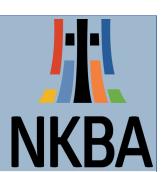


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John ~ Acts ~ Romans~ 1 Corinthians ~ 2 Corinthians ~ Galatians ~ Ephesians

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 18:58 (ESV)



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Jím's Journal

Rick Warren said, "You tend to base your decisions on one of four motivations in life: circumstances, conveniences, criticisms, or convictions. Yet only decisions that are based on your convictions will last and leave a lasting legacy."



At this stage in life and ministry I am thinking about legacy and allowing God to use me to make maximum impact for the mission of the Gospel. If you think about it, "the people who have made the greatest impact on this world, for good or bad, are always those who had the deepest convictions. They weren't necessarily the smartest, the wealthiest, or even the most famous. If you're going to build convictions, you need to build them on something that's going to last (Warren)."

Building things that last is a challenge, because everything changes. There's only one thing that never changes...the timeless truth of God's Word. Isaiah wrote: "The grass withers, and the flowers fade, but the Word of our God stands forever" (40:18 NLT). Consider these convictions for 2017. I am grateful for Rick Warren sharing these in a recent blog. Are these convictions that reflect your heart?

1. It's all about God.

It's not about me or you or our preferences. It's all about God and His mission. Until you understand that, life and ministry are never going to make sense. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment" (Matt. 22:37 NIV).

2. Only the Church will last forever.

Nothing on earth will last forever – no business, government, or nation. But Jesus said in Matthew 16:18: "I will build my church and all the powers of hell will not conquer it" (NLT). It's not enough just to love God. You must love the Church. The Bible says Christ died for the Church, anyone who has made Jesus Lord of his or her life.

3. God expects me to love everybody else too.

Life is not about the acquisition of things, achievement or popularity, it's about learning how to love. If you miss that, you miss THE lesson of life. "The second most important commandment is love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31 NLT). So who is our neighbor? The short answer is everybody. That means you're to love the unlovely, those who are different, difficult, and even dangerous. It's easy to love people who are safe. But God says that he wants you to take it even further. He says we're to love even our enemies (Luke 6:35).

4. The whole world needs Jesus.

Jesus tells us to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19 NIV). I want my legacy to be that there is no place I won't go and nothing I would not do (within the confines of Scripture) to reach people who are lost and far from God. I'd go into hell if I could bring people out with me. If the whole world needs Jesus, then we have to share the Good News. To keep it a secret would be criminal. We need our past forgiven, a purpose for living, and a home in heaven - we need Jesus.

5. Everything is possible with God.

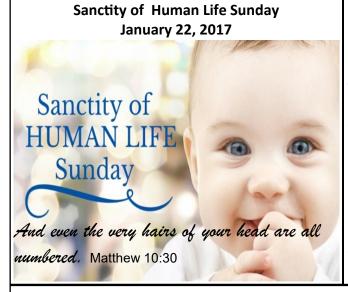
"Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26 NIV).

6. History's conclusion is inevitable.

The Bible tells us how it's going to end. One day, God's going to wrap it all up here on earth, and he's going to take his children who've trusted him to heaven forever. What we are trying to do is populate the Kingdom of Heaven. We want to take all our friends and everybody else with us. We want to get people into the Kingdom of Heaven, whatever it takes.

Is this your mentality? Is it the heartbeat of your church? From where I sit, our convictions, based on God's Word are clear. The real question is, will we be found faithful in 2017?

Following Him, JLM



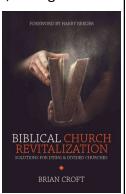
Leadership IQ

January 24, 10:00 a.m. Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington

The speaker is Brian Croft. He will be speaking on the topic of his book:

Biblical Church RevitalizationSolutions for Dying and Divided
Churches

A carpool from the NKBA office will be available. Please contact the NKBA office to let us know you will attend.



"IN ALL THINGS PRAY" January is SBC Call to Prayer Month

The 2016 SBC Call to Prayer highlights five areas of prayer, to correspond with January's five Sundays.

- † **My Family.** Select a family member who is unchurched or without Christ and pray that they would come to faith in Christ.
- † **My Community.** Select a friend, neighbor, or colleague and pray that they would come to faith in Christ.
- † **My Church.** Select a specific area of ministry in your church, such as a small group or age-graded ministry, and ask the Lord to use it to engage the lost with the Gospel.
- † **My Nation.** Select an elected national leader or a Send North America city and pray for the salvation of the leader or the church planting efforts in that area.
- † **My World.** Select an unreached people group and pray that the Gospel would be advanced among these people.

A Great Commission Prayer Experience



More information about this call to prayer and how to participate, including resources for use in your church, can be found at http://www.sbc.net/inallthingspray/.

The resources were developed by the SBC Executive Committee in cooperation with





Shepherding the Shepherd 2017

Shepherding is a time of relaxation, worship, refreshment and fellowship for ministers and their spouses.

COST: \$250 per couple (includes lodging, meals & conference fee)

Please visit the KBC web page for more information or to register at:

http://www.kybaptist.org/shepherding/

Northern Kentucky Baptist Association

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Mark Your Calendars Upcoming Events

January 3—Pastors' Round Table, 11:30am, NKBA Office

January 16—Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 22—Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

January 24—Leadership IQ, 10am, Immanuel Baptist, Lexington

January 26-28—Shepherding the Shepherd, Griffin Gate Marriott, Lexington

