

Sunday, August 6, 2017—The Ministry at Forty

### **Introduction**

- This morning we are going to be taking a break from our study of I Corinthians to do something a little bit different.
- As you may have heard, I turned forty last month and we had a party here at the church yesterday.
  - Share one of the pieces of advice that I was given yesterday.
- I believe that it is important for people to recognize and celebrate milestone events within the life of an assembly.
  - Ron and Nacey's Anniversary
  - 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Church
- This morning I want to share with you some of my thoughts about the ministry at forty.
  - Looking Back—how did we get here
  - Looking Forward—where are things going

### **Why Forty is Important**

- In 1991 William Strauss and Neil Howe wrote a book titled *Generations: The History of America's Future 1584 to 2069*. This book was followed up in 1997 by the publication of the *Fourth Turning: What the Cycles of History Tell Us About America's Next Rendezvous with Destiny*. Since the late 90s, their work has been applied to a host of fields including economics, leadership, and education.
- While a full exposition of their work is beyond the scope of this study there are a couple points that will help us understand our current situation. First, they say that, "Generations come in cycles. Just as history procures generations, so too do generations produce history." Each generation possess a different age location, peer personality, and lifecycle. At any given time in the life of a nation there are four different generations in existence each in its own phase of life.
  - Childhood (ages 0-20)—social role: growth (receiving nurture and acquiring values)
  - Young Adulthood (ages 21-40) social role: vitality (serving institutions and testing values)
  - Midlife (ages 41-60) social role: power (managing institutions and applying values)

- Elderhood (61-80) social role: leadership (leading institutions and transferring values)
- Late Elderhood (81+) social role: dependence (receiving comfort from institutions and remembering values)
- Ages 40 to 60 are the power stroke phase of life. People in this phase are managing and running intuitions. They are helping to lead and guide other who are younger and in a sense, they are finally respected by those who are older.
- I Timothy 4:12—to have already been teaching, preaching, and leading an assembly for 17 years before the age of 40 is a rare thing. While others in our age democratic where off doing other things Becky and I were struggling through how to balance life and ministry.
- Its not now that I am forty I magically have everything figured out. Rather its now that I am forty people will listen to what I have to say.

### **Looking Back**

- I grew up, during my formative years as a PK in a Grace home. It wasn't until high school that I started getting serious about studying my Bible.
- 1996—I came to Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1996 to go to Grace Bible College to study for the ministry at the age of 19.
- 1997—after one year at the GBC I was dissatisfied with the Pastoral Training program so I enrolled in Grace School of the Bible in the Summer of 1997 at the age of 20. I also changed my major at the college from Pastoral Training to Business Administration.
- 1998—I started teaching the College aged Sunday School class at Berean Bible Church now Rush Creek Bible Church in Byron Center. This was also the year that I meet Becky.
- 1999—Becky and I left Berean Bible Church and began driving nearly 1 hour to West Side Grace Church. In November of 1999 we got engaged.
  - Changed by major to Secondary Education. Realized the being a teacher was a better fit for ministry work.
- 2000—Becky and I were married on July 1. I turned 23 three days later on July 4<sup>th</sup>.
  - Mid-July, I started teaching at West Side Grace Church
  - Newly married, full time student, and teaching twice at church on Sunday

- 2002—I graduated from College with Bachelors of Religious Education from Grace Bible College and a Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education from Cornerstone University.
  - Later that Summer I was ordained by Berean Grace Church in Genoa City, WI and officially became the Pastor of Westside Grace Church at the age of 25.
  - This was also the first year that I spoke at the summer conference in Chicago.
- 2003—I took my first teaching job at Creative Technologies Academy in Cedar Springs.
- 2004—Wayne and Linda Nash began attending West Side Grace Church.
  - Began a Bible study in Cedar Springs.
- 2006—I began working on my Master’s Degree in Military History in December.
- 2007—I turned 30 and began to reevaluate some things at West Side Grace Church.
  - October—I resigned the Pastorate of West Side Grace Church and moved to found and establish Grace Life Bible Church.
  - December—Becky’s grandfather died, I started a new teaching job mid-school year, and Daniel was born.
    - New church
    - New baby
    - New job
    - Still working on my Master’s Degree
- 2008—I finished my Master’s Degree and the church moved its current facility in November.
- 2010—at the age of 33 I began the Grace History Project a five your course on church history from the vantage point of Pauline truth.
  - Started a printing ministry.
  - Published my first booklet—*The Argument for Inerrancy and the King James Bible*
  - Total of about 10 booklets have been published
- 2012—reconnected with a former to professor and began working on a series of article for *Truth Magazine* on the life and Ministry of J.C. O’Hair.
  - Full length feature book should be available next year (2018)

- Day of the Lord Project—partnership with David Reid
- 2013—The Gospels Project
- 2014—Article published in the Grace Journal of Theology
- 2015—the Grace History Project ended and current project on Permeation and the King James Bible began.
- 2017—The King James Bible in America, Acts 12:4 Don't Passover Easter, and A Tale of Two Constantines: Rethinking Codex Sinianties.
- All of that before the age of 40.
  - Making decisions based upon how they will affect your ministry
  - Time management
  - Making the ministry your life

### **Looking Forward**

- Galatians 1:4—we live in a present evil world
- II Timothy 3:13—its going to get worse before it gets better
- II Timothy 4:2—the answer is to keep preaching the word
- Books I want to write
  - Grace History Project
  - King James Bible
  - Codex Sinaiticus
  - Grace Life and Identify Issues
- The question of full time ministry?
  - E.W. Bullinger, J.C. O'Hair, Richard Jordan—opportunities to impact the body of Christ
- I plan on being as productive as I have time and opportunity to be.

- Colossians 3:1
- II Corinthians 4:15-18
  - What we do in life echoes in eternity.
- No other place that I would like to be about accomplishing these things than right here at Grace Life Bible Church.