messiah, would live in total dependence on God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

T: But that's not all... Jesus was anointed by the Spirit and...

Affirmed by the Father

- A voice thundered from heaven: "YOU are MY BELOVED SON; with YOU I am WELL PLEASED."
- Underline these words. Write them down. Memorize them this week. We can't overstate their importance.
- The Greek would be translated literally: "you are my son, the beloved one. I am very pleased with you." (Osborne & Geulich, 29)
 - "You are my Son" echoes the royal psalm celebrating the coming Davidic King in Psalm 2:7.
 - "Beloved" echoes Genesis 22:2 where God tells Abraham to take his "only son whom he loves." A probable pointer to the salvific mission Jesus would accomplish through suffering becoming the true and greater sacrifice on the cross.
 - "With you I am well pleased." Takes us back to a messianic passage in Isaiah 42:1 - "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights."
 - Jesus is the messiah, the beloved Son of God, who will be the sacrifice for our sins!

These words do not simply reveal Jesus' identity, they point us to the kind of relationship he enjoyed with God the Father.

This is the SAME kind of relationship God has with each of his children! If you follow Jesus, if you have received him as the Lord and supreme treasure of your life, THESE words are for you, so much so that you can put your name at the beginning of the statement: "Josh, you are my beloved son, with YOU I am WELL PLEASED." "Tomisin, you are my beloved daughter, with YOU I am WELL PLEASED."

Consider this...

- God desires deep, intimate friendship with you, MORE PERSONAL than we can fathom (Genesis 1-2)
- YOU ARE BELOVED. GOD loves us, not because of what we do but because of who we are. We belong to him! Remember, this is before he's started his mission. As Bob Stein says, "He is not the Son of God because he does certain things; he does certain things because he IS the Son of God. Who he is determines what he does, not vice versa."
- God takes pleasure in you. The NLT says, "You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy." That's how God feels about you. He looks at you with delight! He cherishes you for you!

T: We are called to live FROM your identity, not for your identity. Live from approval, not for approval. Live from love, not for love.

At Redemption Hill, we believe there is nothing more important than enjoying a growing relationship with God. That's why we're going to spend our best energy and focus on discipleship in 2021.

2021 is all about Discipleship

- **Disciple: A follower of Jesus.**

Are you a follower of Jesus? Are you learning from him? Sitting at his feet? Aware of his presence everywhere you go? When we talk about discipleship, we are talking about...

2021 is all about Discipleship

- **Disciple: A follower of Jesus.**
- **Discipleship: Following Jesus in all of life.**

How closely are you following Christ? Are you growing in your relationship with him? As we follow Jesus, we will hear his call to help others in their spiritual journey. That's called...

2021 is all about Discipleship

- **Disciple: A follower of Jesus.**
- **Discipleship: Following Jesus in all of life.**
- **Disciple-making: Helping others follow Jesus in all of life.**

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You say, “Well, Tanner, this is pretty comprehensive. If we are pouring our best time and energy into learning how to follow Jesus in all of life, what is this going to look like in 2021?” Great question. While there are many steps we will take as we follow Jesus together, the one we believe will drive them all is helping you encounter Jesus and walk with him daily. That is why we are focusing our 2021 Vision on 1,000,000 Minutes with God.

Vision: 1,000,000 Minutes with God

Invest at least 1% of your day (15 minutes) in focused, face to face time with God.

What are we going after? FOCUSED, FACE to FACE time WITH GOD. Let’s break that down.

- Focused: is about removing distractions. Finding space to give God our full attention.
- Face] to face: is about personal relationship!
 - Exodus 33 talks about how God spoke face to face, as a friend speaks to a friend.
 - Psalm. 25:14 says, “The friendship of the Lord is with those who fear him.”
 - Mark 3:14 tells us: “[Jesus] appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) **so that they might be with him** and he might send them out to preach.”
- God is saying: “SIT DOWN!” Your name is on my calendar, every day!

We’re talking about one million minutes collectively as a church with Jesus to experience the changing power of Jesus.

The MATH (in case you're wondering...)

15 (min) x 7 (days) x 52 (weeks) x 200 people = 1,092,000 Minutes!

As Pastors, as we talked and prayed, as we listened to our staff team and to you, we became increasingly convinced that his focus on discipleship is the most important value we could chase after in. 2021.

Why?

1. We are coming off one of the most difficult years we’ve ever faced!
 - We are concerned for your spiritual health and well being. Anxiety. Depression. Added Stress. Relational tension. Spiritual battles.
 - We need God’s strength like never before, but even beyond 2020,
2. We constantly hear of the need for people to grow in their devotional life.
 - **Survey on Bible Reading & Prayer**
 - **55% read at least one chapter of the Bible 5 days/wk.**
 - **58% pray at least 5 days a week** (19% only a few times a month or less)
 - **86% find Bible reading & Prayer at least moderately satisfying** (50%+ very or extremely)
 - **69% rarely spend time memorizing Scripture.**
 - **89% fast a few times a year or less** (but 69% believe it is at least moderately important)
3. Disciple-Making - At one time was a real strength... Now,

I know you may be thinking...

- “Why focus on how much time we spend?” Because every relationship is cultivated through quality time! Time is how we measure investment and things that matter to us.
- “Why 15 minutes? I’m just trying to survive. I don’t have 15 minutes!” If 15 feels like a stretch, start with 5!
- “Others may be thinking only 15 minutes? Why not 20 or 30?” We chose a target we believe everyone can hit. Remember the vision is “at least” 15 minutes. There is no limit to how much time someone spends with God.
- “But Tanner, aren’t we supposed to walk with Jesus all throughout our day?” Yes! But what we are saying is that these 15 or 20 or 30 or 60 minutes are designed to fuel the rest of your day.
- “Devotional time is not the end all, be all.” Couldn’t agree more! There are a lot of Christians who read the Bible every day and live relatively boring lives when it comes to the kingdom of God.
- “Isn’t this legalistic?” Not if it’s FROM LOVE (Mark 1:11) and FOR LOVE.
- “But I don’t know where to start!” We have you covered!

What does this mean for Redemption Hill in 2021?

- **Personal Discipleship: Help you encounter Jesus daily.**
 - Set you up for success. **Bible reading plan.** Reading through the NT as a church family. 1 chapter 5 days a week.
 - We’ve also created a devotional guide (prepare your heart, listen to God, talk to God) and a monthly prayer guide, not to mention verse for us to memorize together and times of fasting throughout the year.

T: Why is this starting point so critical? As we cultivate friendship with God, he fills us to...

2. Experience God’s change in all of life. (1:12-13)

Read 12-13

- Again, we are surprised to see Jesus is driven into the wilderness, not by Satan, which means “adversary,” but by the Spirit. The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus and then immediately takes him out to a barren, uncomfortable and unsafe place.
- [The words “drove out” come from the Greek word *ekballo*, which means to “cast out” or “expel.” They carry the idea of a strong force. Why?]
- They show us that Jesus was living under the complete control of the Spirit, even when facing trials and temptations, even when Satan looked to immediately thwart Jesus’ saving mission, because if he could get Jesus to sin, he could not be the perfect sacrifice for our sin. For forty days, Jesus encountered a vicious onslaught of temptation from Satan. The presence of wild animals points to how dark and trying this would have been.
- But while Satan was tempting Jesus to rebel against his Father’s ways, Jesus was also being tested. As we learn from Israel’s history, the wilderness was a place of testing. A test reveals how prepared you are to tackle your next assignment.
- Through Spirit-inspired dependence on his Father, through prayer, fasting and meditating on the Word of God, Jesus defeated each temptation (only implied in verse 13). In doing so, he proves himself to be the Son of God. Where Adam, the first son of God, failed in the garden, Jesus, the true and greater Son, succeeds in the wilderness and passes the test.

Just as the Spirit empowered Jesus to overcome any temptation, we too have everything we need to experience God’s change in all of life. As we focus on discipleship in 2021, we want to...

What does this mean for Redemption Hill in 2021?

- **Personal Discipleship: Help you encounter Jesus daily.**
- **Discipleship: Equip you to follow Jesus in all of life.**
 - That’s why we’re camping out in the Gospel of Mark for the entirety of the year.

- That's why we're enhancing our Equip Group offerings like "The Bible for Life" (to equip you read and interpret the Scriptures), Financial Peace University (to equip you effectively manage the financial resources God has entrusted to you), Be the Bridge (to equip us to seek racial justice and reconciliation), and more Groups will be identified throughout the 2021.
- We're also going to enhance our efforts to help you discover and use your SHAPE and the spiritual gifts God has given you.
- All of this will be amplified, not just on Sundays, but through our Groups and Teams and Ministries as we provide resources and tools to help us follow Jesus in all of life!

Our hope is that at any moment, you will always have an answer to two essential questions. The first is this:

Two Essential Questions

1. How is God changing you?

Consider the depth of change you'll experience when you always have an answer to that question. I want this to become part of our vocabulary, a question we ask as we interact with one another. "How are you?" "What's been going on?" is important. BUT "How is God changing you?" will be the question that reveals how we are moving forward in discipleship to follow Jesus in all of life.

T: And simply asking that question is one way we will work to...

3. Bring God's change to others. (1:14-15)

Read 14-15

- Jesus came not only to experience God's changing power for himself, he came to bring God's change to others!
- He did so in a visionary way: "The time is fulfilled (the new covenant age has dawned), and the kingdom of God is at hand (it has drawn near to you! ...so here is the only appropriate response) repent and believe in the gospel."
- In other words, experience God's change. Turn from living for yourself to trusting in the joyful announcement of the gospel! The way of Jesus is the way of LOVE. The way of Jesus means we pour ourselves out for the sake of others.
- Yes, this includes introducing Jesus to our friends, neighbors and coworkers who have yet to believe (we call that evangelism), but it also includes helping believers and new believers follow Jesus in all of life as well. Repentance and faith are not one time acts, but what we practice every day of our lives. Followers of Jesus help other people become mature followers of Jesus. It's called disciple-making.

What does this mean for Redemption Hill in 2021?

- **Personal Discipleship: Help you encounter Jesus daily.**
- **Discipleship: Equip you to follow Jesus in all of life.**
- **Disciple-Making: Prepare you to help others follow Jesus.**
 - This used to be one of our greatest strengths. In the early years of RHC, a large percentage of our church intentionally invested in others to help them follow Jesus in all of life (1 to 1 or with 2 or 3 others).
 - We're excited to return to that value! Over the course of this year, we are going to provide resources to help you live Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 11:1 and say to others: "Follow me, as I follow Christ."
 - This is going to be happening in Groups, Teams, Ministries and in our Homes! Through our Redemption Kids and Redemption Students ministries, we're going to put a stronger emphasis on family discipleship.

Which leads us to the second essential question:

Two Essential Questions

- 1. How is God changing you?**
- 2. How is God changing others through you?**

T: God wants that for you! He made you and saved you to help the people around you grow as followers of Jesus!

Conclusion:

As we move out into this new year, my prayer is that you would... _

The Point: Experience God's changing power through daily encounters with Jesus.

As we conclude our time, let me give you four reasons...

Why should we pursue 1,000,000 Minutes with God?

1. God really, really LOVES YOU!

- God is speaking to you this morning: "You are my beloved son and daughter; with you I am well pleased."
- The primary reason I set aside time each day is not for me to love God but to give him the opportunity to love me, to pour into me! God doesn't need your 15 minutes! He wants to give you 15.
- I'm not there to perform, to check a box, but to enjoy a relationship. There is nothing more satisfying, nothing more life-giving than walking with Jesus all day, every day. The place that is strengthened is through focused, face to face, quality time with God.

Why should we give ourselves to this?

2. Strength for life.

- You will be changed. You will be strengthened. You will be prepared to face every trail and temptation.
- No matter what you face, resources are found in the heart of God. Daily encounters provide daily power. "Man does not live by bread alone, but every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

Why should we give ourselves to this?

3. Impact for Jesus wherever you go.

- Do you believe it is possible? Impact everywhere!
- "Whoever abides in me and I in him, bears MUCH FRUIT!" John 15:5
- "Beholding the glory of the Lord, we are being transformed into the SAME IMAGE." (2 Corinthians 3:18)
- As we become more and more and more like Jesus, we will impact our workplaces, neighborhoods and homes!
- We will overflow with God's love. We will be ready to speak that word, that might not only change someone's day, but their eternity!

Why should we give ourselves to this?

4. Legacy of faith influencing generations!

- When God publishes the story of your life, how it will it read? How will people remember you?
- I know you want your life to count. THIS is the WAY!
- This one relationship effects every relationship. As we receive from God daily, we will pour out and leave a lasting legacy for the glory of God!

Imagine what Redemption Hill will look like as we are filled up and fueled with the love of God, as we're strengthened for life, making an impact wherever we go, leaving a legacy of faith for future generations!

I dare you to go for it!

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)