

"The Parable Of The Lifesaving Station"

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur, there was once a crude little lifesaving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea and, with no thought for themselves, went out day and night tirelessly searching for the lost. This wonderful little station saved many lives, so that it became famous. Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding area, wanted to become associated with the station and give of their time and money and effort for the support of its work. New boats were bought and new crews trained. The little lifesaving station grew.

Some of the members of the lifesaving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those saved from the sea. So they replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in the enlarged building. Now the lifesaving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they decorated it beautifully and furnished it exquisitely, because they used it as a sort of club. Fewer members were now interested in going to sea on lifesaving missions, so they hired lifeboat crews to do this work. The lifesaving motif still prevailed in this club's decoration, and there was a liturgical lifeboat in the room where the club initiations were held. About this time a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boatloads of cold, wet, and half-drowned people. They were dirty and sick, and some of them had black skin and some had yellow skin. The beautiful new club was in chaos. So the property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where victims of the shipwreck could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's lifesaving activities as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members insisted upon lifesaving as their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a lifesaving station. But they were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save the lives of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own lifesaving station down the coast. They did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a club, and yet another lifesaving station was founded. History continued to repeat itself, and if you visit that seacoast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are frequent in those waters, but most of the people drown!

Taken from Personal Evangelism 101, by Brent Hunter

Mission, Values and Vision:

*A workshop for discovering God's plan for New Westminster EFC -
and my part in it*

Dear friends in Christ,

I look forward to joining you next Saturday for our workshop on the future of NWEFC. I am thankful for you and for your partnership in the gospel.

When we speak of vision for a church, we may have different images come to our mind. Speaking of images, perhaps that is a good definition of vision - an image or picture of what God desires to do through his people. George Barna describes vision as, "...the insight God provides to instruct you and direct your path."

While we can learn from the vision others have received, vision itself cannot be bought, borrowed or downloaded from the Internet. While we may expect a pastor to have a vision from God, it must be shared by God's people for it ever to become reality.

In light of this, please plan to join us for our workshop, as we pray, share, learn, laugh and listen together. Everyone is needed!

Please take time to prepare for our workshop by.

- Praying. Prepare your heart and pray that we will honour Christ as Lord in our discussions and planning.
- Encouraging your friends from church to attend.
- Observe and take notes about your community. Take a prayer walk and note what you observe.
- Read the parable on the backside of this insert. What does it say about vision and purpose?
- Give thought to, and answer, the questions on the reverse side of this sheet. This will help facilitate our discussion on Saturday.

I look forward to being with you next week.

God bless,

Rob Stewart, lpd superintendent

My Personal Feelings:

1. What brought you to NWEFC?
2. What do you most appreciate about NWEFC?
3. What has been the best thing that has happened in your time at NWEFC?
4. If you could change one thing about NWEFC, what would it be?
5. Is there anything that would cause you to leave NWEFC? (other than death or a move to another locale)?

My Neighbours:

1. What do the people of Burnaby/New West think of NWEFC?
2. What keeps some people from coming to NWEFC?
3. Would you invite a friend to NWEFC? Why? Why not?
4. What is the greatest need in our community?
5. When did you last share your faith with someone in this community?

Our Shared Mission:

1. What are the top three things that our church is called to do?
 - i.
 - ii.
 - iii.
2. If God asked for my advice about NWEFC, I would suggest that He do the following ...
3. In my opinion, the greatest need for NWEFC is....
4. In my opinion, the greatest opportunity for NWEFC is.....
5. What would you hope that NWEFC will be remembered for?

What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. (1 Cor. 3:5-9).