

Moving Forward At Maranatha

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 August 2016

Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0:00] I would be remiss this Sunday morning if I did not ask at the very outset that you pray for me. Over the years I have often, when I find myself a little encumbered by my emotional frailty, I task Jack with the responsibility of praying.

He kind of knows that's going to happen and goes with the task. I've never asked him to preach. I told Pastor Shearer yesterday, when the absolute crowd was in their home and all over, and we were fairly finished with at least putting boxes and beds and bed frames and washers and things in their places, I got a little emotional, and so I tasked him.

I said, in the future, when I get emotional, I'm going to make you pray. And I'm not going to make you preach. But I do ask your prayer because this is a very poignant moment for me, and one that encourages my soul greatly.

Because I find our fellowship at a point in our history that bears testimony to our confidence in God revealing to us in His Word His wisdom and following it to our blessing.

I want you to turn in your Bibles this morning to Numbers chapter 27. And I'm going to read for you, beginning there in verse 12 down through verse 18.

[1:57] Numbers chapter 27, verse 12 through 18. The Lord said to Moses, Go up into this mountain of Abiram and see the land that I have given to the people of Israel.

When you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people as your brother Aaron was, because you rebelled against my word in the wilderness of Zin when the congregation quarreled. Failing to uphold me as holy at the waters before their eyes. These are the waters of Meribar at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin. Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be a sheep that have no shepherd.

So the Lord said to Moses, Take Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him. Make him stand before Eliezer, the priest, and all the congregation, and you shall commission him in their sight.

Let's pray. Father, we frame our thinking with your word, because it is settled in the heavens, because it is our life, because it has been given to us as a fit and suitable instrument of guidance and blessing, because we understand that it reveals to us not only the way of salvation, but also the way of godly living.

[3:57] It helps us understand how the body of Christ is to function, and how we as your people go about dealing with the issues of life in a fashion that is above and beyond and atypical of a broken and profoundly troubled world.

We're thankful for the word that you've given to us that we may rely upon today and every day, and we ask, Father, that we, in our dependence upon your word and our dependence upon the Spirit, would be a people that, in our walk, are marked by humility and joy and fruitfulness.

We ask for the teaching of your word, that it is enabled by the Spirit and it is received by your people for the glory of Christ, and we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Allow me to deal with one more issue. I want to mention that Awana training will be taking place tomorrow evening.

It's one of the things that I penciled in on my notes and I don't want to forget it. Monday evening, you'll notice, and greatly appreciate all you that are involved in this. Numbers chapter 27 is a passage that gives to us a picture of a transitional moment in the life of the nation of Israel, people of God.

[5:27] It's a point where, and you have to stop and realize the emotion of this moment is pretty significant because here is God coming to Moses and saying, you're done. It's over.

You're out of here. And if I were in Moses' shoes, I could imagine that it'd be kind of, yeah. And not only that, but God brings up his failure.

Do you remember when, yeah, I am struck, and I think you should be, by the incredible heart Moses had for everyone beside himself.

his execution had been announced. His sin brought to the forefront, and his singular interest was in other people.

Lord, I'm concerned that after I leave, the nation of Israel have a shepherd that will take care of them.

[6:35] today marks just another step in this congregation's journey toward a God-honoring transition from one generation to another.

The fact that we're here and we are looking at a passage such as this that lays a biblical foundation for the fact that transition is appropriate and necessary and should be done in a certain fashion is an indication of our complete confidence in the fact that the Word of God can be trusted for counsel and instruction for the blessing of God's people.

Handoffs are tough. I ran track. I know you're looking at me and saying at 68, you've got to be kidding me.

But I did. I ran 220, 440, and I ran the relays in both legs. Is Joe here today?

He's not. He's at Cedarville. Much faster than I was and am. We worked hard. In fact, we worked harder at handoffs than any other part of our individual skill.

[8:04] And the reason for that is that handoffs are where it all happened and blew up or succeeded. And as a matter of fact, when you run relays, there is only a certain amount of track that you are allowed to make the handoff in.

If you hand it off before or you hand it off after that little passing lane, guess what? You are disqualified. And the truth of the matter is is a number of years ago, actually over eight years ago, Pastor Saul and I began talking about the fact that as he and I got old together, we realized the day would eventually...

We did. We got old together. He and I began talking about the fact that handoffs were important and that sadly enough, most churches did not prepare and think about it.

And behind the scenes, we spent probably a year in discussing and praying about it, eventually brought it to the deacons a number of years ago and they began confirming and affirming the principles and we began actually saving money because handoffs take money.

And we began doing research, both among fellow believers and in churches and also in the secular environment and even in the military, learning the issues that are related to how important it is to put together a plan and think it through carefully in relationship to how you make the shift and the change.

[9:45] You as a congregation approved by unanimous vote in 2014 that we move forward with that and that we began the process for searching for the man that we would call our senior pastor elect.

It was really exciting yesterday to finish moving. Well, I don't know that we're entirely finished moving. There's still wood down in Chillicothe that Pastor Shearer covets.

he is a wood burner, guys. You know, hey, if you have a tree that needs to come down, just chop it up in little bits and I guarantee he'll move it. So, I don't know that I could guarantee that, but he's nodding his head.

He's with it. That's why he had six kids, he said. I heard that. The wood burning team. But, you know, it was kind of neat to walk out of there and the house is absolutely filled with boxes and I thought to myself, our part of the moving is done.

I texted him this morning and said, I'm praying for you. You're probably wondering which box some things were packed in that you need for Sunday. I was like, where are my shoes? I remember that.

[10:59] The truth of the matter is is that in approximately 23 months, the day will come when I'm going to hand a towel to my brother.

It will not be a miter or a scepter because his role and place among us while he is a man that God has called to be the leader of this fellowship, at the end of the day, the most significant part of his leading will be his service.

to the word, to you, and to Christ. And so, what I want to do this morning is just give you a little further insight into the biblical roots of our effort and then lay out for you some practical mileposts to our plan.

our fellowship over the years has relied over and over again on clear communication to frame our prayers and to help us know together the path that we're on and the reasoning behind it.

And so, I want to follow in some senses the same pattern that we followed back in 2014 when I laid out for you the steps that were going to lead us to begin this process together.

[12:23] In your bulletin this morning you have or you were to have a printed copy of the pastoral transition planning. What have we been working on behind the scenes?

And I'm going to come to that later so you can follow along and know some of the mileposts that we are shooting for. But let me begin by addressing the fact that what we're engaged in here in our fellowship really has a biblical model behind it.

Numerous models actually. And we are looking right now at Numbers chapter 27 verse 15 through 18 and as we look at this passage and kind of frame this I want you to understand that what we find here is a conclusion in a sense of Moses' ministry and an interest in seeing that a clear path is followed and an individual is assigned with the responsibility of caring for God's people.

Here was Moses expressing his heart he said listen I understand my day is up my time is over but as I leave the people I love I want to know for certain that someone else is going to come along so that they are not like people that have no shepherd.

It's not an accident that when people ask Tim Kenoyer so how do you want to be called? Last night as I was walking in my neighborhood people have figured out finally that I'm a Baptist pastor and this one individual relatively new neighbor he had heard from somebody else I think that I was a pastor and he comes from a more formal liturgical fellowship and so as I was walking by he said hi reverend and you know it's like hey good to see you Bob whatever he is I said but just call me Tim you know to our people I'm a pastor I'm a shepherd and here is Moses expressing his interest in the same fashion he says I'm just interested that you provide God that you provide a shepherd for your people we do see here in this passage in Numbers chapter 27 that God appointed Joshua to be [14:40] Israel's next leader what is not evident in these few verses that we note here is all the time that had taken place in preparation for that the day would come when all the responsibility of caring for the flock of God the shepherd that was going to be needed would fall on the shoulders of this man Joshua but what we really don't understand is that Joshua was trained for his role of leadership over time it took place quietly behind the scenes and I'm not going to bring you back all the way back into the book of Exodus and have you track with me all the process but I do want you to understand that Joshua had spent 40 years with Moses he'd been with Moses when Moses had gone up to receive the law he had been the commander that Moses had sent to deal with the battle with the

Amalekites remember when Moses stayed removed from the nation and the warfare down in the plain Moses raised his arms up and so long as Moses kept his arms up Joshua was the one that was down on the plain doing the hard work and engaged in the conflict it was also Joshua you'll remember at one point when the spirit of God had fallen on a number of individuals in the camp and there were two other individuals that Joshua didn't think were qualified to be prophesying and remember they were lighting up and Joshua comes running to Moses and says hey there are a couple guys that are kind of freewheeling and put a stop and Moses says oh would to God that all of his people would be prophets by the way that has to do with music in case you're wondering I love it when all of us get into the business right this is a sidebar it's not in my notes but I gotta tell you I love listening to you sing I do and I can tell you that the people who are on this stage do not view themselves as professionals who are here to entertain you they are here for one reason and that is to encourage your heart to worship the Lord of glory enthusiastically and joyfully with every bit of energy that you can muster

I have to tell you the deacons let me know that in the future when we do communion that if we're going to be doing special music at the front they need further warning but it's alright you know it says make a joyful noise unto the Lord right and I will clue them in John we need to remind them if they're going to be singing probably fewer of them will want to participate but we're in it together right we're in it together and here was Joshua concerned with the fact that too many people were involved and Moses says oh no no bring them all in get them involved Joshua was sent by Moses to be a spy Joshua was one who came back and pled with the nation not rebel against God and it's

important for us to understand that over the years Joshua was right there by Moses over and over and over again as

Moses dealt with the people of God with a shepherd's heart and with an interest in the glory of God and when it came time and Moses recognized that his day was finished and he desired someone to be a shepherd in his place the man God appointed was a man that had spent much time in doing what shepherds do you see what had happened is that Joshua had grown to understand that godly leadership principally was an exercise of biblical principle it's something that I think is important for us to figure out in our lives how is it that Joshua ended up being in this position for one he was there with Moses over and over again in the journey but I want you to understand that the exercise of leadership on the part of Joshua was not so much a matter of his personality as it was a dependence upon principle to argue that case and you should always be thinking to yourself pastor can you prove that in the

Bible I want you to turn you are there in numbers I want you to turn forward just a little bit to Joshua chapter 1 verse 5 through 9 Joshua chapter 1 verse 5 through 9 my argument is this is that biblical leadership is ultimately the exercise of biblical principle we make a mistake of thinking that that leadership is ultimately in the family of God a matter of unique personality or characteristics and the individual who possesses these that's the one no no no look at Joshua chapter 1 verse 5 no man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life just as I was with Moses so will I be with you I will not leave you or forsake you verse 6 be strong and of good courage for you shall call this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them only be strong and very courageous be careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you do not turn from it to the right or to the right hand or the left that you may have good success wherever you go this book of the law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it for then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success nine have I not commanded you be strong and courageous think with me why would God tell Joshua three times in these few verses be strong and courageous what do you think now listen to me the weight of the responsibility of leading [21:14] God's people was more than any man could bear on his own I am reminded of Solomon when he received the blessing of being the king following David and remember God came to him and said hey what would you like what did Solomon ask for I tell you what I'd like a thousand concubines and three hundred wives is that what he said I would like all my enemies to drop dead now I'd like to be the richest man around what did he say he said I'm a rookie free rendition here for you who are literalists you know it's kind of broad I am inexperienced and I really don't know how to do this thing of caring for your people I desperately need wisdom anybody who steps into a position of spiritual leadership that is not overwhelmed by the responsibility is a fool and here is

Joshua being told three times be strong and courageous it is interesting that along with the counsel of being strong and courageous depending on how you count the statements you can come up with as many as four times that God says explicitly follow my instructions Joshua don't be a wimp don't be a wuss don't be intimidated by the responsibility of leading the family of God and bringing blessing to them and by the way what your job is essentially is follow instructions my wife is actually a better cook than I am principally because she is laboriously committed to following instructions last year

I thought it was a good idea for us to make sauerkraut I bought the crock I mean hey I got all the tools in fact everything that a person could fantasize to go along with being a sauerkraut maker of the first order I've got it I tried once details bore me I was like how many of you know that cabbage can become a spongy stinking foul mess within about four or five weeks does anybody else have experience okay well I thought okay once burned fool me once you know shame on me I'll try again the second was just as bad!

thankfully it has dissipated over the last year but out in the alley of my neighborhood there were two piles of fetid stinking kraut that was not fermented it was just rotted you see when God says to Joshua you're to lead my people it came down really to this follow instructions and so as we think about what is involved in pastoral leadership it really comes down to this be courageous because of who God is and number two trust him and follow his advice I do want you to look at a second illustration because we see something a little different not off the page but a little more detail I want us to think about Timothy Timothy ended up being the pastoral leader there at the church in

Ephesus and his ministry there did not happen by accident before he became the shepherd of that congregation he spent many years with Paul he traveled with the apostle he listened to Paul preach he saw Paul deal with some of the difficulties and I guarantee you Paul's ministry was probably more marked by the conflict and the tension that he endured than anything else phenomenal teacher a man with a shepherd's heart and yet adversity just seemed to track him left and right it's very interesting that when it came time for Paul to recommend Timothy for ministry Paul made a very interesting statement about him and I want you to look at this passage in Philippians chapter 2 that gives us another little picture at what we are looking for in pastoral leadership and are anticipating God to do in our fellowship in relationship to Pastor

[26:39] Shearer's ministry Philippians chapter 2 verse 20 through 22 here is Paul referring to Timothy his son in the faith for I have no one like him who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare for they all seek their own interests not those of Jesus Christ but you know Timothy's proven worth how as a son with a father he served with me in the gospel very interesting statement isn't it here is the apostle saying this and by the way at this point in the apostle's life and ministry he had spent much time working with many individuals in preparing teaching coaching stirring up their hearts for pastoral ministry and yet he says this he says most of the guys that I have served and taught really don't have a sincere heart for what it means to be a pastor why is that pastoral ministry really is about loving people if you are going to think about what is engaged in the responsibility you think about first of all it takes courage because of who

God is it takes a commitment to follow the word of God even when people don't always like hearing the word interesting I had an individual say to! one of the things pastor as I've been around different churches I noticed that there are a lot of places where all you hear is just feel good info and the clear commitment to teaching the glory of Christ and the word of God without shame is a diminishing affection in the church today being a pastor means teaching of the word and being clear about what God has to say whether or not people smile there's a third piece though and that's what we see in the life of Timothy pastoral ministry really is about loving people I remember many many years ago when I actually was before I had my first responsibility as a shepherd I asked a man named

Bill Good he's with the Lord now I said hey Bill I'm new at this and I'm a little nervous at doing this and help me understand what does it take to be a pastor here's what he said he said Tim it's not complicated love people love the word it'll work out I gotta tell you that was pretty humbling for me because Tim Kenoyer was not born a natural lover of anybody other than himself and when I heard Bill Good say that it drove me to prayer and it keeps me at prayer because if you are going to be a shepherd you have to love people I have to tell you one of the things that I appreciate about Pastor Shear is as we were thinking through the logistics of transition we are in this transition phase he is going to be in the near term choosing a search committee and then eventually probably early next year bringing to you as a congregation a profile of what we're going to be looking for in the interim period there was a question of who's going to take care of property details how many of you know there's 12 million dollars worth of property here there's 18

AC and heating units there the details would bog you down and and pastor Saul used to do a wonderful wonderful job with all of these details but he retired wasn't a nice thing but I love you anyway and boy Greg Bernard has been a prince and he stepped in and he has done so much but it's time for a pastor to suck it up and do something and it came down to you know it's like so pastor Shear do you want to do this or should I do me and here's what he said and by the way he's better with detail than I am here's what he said he said pastor I want to spend my time right now getting to know our people and building relationships I respect that he said long term ministry relies upon relationships and

I want the privilege of investing as much energy as I can in that part while you're still here so guess who's doing property I'm learning things about parking lots and lawn mowers in the fall of my life that I had no intention but you know what hey I am thankful that's where God has me let me come back to the point pastoral ministry is really about loving people and I want you to understand that God uses time to repair a man's heart to love and to lead his church another conversation that pastor share and I had about a month ago now we meet on a regular basis we spend a lot of time together and he asked me some very telling questions about the energy that we have put into doing a transition here at

[32:33] Maranatha he asked so what do you think is going to be a key to transition working here at Maranatha and really what are we aimed at my answer to the first one is the key is humility and prayer humility and prayer and I said the second thing is this is that we really want to bring someone in off the bench over the years as we did research as to where transitions were effective in particularly whether it's in business or in the military and that's where it more commonly!

is effective in the vast majority of cases successful transitions in leadership come from those who have been part of the organization understand its DNA and come in off the bench and that's why we as a fellowship made the commitment to allow the one who will be our future leader the time to allow development of a sense for the fellowship and its direction so that when it comes time for me to hand my brother the towel he will understand us better I want us to take just a minute and turn to the plan that gives us the building blocks of our future and you've got it there you wouldn't think that a pastor who you know me right right one of the things that I was kind of flummoxed with a little bit this morning is Tim Knoyer he loves to get the gospel in and I'm not it'll get in there trust me but this is a fairly practical little run up on how we're going about this and why would we let you know hey everybody look up so I

I'm talking to you you're not loyal subjects or serfs we are together as companions in the gospel and it is appropriate that we together know what's going on it's not like you're sitting in the back of the bus and I say I'll let you know when we get there okay our broad goals for this transition plan include pastor you really have the nerve just to read this well there's some of you that don't want to read it and I'm going to help you following the biblical plan here here's the thing you should always be able to ask yourself this question in Maranatha Baptist church where is this idea in the Bible why are you doing this well we went to a seminar down there in Louisiana and they were thinking it was a good idea and we thought we know where is it in the Bible okay we did that part start with second maximizing the future discipleship and shepherding ministry of pastor shearer we're giving him the time one of the things that pastor shearer has been doing every week this is while he was burning the miles back and forth between

Chillicothe and back and forth between here and Lafayette he was meeting with families in our fellowship and if I were to ask you to raise your hand there's a good number of you that already spent time with pastor shearer there are men in our fellowship that have been meeting with breakfast and coffee and spending time he getting to know them and them getting to know him pastor shearer very well understands that ministry depends in part upon lasting relationships and rapport and we together will do our very best to keep you informed of our general progress and goals look up so you hear me Maranatha is not a place where the super saints and the administration kind of run the show for y'all we are together and we're very open the way we communicate things our near term goals that means probably in the next year or so we're going to work and pastor shearer now that he has been at least the boxes have been put in one place in a home in

Hilliard he's going to be here Monday Friday will be his day off by the way everybody so that you know whoever is preaching is the pastor that really gets the Friday off okay because there will be a backup if any of you have a need you call and so long as I am still in the position I am in you call me and I'll assign Pastor Shearer you're not preaching this week you go to the hospital or if I am not preaching I'll go to the hospital we have it covered but in the near term he's going to be poking his head in to Awana he's going to be checking on how things are going so we're working together to get a sense of what's going on in the fellowship he is going to preach through the month of September and in the future beginning in 17 Pastor Shear will begin preaching 50% of the services in our fellowship and we look forward to his ministry and the continuum of his development in that area we are going to ask

[37:52] Pastor Shear I've already mentioned this to develop a search committee for an associate pastor and propose a job profile that kind of fits with his skill set and his vision and he is also going to work with our budget committee to form the proposed budget for 17 in relationship to that Pastor Knoyer is going to be responsible for overseeing building and grounds nursery hey did you hear me say that nursery everybody listen there will be no scheduling problems in the future the Ayatollah will track you down now Pastor Saul is over there laughing because it ain't gonna happen oh let's go to the long term long term we're going to ask Pastor Shear to work with our leadership to develop our strategic initiatives with a congregational presentation in

January of 18 in relationship to that I want you to know that we are already working the principal strategic initiative of this fellowship for the last several years has been praying searching pleading with God to provide our senior pastor elect that part's done so we'll come to you in the last part of this year and lay out for you here are things we're going to work on kind of begin the process of moving forward again after we've got this under our belts one other thing here I mentioned to you is that we want to encourage!

Pastor Shear to begin working on a D-Min to encourage his pattern of lifelong learning and teach the people of God must be a lifelong student does that make sense does that make sense and we want him to knock it out of the park you know what I mean right and we are encouraging him to be willing to put the energy and sacrifice of preparation towards that end as we think together of what this day represents it is first of all biblical it is second of all challenging do you know why it's challenging because passing lanes are passing lanes and the human heart that

I have and you have will require the enabling of the spirit of God to pull it off in such a way that other people look to us and say how did it happen and we will say it had nothing to do with us because we came at this with fear and trembling and like God said to Joshua be strong and be courageous and follow the book let's pray our father this morning as we have thought together as a congregation we want to be a people that are governed by the word of God that at the end of the day our own personal perspectives and even our history and experiences are submissive to the authority and the supremacy of scripture that our desire is for the glory and testimony of Christ our desire is that we reflect the heart of our savior in in the way in which we go about as a family moving forward to the next place of ministry and the next time of service we're thankful for your provision for your counsel over the years for your help in our prayers and encouraging us in this journey and we pray that we are a fruitful congregation to the testimony of Christ here on the west side your precious name amen