

# NEW **KAINOS**

*Jesus Makes All Things New*

\ kī-'noss \



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR GREGG	7
INTRODUCTION	8
OUR COMMISSION	12
OUR COMMUNITY	24
OUR COMPASSION	40
OUR GENEROSITY JOURNEY	62
WEEKLY MESSAGE NOTES, <i>KAINOS</i> MOMENTS, LIFE BIBLE STUDY LESSON/DEVO, PRAYER FOCUS	
WEEK 1	72
WEEK 2	79
WEEK 3	86
WEEK 4	92
WEEK 5	98

*THEY SANG A*

**KAINOS**

*SONG*

**\ kī-'noss \**

THEY SANG A

**NEW**

SONG, SAYING:

***"You are worthy to take the scroll  
and to open its seals,  
because You were slaughtered,  
and You purchased people  
for God by Your blood  
from every tribe and language  
and people and nation."***

**— Revelation 5:9**



\ kī-'noss \



## DEAR HOUSTON'S FIRST FAMILY,

We turn up the volume when a station plays the latest song from our favorite artist. We cheer with anticipation as a recently-signed player takes the field with our beloved team. We look forward to meeting the neighbors who just moved in across the street.

## NEW THINGS CAN BE EXCITING!

Can you imagine how many “new” moments there have been in the life of Houston’s First Baptist Church? Our church today does not look, sound, or do ministry like we did when we were founded in 1841. Over the past 180 years, there have been countless times when something new came along that impacted the direction our church would take from that point forward.

Among the more significant moments were several times when we changed our location and added additional campuses to further reach the city of Houston as the Lord provided larger facilities to accommodate our growing church, when we introduced additional ministries to impact more lives, or when we welcomed a new pastor to lead us — something Houston’s First had done at least 28 times in our history before graciously welcoming me and my family in 2004.

Beyond those larger moments are the countless times God has led us to start something that invites individuals to better connect with our church family and to Him — new Life Bible Studies, new discipleship classes, new mission trips, new programs for children and students, and more. Houston’s First is continually open to pursuing new ways to serve the Lord and the people He brings our way as we seek to be a relevant biblical community.

*Kainos*, our bold two-year generosity initiative, will provide our church with exciting new ways to enhance and expand our Gospel ministry here at home and around the globe. As you read through this book and discover the scope of the initiative, picture the faces of the people each project will reach — and pray for the new people who will be drawn into a deeper relationship with Jesus, perhaps meeting Him for the very first time.

As excited as we are about seeing these projects come to life, *Kainos* is about far more than providing our church with much-needed facilities or funding impactful missions endeavors.

All that we do as a church is aimed at fulfilling the Great Commission — making disciples, baptizing believers, and teaching God’s Word. If we were to build what we intend to build and fund the projects we plan to fund but do not experience life-change and personal growth along the way, then we will not have achieved our goals. We will not have made the most of this new journey God is inviting us to take with Him.

Therefore, as you get excited about what *Kainos* aims to accomplish outwardly, I encourage you to faithfully pray about what God wants to accomplish inwardly in your heart and in your relationship with Him. That is the primary goal of *Kainos* — to have 100% of our church family engaged on this journey and praying about the new levels of surrender, faith, and generosity the Lord is calling us to individually.

You do not have to wait long to experience change in our church. Houston’s First today is different in many ways from who we were even just one year ago, and we will be different in many ways a year from now. In your life, however, you do not have to wait at all to encounter something new! You can experience change today — right now, at this precise moment — as you commune with God and pursue His will for your life.

Jesus indeed makes all things new, and He wants to do a *Kainos* work in you — today.

## WILL YOU FOLLOW WHERE HE LEADS?

With great expectation of the journey ahead,



Pastor Gregg Matte

*The story of God is one of transformation  
— a story about making things new, or kainos.*

# KAINOS

\ kī-'noss \

*New: (recently made) fresh, unused, unworn*

*New: (new substance) of a new kind, unprecedented,  
novel, uncommon, unheard of*

Houston's First is looking ahead with a spirit of anticipation about what God is going to do next in our church. Time and time again — from generation to generation — He has done immeasurably more than we could have ever imagined. He calls us to new adventures, and He is faithful to see us through them.

Today, our church family enjoys the fruits of the generosity shared by those who came before us. Countless people throughout our long history gave and sacrificed so that facilities could be built, ministries could be launched, and lives could be forever changed by the Gospel.

Now, the Houston's First family is called upon to invest in new endeavors that will impact people today and for decades to come. At the same time, we are calling upon the Lord to do a new work in each of our lives, too. Let us join together, united in Jesus' name, and embark on this new adventure as we experience the truth that He makes all things new!

## REVELATION 5:9

"And they sang a **KAINOS** song: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because You were slaughtered, and You purchased people for God by Your blood from every tribe and language and people and nation."

## REVELATION 21:1

"Then I saw a **KAINOS** heaven and a **KAINOS** earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more."

## REVELATION 21:5

"Then the One seated on the throne said, 'Look, I am making everything **KAINOS**.' He also said, 'Write, because these words are faithful and true.'"





# OUR PRIMARY GOAL

## 100% ENGAGEMENT

**We desire for every person to embrace the truth that Jesus makes all things new — and prayerfully expect Him to do a new work in our lives and through our church.**

### **A NEW LEVEL OF SURRENDER**

What am I holding back from Jesus and need to relinquish to Him?

### **A NEW LEVEL OF FAITH**

What steps do I need to take to move away from my comfort zones and toward deeper dependence upon Jesus?

### **A NEW LEVEL OF GENEROSITY**

How can I honor God more through the stewardship of my finances and my financial generosity?

# OUR SECONDARY GOAL

## \$93 MILLION OVER TWO YEARS

Our COMMISSION

Our COMMUNITY

Our COMPASSION

**In His perfect timing, the Lord has brought Houston's First to a point where several opportunities will allow us to pursue new ways to serve Him and His people. We look forward to seeing Him move through our church family to generously provide funds to make this vision a reality.**

*PUT ON THE*

**KAINOS**

*SELF*

**\ kī-'noss \**

*"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;*

**TO BE MADE**

**NEW**

**IN THE ATTITUDE OF YOUR MINDS;**

**AND TO PUT ON THE**

**NEW**

**SELF,**

*created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."*

— Ephesians 4:22-24

# OUR COMMISSION

\ kī-'noss \

# OUR COMMISSION: \$63 MILLION OVER TWO YEARS

## GIVING TO OUR GREAT COMMISSION FUND TO ENABLE OUR ONGOING MINISTRIES

Houston's First Baptist Church is a relevant biblical community where we gather our hearts, grow our souls, and give our lives as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission. All that we do as a church today points toward living out what Jesus commissioned His disciples to do nearly 2,000 years ago.

### THE GREAT COMMISSION

***'Jesus came near and said to them, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age.'***  
(Matthew 28:18-20)

That is why our annual ministry operating budget is called our Great Commission Fund. As we seek to make disciples, baptize believers, and teach God's Word, this fund fuels what Houston's First does daily to minister to children, students, and adults across our area and beyond.

### GREAT COMMISSION FUND

By the grace of God and the faithful generosity of our church family, we already receive over \$30 million each year toward this fund. Over the next two years (Dec 2021-Dec 2023), \$63 million will make our ongoing ministries possible. When you give to Houston's First, your generosity empowers the many ministries of our church to continue the beautiful and compelling work of fulfilling the Great Commission.

**GROWTH IN THE GREAT  
COMMISSION FUND**

**\$10.3 MILLION**  
2004



**\$31.5 MILLION**  
2021

# KAINOS

**1 CHURCH**



**4 CAMPUSES**

**4 FAITH CENTER LOCATIONS**



**11 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES**

**286 LIFE BIBLE STUDIES ACROSS ALL CAMPUSES**



**180 YEARS OF GOSPEL MINISTRY (FOUNDED IN 1841)**



# THE LOOP

## LIFE BIBLE STUDY

**2,670**

ADULT LIFE BIBLE STUDY  
AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

## CORNERBOOKS

**2,090**

HANDCRAFTED GOODS FROM HOUSTON'S FIRST  
MINISTRY PARTNERS SOLD IN CORNERBOOKS  
MISSIONAL MARKETPLACE

## THRU THE ROOF

**60**

FRIENDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES SERVED  
BY OUR THRU THE ROOF MINISTRIES

## FITNESS & REC CENTER

### DAYCATION 2021

**800** CAMPERS

**74%** ARE NOT MEMBERS OF  
HOUSTON'S FIRST

**52%** HAVE NOT VISITED A CHURCH



# CYPRESS



8

MINISTRY  
PARTNERS

3

SCHOOL  
PARTNERSHIPS

623

BACKPACKS COLLECTED  
AND DISPERSED

123

DECISIONS FOR CHRIST  
(SUMMER 2021)

## GO HOUSTON

4 SITES

283 PARTICIPANTS

146 VOLUNTEERS

# DOWNTOWN



17.3%

OF ADULTS WHO ATTEND OUR DOWNTOWN  
CAMPUS WERE PREVIOUSLY NOT INVOLVED  
IN A CHURCH (FROM 2019)

56.4%

OF ADULTS ARE UNDER 40 MAKING  
THE DOWNTOWN CAMPUS THE  
YOUNGEST IN AGE (FROM 2019)

68 PEOPLE

JOINED THE CHURCH, OF WHICH 18 (26.5%) WERE BY BAPTISM (IN 2020)

10+

COLLEGES REPRESENTED IN OUR  
DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

10+

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED IN  
OUR DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

# SIENNA

**253+**

TOTAL NEXTGEN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE  
AT OUR SIENNA CAMPUS

**33%**

OF THE SIENNA CAMPUS ATTENDEES ARE  
18 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER

**3RD**

WORSHIP SERVICE ADDED AT OUR SIENNA CAMPUS  
DUE TO GROWTH

**\$75K**

AND 1,800 VOLUNTEER HOURS SPENT HELPING REBUILD  
NEW ZION BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH. THIS 112-YEAR OLD  
AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHURCH IN WHARTON, TX, WAS  
DAMAGED DURING HURRICANE HARVEY.



# MISSIONS

**100+ MISSIONARY FAMILIES** in approximately 40 countries supported by our church

**\$1.5+ MILLION** given to Scripture translation efforts in the past decade

**210 ADOPTIONS** financially supported by Legacy 68:5

**\$2.4+ MILLION** in adoption and post-adoption support through Legacy 68:5

**10 MISSIONARY HOUSES** in Houston operated by our church and more than \$120,000 per year spent to support missionaries on furlough and respite

**100 MINISTRIES** locally, nationally, and globally financially supported by our church

**800 VOLUNTEERS** at 23 mission sites involving all our campuses for **GO Houston** this year

**20 MISSION TRIPS** planned for 2022 (includes all campuses)

**\$135,000** given to church members for COVID-19 assistance

**\$1.5 MILLION** given annually to other Gospel partner organizations (separate from the World Mission Offering)

**\$2.9+ MILLION** raised during the 2021 World Mission Offering (\$1.6 million used for denominational support and the remainder going to Gospel partner organizations)

**\$4.2 MILLION** given toward Hurricane Harvey disaster relief organizations and affected Church members

# COUNSELING

**10,935 APPOINTMENTS** through our Julianna Poor Memorial Counseling Center (Sep 2020-Sep 2021)

**789** new counseling clients

**60% CLIENTS** are not members of Houston's First

**34 COUNSELORS** on staff



# ACROSS CAMPUSES

## ADULT MINISTRIES

105

WIDOWS SERVED THROUGH OUR  
**MEN: SERVE** MINISTRY WITH  
551 MEN/CHILDREN SERVING

400

MARRIED AND ENGAGED ADULTS  
MINISTERED TO BY **NEWLYWED OR  
CLOSE** LIFE BIBLE STUDIES EACH YEAR

HR 182

FULL-TIME STAFF MEMBERS FROM ALL  
CAMPUSES AND FAITH CENTERS

WORSHIP 289

WORSHIP LEADERS AND  
VOLUNTEERS FROM ACROSS  
ALL CAMPUSES

SoFA

82

TOTAL STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED AT  
OUR **SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS (SOFA)**  
AS OF SEP 2021

35%

OF OUR ACTIVE SCHOOL OF FINE  
ARTS STUDENTS DO NOT ATTEND  
HOUSTON'S FIRST

## NEXTGEN

26K

BIBLE LESSONS SHARED  
WITH 1ST-5TH GRADERS  
OVER ONE YEAR

100 & 93

**MIDDLE SCHOOLS** **HIGH SCHOOLS**  
REPRESENTED IN THE HUB STUDENT  
MINISTRY IN ADDITION TO OUR  
HOMESCHOOLED STUDENT POPULATION

# HUNT RETREAT

*Hunt Retreat is self-sustained and not a part of the operating budget*

**93%**

WEEKEND USAGE (EXCLUDING  
THE WEEKEND HOLIDAYS)

**24%**

WEEKDAY USAGE BY HOUSTON'S FIRST  
GROUPS AND OUTSIDE GROUPS

# PASTORAL CARE

**125-150 FUNERAL SERVICES** on an average year

**\$2 MILLION** estimated financial support to families since the inception of Hope House ministry

**126 FAMILIES SERVED** since the inception of Hope House ministry

**37** total current Stephen Ministers

**40,000 HOURS** spent by Stephen Ministers since 2000 ministering to hurting people through Christian caring relationships

**800** hurting people have been blessed with Christian caring relationships through the Stephen Ministry since 2000

**7,000** hospitalized patients have been visited and prayed over by Stephen Ministers since 2000



# LOCAL MISSIONS

**14,423 FAMILIES** (52,548 individuals) served by our Faith Center Food Pantries each year

**28,886 FAMILIES** (126,157 individuals) served by our Faith Center Food Pantries during the COVID-19 pandemic

**1,208,209 POUNDS OF FOOD** distributed by our Faith Center Food Pantries since COVID-19 pandemic

**7,705 FAMILIES** (26,253 individuals) served by our Clothes Closet each year at Faith Center-Spring Branch

**1,230+**

FAMILIES RECEIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE  
THROUGH OUR BENEVOLENCE MINISTRY

**27,120+**

GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS THROUGH  
LOCAL MISSIONS (IN 2020)



A

# KAINOS

*COMMAND I GIVE TO YOU*

\ kī-'noss \

NEW <sup>A</sup> NEW

## COMMAND I GIVE YOU:

*"I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another."*

— John 13:34

# OUR COMMUNITY

\ kī-'noss \

# OUR COMMUNITY: \$20 MILLION OVER TWO YEARS

**INCREASING THE MISSIONAL IMPACT OF HOUSTON'S FIRST IN  
OUR COMMUNITY BY EXPANDING AND IMPROVING FACILITIES**

## NEW FUTURE

**SIENNA CAMPUS** – new facility on our current property

## NEW REACH

**DIGITAL COMMUNITY** – new equipment, content development, and expansion of our digital footprint

## NEW CHAPTER

**THE LOOP CAMPUS** – expanded Main Foyer, reimagined Oasis Courtyard, updates to The HUB Student Ministry area, and new indoor play area in Fitness & Recreation Center

**CYPRESS AND DOWNTOWN CAMPUSES** – enhancements to current facilities

# NEW FUTURE

## **\$12,700,000 TO PROVIDE A NEW FUTURE FOR OUR SIENNA CAMPUS WITH A NEW FACILITY ON OUR CURRENT PROPERTY**

Our Sienna Campus launched in 2013 in rented space in a retail shopping center. The space where we gathered for worship services held fewer than 100 people at the time, and our Life Bible Studies met in rooms we rented from other tenants in the building.

In 2014, we were able to purchase the shopping center and build out a dedicated Worship Center and Life Bible Study classrooms for all ages thanks to the generosity of the Houston's First family.

Now, in our prime location on the main road entering Sienna, we are going to increase our impact in the surrounding community by building new facilities on our current property.

The Sienna Campus will expand from approximately 21,000 square feet to 72,000 square feet, including a Worship Center with 9,300 square feet and seating for about 600 worshippers. That is more than three times the size of our current Worship Center with 2,759 square feet and seating for just 202 people.



*Conceptual rendering*



# OUR NEW FACILITIES WILL ALSO INCLUDE:

**LARGE MAIN FOYER** with dedicated hospitality space

**COVERED WALKWAY** connecting new and current building

**CHILDREN SPACE** with six Life Bible Study classrooms,  
two large rooms for worship and other activities

**PRESCHOOL SPACE** with 13 rooms, a large worship space,  
and a nursing mothers' room

**INDOOR PLAYGROUND**

**OUTDOOR ARTIFICIAL TURF SPACE**

**OFFICE SPACE** for staff members

**100 NEW PARKING SPACES**

## OUR EXISTING FACILITY

will continue to be used for Student and Adult ministry activities. Adults will have seven Life Bible Study classrooms, and Students will have eight breakout rooms, a gathering/pre-function area, and a large worship space.

# NEW FUTURE TIMELINE

**CONSTRUCTION ON THE  
NEW SIENNA CAMPUS  
BUILDING IS EXPECTED  
TO BEGIN IN SUMMER 2022**

*Conceptual renderings*



# FUNDING FOR SIENNA CAMPUS

Conceptual rendering



**RCLCO** 2020  
REAL ESTATE CONSULTING

## THE 50 TOP-SELLING MASTER-PLANNED COMMUNITIES IN THE USA

**#9 BRIDGELAND (CYPRESS)** — home of our Cypress Campus

**#15 SIENNA (MISSOURI CITY)** — home of our Sienna Campus

**SOURCE: RCLCO.COM**

**KAINOS COMMITMENTS**

**\$12.7**  
**MILLION**

**+**

**ANTICIPATED BORROWING**

**\$5**  
**MILLION**

**=**

**TOTAL COST**

**\$17.7**  
**MILLION**



# NEW REACH

## **\$500,000 TO EXPAND OUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT TO REACH PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE IN NEW WAYS**

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted what Houston's First already knew — people are engaging with the church in new ways. The number of online viewers on Sundays during the quarantine reached a peak average of 11,000 — larger than any on-campus attendance we had recently experienced.

Since January 2021, people have watched an average of 9,000 hours of video on our YouTube channel. On [HoustonFirst.org](https://HoustonFirst.org), 37,344 viewers from 144 countries contributed to 118,921 page views in the month of August 2021 alone.

Through new equipment, targeted content development, and enhanced distribution strategies, we will expand our digital footprint to reach more people on Sundays and throughout the week — bringing the Gospel to them personally by leveraging the latest technology.



\ kī-'noss \

**KAINOS**

# NEW CHAPTER

## \$6,800,000 TO LAUNCH NEW CHAPTERS FOR THE LOOP, CYPRESS, AND DOWNTOWN CAMPUSES

### THE LOOP CAMPUS | \$6,300,000

The Loop Campus opened in 1977 when Houston's First moved to what was then the west side of town after being in downtown since 1841. The campus ministry space has been expanded and remodeled numerous times over the past 44 years to better enable our ministry to members, guests, and the community — all thanks to the generosity of our church family.

Now, four projects will open a new chapter for the campus and our church as we continue to meet the needs of those we serve.

### MAIN FOYER EXPANSION

The "front door" of The Loop Campus will be enlarged and enhanced to better greet people as they arrive, and to serve as a welcoming space to gather for small moments or large events.

- ☐ Increase of 3,500 additional interior square feet, including removal of two columns currently closest to front doors
- ☐ New stairs from Main Foyer to Level 2
- ☐ New restrooms for men and women
- ☐ New flooring, lighting, and acoustical panels
- ☐ Additional entrance to CornerBooks with relocated coffee service area
- ☐ Three pairs of automatic sliding building entrance doors
- ☐ Outdoor entrance walkway replaced with new pavers
- ☐ Covered awning over entrance walkway
- ☐ Regrading of crosswalk to eliminate curbs on either side of the street between west parking lot and entrance walkway
- ☐ Addition of windows to three classrooms in Thru The Roof Special Needs suite on Level 3





## THE LAWN AT THE LOOP

Formerly known as the Oasis Courtyard, this central green space will provide a new place for playdates, picnics, movie nights, concerts, weddings, and other outdoor gatherings for all ages.

- ☐ Covered bandstand for outdoor concerts and events
- ☐ Large outdoor LED screen
- ☐ Artificial turf lawn for outdoor play
- ☐ Room for 500 temporary seats
- ☐ Raised berm for recreational play and additional seating
- ☐ New lighting, including overhead string lights
- ☐ Covered awnings for seating on the north and south sides
- ☐ New furniture throughout the space
- ☐ Small playground area
- ☐ Numerous play surface elements (rocks, play "cubes" to sit on, etc.)
- ☐ New gates at Rotunda entrance to enhance security





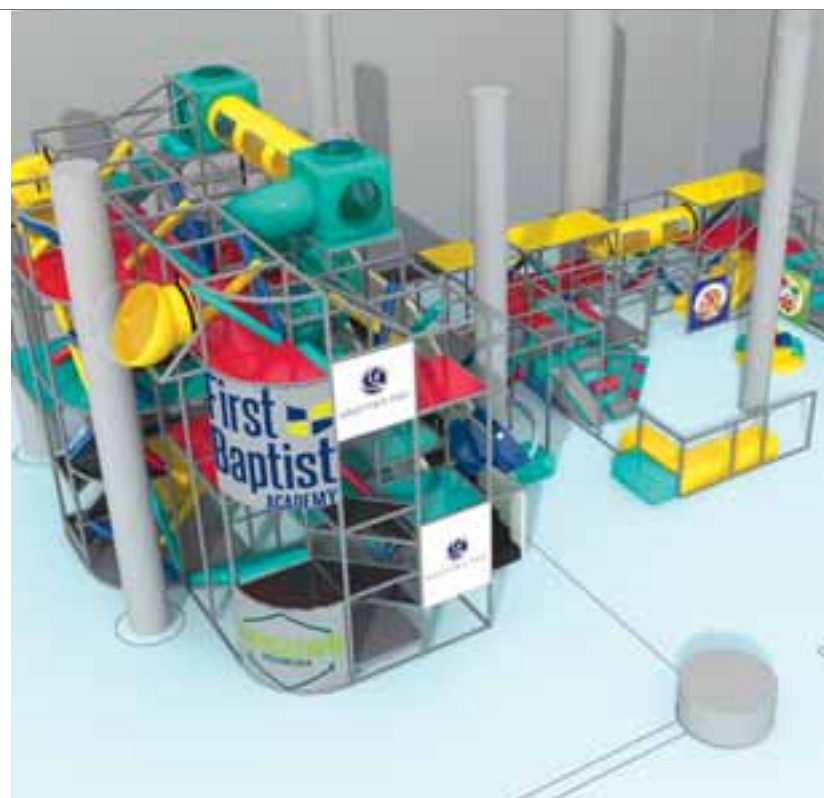


## HUB STUDENT MINISTRY UPDATES

Students from about 120 middle schools and high schools participate in The HUB Student Ministry at the Loop. The HUB's dedicated area on Level 3 will enter a new chapter of ministry to these students as fresh designs, updated finishes, and enhanced security features are put in place.

## NEW INDOOR PLAY AREA

Approximately 60% of Fitness & Recreation Center members are not members of Houston's First, making the FRC a unique ministry at The Loop. The indoor play area in the FRC lobby is a go-to place for parents to bring their young children. First Baptist Academy, Daycation, and other ministries in the church make use of the area, as well. New equipment will further increase the appeal for parents — and the fun for kids, too!



## CYPRESS CAMPUS | \$250,000

The Cypress Campus launched at Smith Middle School in 2013. Now, it is a thriving campus with a facility of its own that opened in 2017, thanks to our church family generously giving \$16 million to make it happen. The campus is located at 11011 Mason Road just off the Grand Parkway (SH 99) in Bridgeland — the 9th top-selling master-planned community in the United States in 2020. Next door to the campus is a Cypress-Fairbanks ISD educational village with Wells Elementary School, Bridgeland High School, and a middle school under construction. Across the street, a new 358-unit multifamily residence is scheduled to open in 2022.

As Bridgeland continues to grow, the Cypress Campus finds new ways to minister to their community. In the wake of quarantining due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the campus began offering

free community workspace during the week for people seeking to “office” outside of their home. Through a partnership with Bridgeland High School, students with special needs come to the campus once a week to assist with projects such as assembling packets for children to use in our Sunday worship services. Finally, the campus hosted VBS in person for the second time this summer — with over 500 kids in attendance!

Beyond the campus itself, the Houston’s First family in Cypress has formed partnerships with several local nonprofits who serve the community in various ways. By providing funding, volunteers, and other resources to the groups listed below, our Cypress Campus is able to further our impact for the Gospel.

	Boys and Girls Country
	Care Net Pregnancy Center
	Cy-Fair Helping Hands
	Cy-Hope
	SportsQuest, Inc.
	Mansions at Hastings Green
	New Life Adoptions
	Redeemed Ministries

Although our Cypress Campus story and facilities are still young, we are exploring ways to enhance the Cypress Campus and prepare for a new chapter as the community grows exponentially.





## DOWNTOWN CAMPUS | \$250,000

Celebrating our 10th anniversary in 2021, the Downtown Campus was our first multisite campus and its launch in 2011 marked our return to the heart of Houston. For 136 years — from 1841 to 1977 — Houston's First gathered downtown in a series of different buildings. Just as the church moved west in the '70s to The Loop Campus to follow the growth of the city, we returned to Downtown in 2011 in response to the resurgence of the area.

The Downtown Campus initially gathered on the tunnel level of 1010 Lamar — the high-rise office tower on the corner where our previous building stood for decades. In 2017, the generosity of over 2,770 Houston's First donors provided \$11.3 million so we could purchase and renovate an entire city block and building at 1730 Jefferson. The new space was unveiled in May 2018 and has become a distinct addition to Downtown not only in terms

of the architecture, but in how this diverse campus ministers to the community around them — providing a light in the heart of Houston.

One way our Downtown church family makes an impact beyond our facility is by partnering with local nonprofits. The campus has formed strong relationships with Houston Welcomes Refugees, Open Door Mission, and Freedom Church Alliance. Each organization has a unique focus and calling, and our members support them through volunteering, special events, funding, and other ways.

As Downtown Houston and the surrounding neighborhoods continue to be revitalized and developed, our Downtown Campus is praying about how we can ensure that our facility and programs are well-prepared to minister to the people around us.



\ kī-'noss \

*THE*

# KAINOS

*COVENANT  
IN MY BLOOD*

*"In the same way He also took the cup after supper and said, '**THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT IN MY BLOOD, WHICH IS POURED OUT FOR YOU.**'"*

— Luke 22:20



# OUR COMPASSION

\ kī-'noss \

# OUR COMPASSION: \$10 MILLION OVER TWO YEARS

**LOVING PEOPLE BY FURTHERING THE GOSPEL IN OUR CITY, OUR NATION, AND OUR WORLD**

## NEW CHAPTER

### LAUNCH NEW CHAPTERS FOR OUR THRIVING FAITH CENTER MINISTRIES

- Faith Center-Spring Branch: Extensive Renovations
- Faith Center-Harwin: Building Acquisition

## NEW HORIZONS

### ENABLE THE GOSPEL TO REACH NEW HORIZONS IN SOUTH ASIA

- Strategy Funding for IMB in South Asia
- South Asia Church Planting Expansion

## NEW CONNECTION

### PROVIDE NEW CONNECTIONS FOR ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN AROUND THE GLOBE

- Legacy 68:5
- Heshima Children's Center (Kenya)
- The Vine (Uganda)

## NEW STRENGTH

### PROVIDE NEW STRENGTH FOR THOSE IN NEED OF RESTORATION

- Missionary Care House at Hunt Retreat
- Hunt Retreat Cottages
- ThriveOn Wellness Retreat Center

## NEW IDEAS

### ENCOURAGE AND ENABLE NEW WAYS OF MINISTERING IN JESUS' NAME

- Difference Maker Ventures

## NEW LIFE

### PROVIDE REVITALIZATION ASSISTANCE TO SPECIFIC CHURCHES IN HOUSTON AND THE U.S.

## NEW CHURCHES

### SUPPORT CHURCH PLANTS IN STRATEGIC U.S. CITIES

## NEW BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

### PROVIDE GOD'S WORD TO UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS

# OUR COMPASSION

## THE GREAT COMMISSION

**Our Great Commission Fund** includes \$5.5 million for missions — or approximately 17.5% of the annual ministry operating budget. However, Houston's First contributes far more than that toward missional endeavors in a typical year.

For example, in the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2021, our church family gave over \$6 million in designated donations beyond the budgeted \$5.5 million. These generous funds were faithfully distributed by our Missions team to various causes throughout the year.

Through *Kainos*, we look forward to this continued generosity while also expanding our collective giving even further. When we do, we will boldly pursue these projects that demonstrate our desire to share the love and truth of Jesus at home and around the globe.

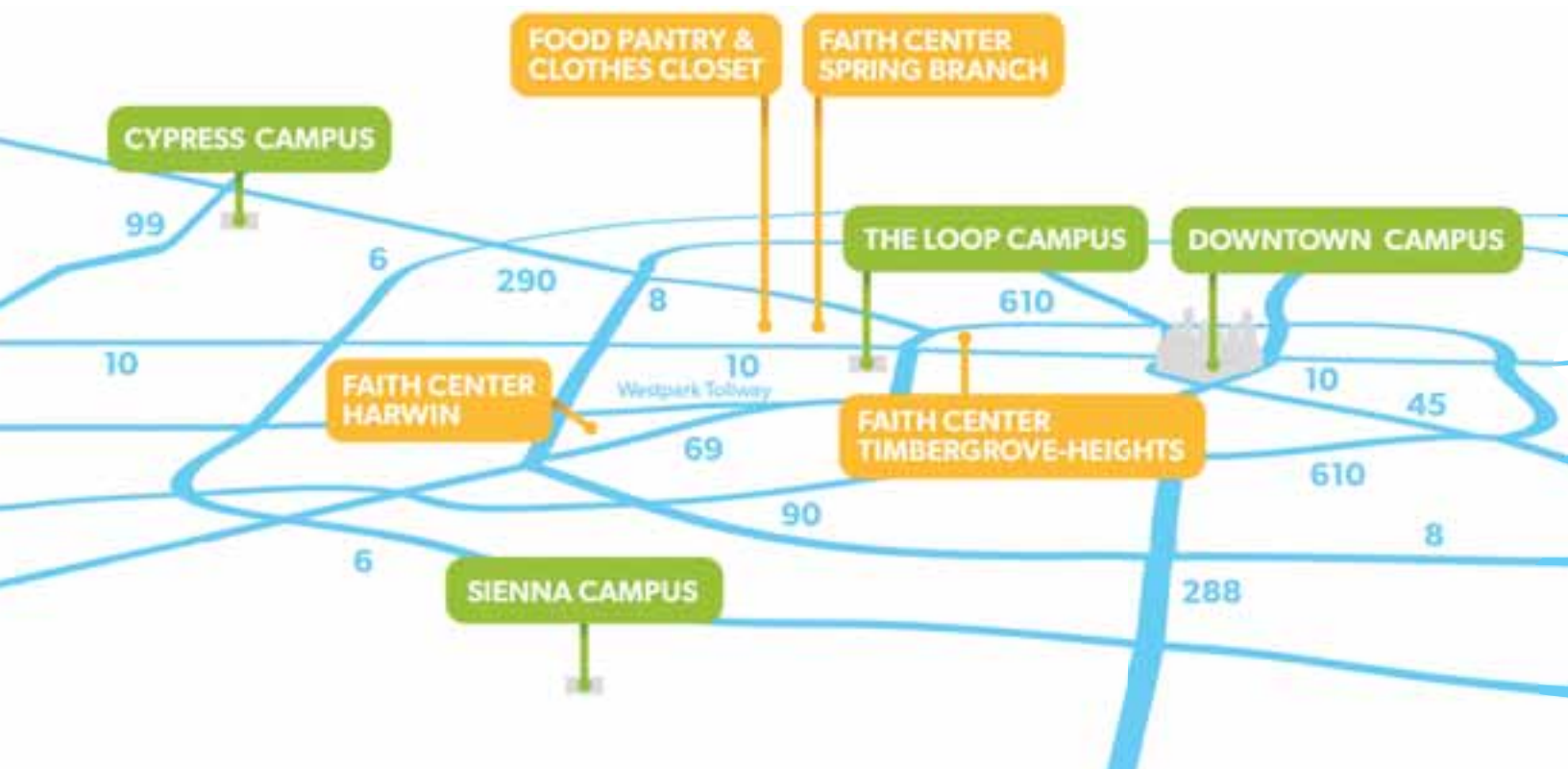


# NEW CHAPTER

## **\$6,250,000 TO LAUNCH NEW CHAPTERS FOR OUR SPRING BRANCH AND HARWIN FAITH CENTER MINISTRIES**

Our Faith Centers truly serve as the hands and feet of Christ every day in our city. Focused on meeting the many challenging needs of thousands of individuals and families every month, these missional outposts not only provide tangible help for those we serve, but also spiritual direction as we point people to Jesus along the way.

### MAP OF CAMPUS & FAITH CENTER LOCATIONS





# NEW CHAPTER

## THE CORE MINISTRIES PROVIDED BY OUR FAITH CENTERS INCLUDE:

- FOOD PANTRIES & CLOTHES CLOSET
- BENEVOLENCE
- ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)
- APARTMENT MINISTRY
- MISSIONARY TRAINING
- COUNSELING
- COMPUTER MINISTRY
- OUTREACH TEAMS

## OUR FAITH CENTERS' CHURCH PARTNERS WHO GATHER AT OUR FACILITIES INCLUDE:

- LONG POINT BAPTIST CHURCH
- KAREN BAPTIST CHURCH
- WOODHAVEN DEAF BAPTIST CHURCH
- IGLESIA BAUTISTA CASA DE DIOS
- HANSON KACHIN BAPTIST CHURCH
- REDEEMED ALLIANCE VIETNAMESE CHURCH



## ORGANIZATIONS THAT OUR FAITH CENTERS PARTNER WITH, OFTEN MAKING OFFICE OR MEETING SPACE AVAILABLE FOR THEM, INCLUDE:

**CHARM PRISON MINISTRIES**

**CORNERSTONE FAMILY MINISTRIES**

**FOSTERING FAMILY**

**FREEDOM CHURCH ALLIANCE**

**HOUSTON LEGAL AID CENTER**

**HOUSTON WELCOMES REFUGEES**

**TRINITY CLASSICAL SCHOOL**

**LEGACY 68:5**

**NABOR HOUSE COMMUNITY**

**UNION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

**INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD**

To meet the increasing demand for what our Faith Centers have to offer — and to enable us to continue to be a blessing to others — we are investing in improved facilities at both locations. In doing so, we will launch a new chapter for each and position us for life-changing ministry for many, many years to come.

Christ's Hope and Reconciliation Ministry



**CORNERSTONE**  
FAMILY MINISTRIES



FOSTERING  
FAMILY



**Houston**  
Legal Aid Center



TRINITY  
CLASSICAL SCHOOL



Nabor House  
Community



**imb**

# NEW CHAPTER

## FAITH CENTER-SPRING BRANCH: EXTENSIVE RENOVATIONS

In 1952, Houston's First purchased land in Spring Branch — what was then a suburb of Houston — to support a growing group of believers seeking to start a church there. A building was soon constructed and the small church became an independent church in 1955 — Long Point Baptist Church. Today, nearly 70 years later, our Faith Center-Spring Branch is housed on that property at 8009 Long Point Road.

Extensive renovations will provide Faith Center-Spring Branch a more welcoming and useful facility. Among the renovations being made are:

### CORE SYSTEMS

- New air conditioning/heating system (HVAC)
- New plumbing
- New electrical system
- Floor plan modifications (move approximately 50% of interior walls)
- Elevator added

### FINISHES

- New lay-in ceilings for entire interior
- New lighting for entire interior
- New flooring throughout
- New paint/baseboards throughout
- New doors for approximately 50% of the interior



## AREAS OF RENOVATION

- Renovated sanctuary seating 350+ people
- Renovated chapel with sanctuary seating 115 people
- Fully-renovated office suite for Legacy 68:5
- All bathrooms fully renovated
- Fully-renovated main kitchen
- Fully-renovated wing for children/toddlers
- Gymnasium renovation
- New conference room

## EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS

- Fix exterior drainage issues
- Update parking lot lighting
- Provide secure parking area for Faith Center vehicles



# NEW CHAPTER

## FAITH CENTER-HARWIN: BUILDING ACQUISITION

Faith Center-Harwin launched in 2016 in rented space generously funded by an anonymous donor from the Houston's First family. Located at 5860 Ranchester Drive near the Westpark Tollway and Beltway 8, the property is surrounded by numerous multifamily communities and serves a diverse population including immigrants and refugees from countries around the globe. Faith Center-Harwin is also used as a training ground for long-term missionaries as they prepare to take the Gospel to the world.

The breadth of ministries and the number of people we serve have grown beyond what our rented space can adequately accommodate. Houston's First is actively searching for a facility in that area of town that we can purchase and transform into a home base for our ministry — launching a new chapter for Faith Center-Harwin.



\ kī-'noss \

**KAINOS**



# NEW STRENGTH

**\$1,000,000 TO PROVIDE NEW STRENGTH FOR MISSIONARIES AND OTHERS IN NEED OF RESTORATION**

## HUNT RETREAT

Hunt Retreat is a beautiful 15-acre property in Brookshire, Texas, that was generously donated to Houston's First in 1976. A new retreat house was built in 2013 to provide a more welcoming environment and to increase the size of the groups the facility could host. Now, Houston's First is expanding our ability to minister to and restore more people at Hunt Retreat by creating new facilities on the property.

## MISSIONARY CARE HOUSE

Houston's First owns or leases ten properties around Houston for short-term or long-term respite for missionaries. A dedicated house will serve as a new option for use by missionary families back in the United States for an extended period of time.

## COTTAGES

A collection of small cottages will allow additional capacity for missionary care, couples retreats, and other ministry purposes hosted by Houston's First or other faith-based organizations.





[ThriveOnRetreat.org](https://ThriveOnRetreat.org)

According to studies, 70% of cross-cultural workers leave the mission field for preventable reasons, while 50% of ministry leaders feel unable to meet the demands of their calling. ThriveOn Wellness Retreat Center provides a holistic approach to wellness for cross-cultural workers, ministry leaders, and their families — anchored in a Christian perspective. Founded by Houston's First members Ron & Cynthia Barkley, ThriveOn's passion is to reduce the number of preventable losses among ministry leaders and cross-cultural workers. They do so by creating opportunities for rest, reflection, and renewal within a safe community, and by providing programs designed to give participants time and space to unwind, share their stories, and anticipate next steps in their journey.

# NEW CONNECTION

**\$900,000 TO PROVIDE NEW CONNECTIONS FOR ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN AROUND THE GLOBE**

## LEGACY 68:5

Legacy 68:5, the adoption, foster, and orphan care ministry at Houston's First, was established in 2008 to provide connection, community, and funding to families who were compelled to move toward adoption in compassion for the orphan. The name is derived from Psalm 68:5-6a — "A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families." Legacy 68:5 focuses on:

### CONNECTING

- families with other families through various gatherings and events, and to financial resources through our Adoption Assistance Fund

### EQUIPPING

- families, caregivers, volunteers, and anyone interested in adoption, foster, and orphan care with relevant, biblical, trauma-informed resources as well as classes and trainings

### SUSTAINING

- families with wrap-around care and volunteers; local Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) workers with encouragement and prayer; and global partners through on-going relationships and mission trips when possible





## HESHIMA CHILDREN'S CENTER

Heshima.org

Heshima means “dignity” in Swahili. Through the love of Jesus, the Heshima Children’s Center in Kenya provides a holistic environment that includes physical, mental, and spiritual support for children with special needs. There are very few private institutions in Kenya that provide services for these children, and the public school system offers nothing. Heshima was started to meet the needs of these hidden children. During the week, they provide breakfast and lunch, medical intervention, special education, and various forms of therapy — occupational, physical, speech, sign language, and horse riding.



## THE VINE

TheVineUganda.org

Located in the heart of Kamuli, Uganda, The Vine is a community center that supports the local community by providing empowerment, education, life skills, medical treatment, and spiritual discipleship. They provide sustainable solutions to help the most vulnerable women and children in Uganda with some of life’s most basic needs as well as encouragement, support, hope and most of all — love. The Vine serves in over ten villages, runs The Vine Preschool and Vocational Tailoring School for students, creates products sold as The Vine Collective, and offers life-changing discipleship through outreaches and events.



**CORNERBOOKS** at Houston’s First carries products from Heshima, The Vine, and other ministry partners. Find CornerBooks at The Loop and Cypress campuses, and visit the new online store at [CornerBooksOnline.org](http://CornerBooksOnline.org).



# NEW LIFE

## **\$800,000 TO REVITALIZE AND PLANT CHURCHES IN HOUSTON AND THE UNITED STATES**

Houston's First has a long history of revitalizing churches — coming alongside communities of believers and doing what we can to strengthen their ministry. We might provide a new air conditioning unit, offer ministry training, support a bivocational pastor, or other measures. As we seek to bring new life to churches locally and nationally, we will partner with the Union Baptist Association and the North American Mission Board to identify candidate churches.



# NEW CHURCH

## SUPPORT CHURCH PLANTS IN STRATEGIC CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

An estimated 83% of the U.S. population lives in urban areas, up from 64% in 1950. At the same time, Americans' membership in houses of worship continues to decline according to a Gallup survey. In 2020, only 47% of Americans said they belonged to a church, synagogue, or mosque — dipping below 50% for the first time in Gallup's eight decades of following the trend. Houston's First will partner with the North American Mission Board to identify and provide financial support for church plants seeking to reach people with the Gospel in strategic cities across the country.



# NEW BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

**\$500,000 TO PROVIDE GOD'S WORD TO UNREACHED  
PEOPLE GROUPS**

Out of 7,360 known languages, approximately 3,900 have no Bible translation. Over the past decade or so, Houston's First has given more than \$1,500,000 to partner organizations who specialize in translating the Scriptures. Houston's First will again serve as a catalyst for new translations to be completed so more people around the globe can access God's Word.



# NEW IDEAS

## \$250,000 TO ENCOURAGE AND ENABLE NEW WAYS OF MINISTERING IN JESUS' NAME

Over the years, Houston's First family members have started various ministries as they pursued their passions and followed God's lead. Knowing that other great ideas are percolating within our church, we are providing a process for members to secure funding, encouragement, and consultation for what they want to accomplish. Whether it's a one-time project or the launch of a non-profit organization, Difference Maker Ventures will help make new ideas come to life — like a Christian *Shark Tank*!

MEMORIAL  
HERMANN

e/ every village



TRINITY  
CLASSICAL SCHOOL

Star of  
hope

1P  
FIRSTplace  
FOR HEALTH

FREEDOM  
CHURCH ALLIANCE

Christ's Hope and Reconciliation Ministry  
C.H.R.M.  
www.CHARMHoustonMinistry.org

Inspire  
women  
find your spark and change the world.

Beth Moore

LIVING PROOF MINISTRIES



# NEW HORIZONS

**\$300,000 TO ENABLE THE GOSPEL TO REACH  
NEW HORIZONS IN SOUTH ASIA**

## **STRATEGY FUNDING FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD (IMB) IN SOUTH ASIA**

The World Mission Offering received each year from the Houston's First family provides funding to send missionaries around the world through the International Mission Board (IMB). Those funds help to keep them on the mission field, providing for housing, food, and other basic needs. Once these missionaries are on the field, strategy funding is used to expand the work being done among the people they are reaching. IMB teams will use these funds to identify, train, disciple, and partner with high-capacity South Asian church planters, and the teams will provide ongoing accountability, training, care, and encouragement as they seek to advance the Gospel.



## **SOUTH ASIA CHURCH PLANTING INITIATIVE**

Houston's First is partnering with native-born South Asian church planters identified by IMB teams. The resources we provide will be designated for these church planters to minister in their region full time. The individuals involved have been vetted over two to three or more years before receiving any resources. They have the ability to teach, pastor, and disciple, they have planted churches, and they have trained others how to plant churches. These church planters, with their families, are committed to finishing the task of engaging the 1,044 Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs) in South Asia.

This effort is already underway thanks to the generosity of the Houston's First family. After just the first year of our partnership with them, a small group of church planters has:

**ENGAGED 15 UUPGS FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER**

**PLANTED 100+ CHURCHES DURING THE COVID LOCKDOWN**

**DISTRIBUTED TENS OF THOUSANDS OF MEALS TO DESPERATE FAMILIES DURING THE PANDEMIC**



*ANYONE IN CHRIST IS A*

**KAINOS**

*CREATION*

NEW

*"THEREFORE, IF ANYONE  
IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A*

**NEW**

*CREATION.*

*THE OLD HAS PASSED  
AWAY, AND SEE, THE*

**NEW**

*HAS COME."*

*— 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17*

\ kī-'noss \

# NEW KAINOS

**\$63 MILLION.....Our COMMISSION**

ANTICIPATED NORMAL  
OPERATING BUDGET GIVING

**\$20 MILLION.....Our COMMUNITY**

**\$10 MILLION.....Our COMPASSION**

**\$30,000,000**  
OF NEW GENEROSITY

**\$93 MILLION GIVEN OVER 2 YEARS  
FOR KINGDOM PURPOSES**

# ONE FUND INITIATIVE

## WHAT IS A "ONE FUND" INITIATIVE?

You may have been a part of church campaigns in the past during which you were asked to give a second gift 'above and beyond' your usual gifts to make special initiatives like new buildings and new ministries possible.

Normally, you gave that gift to the 'Building Fund' and you also continued to give offerings to the 'General Fund.' This type of giving is potentially confusing to people who either don't have a baseline for their "usual giving" or who aren't able to really celebrate the total giving they are engaging in at Houston's First in one single number. We believe that it's all ONE MISSION that

we're on at Houston's First — the mission to love Jesus and make disciples. So, similar to our MISSION 1:8 initiative we embarked upon several years ago, our gifts to Houston's First during the *Kainos* initiative will all go into one fund for this season of ministry expansion — allowing us to celebrate the totality of our generosity growth as disciples of Jesus.

The *Kainos* initiative will last for two years (Dec 2021–Dec 2023). In those two years, every gift that is given to Houston's first will go to the key components of this initiative — our Great Commission Budget (Our Commission), ministry expansion through the

## NEW KAINOS


*Jesus Makes All Things New*

**Yes — I/we want to join with God as He makes things new!**

Here is my/our contribution:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ What I/we would normally give in a  
year to Houston's First  
(regular giving, special projects, missions, etc.)

+ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ My/Our expanded annual generosity  
as part of the Kainos initiative

= \$ \_\_\_\_\_ x 2 years 

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

+ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Gifts from my/our stored resources

### MY/OUR TOTAL 2-YEAR KAINOS COMMITMENT

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Dec 2021–Dec 2023

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Campus (circle one):    The Loop    Cypress    Downtown    Sienna

Commitment Day is Sun, Nov 14. On that day, the Houston's First family in every worship service at every campus will submit their completed commitment cards in support of the Kainos vision. Or, you can submit it at our churchwide Advance Commitment Night at the Sienna Campus the evening of Sun, Oct 24.



investment in our campus facilities (Our Community), and continued investment in furthering the Gospel in our city, our nation, and our world (Our Compassion).

The fulfillment period for your *Kainos* commitment will begin on our Big Give Sunday on Sun, Dec 5, 2021, and it will culminate at the end of Dec 2023.

This sample commitment card will help as you begin to pray about your commitment and what that will mean for your journey with God. Please take time to think and pray through this, and then we will provide you with a separate Commitment Card on Commitment Sunday, Nov 14.

## TWO-YEAR GIFT CHART

As you pray and discern how God would have you give toward Kainos, use this chart as a discipleship tool. You can give at any level the Lord leads you to give, whether it is listed here or not. Simply let this chart inspire and challenge you toward greater generosity for His kingdom as you ask Him to do a new work in you.

GIFTS NEEDED	TWO-YEAR GIFT LEVEL	ANNUAL GIFT	MONTHLY GIFT OF	GIFT LEVEL TOTAL
1	\$10,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$416,667	\$10,000,000
2	\$5,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$208,333	\$10,000,000
3	\$2,500,000	\$1,250,000	\$104,167	\$7,500,000
5	\$1,500,000	\$750,000	\$62,500	\$7,500,000
7	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$41,667	\$7,000,000
15	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$20,833	\$7,500,000
20	\$250,000	\$125,000	\$10,417	\$5,000,000
25	\$150,000	\$75,000	\$6,250	\$3,750,000
30	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$3,000,000
50	\$75,000	\$37,500	\$3,125	\$3,750,000
65	\$65,000	\$32,500	\$2,708	\$4,225,000
85	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$4,250,000
100	\$35,000	\$17,500	\$1,458	\$3,500,000
135	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$1,042	\$3,375,000
200	\$15,000	\$7,500	\$625	\$3,000,000
250	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$417	\$2,500,000
325	\$7,500	\$3,750	\$313	\$2,437,500
475	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$208	\$2,375,000
MANY	\$2,500	\$1,250	\$104	\$2,337,500
TOTAL GIFT GOAL				\$93,000,000

# OUR GENEROSITY JOURNEY

We must always remember there is much more to generosity than just a financial transaction.

*In God's eyes, our growth in generosity is less about a financial transaction and more about a transformation. It is a matter of the heart!*

**The Generosity Journey** can help us think about this transformation. Make no mistake — to move along this path requires a heart change. Moving along the path does not make us super Christians; it brings us to a greater understanding of God, not a greater view of ourselves. As you look and think about this journey, ask yourself, "What drives you to be generous?"

**LIFETIME  
GIVER**

**TOP PRIORITY OF  
LIFE & LEGACY**

**SURRENDERED  
GIVER**

**GIVING DRIVES  
EVERYTHING ELSE**

**INTENTIONAL  
GIVER**

**PLANNED &  
PRIORITIZED**

**INITIAL  
GIVER**

**COURAGEOUS  
& EXCITING  
FIRST STEP**

\ kī-'noss \

# LIFESTYLE GENEROSITY

Church Generosity Initiatives rely on church members making gifts over and above their current level of giving to the operating budget needs of the church. The best path to increased giving is the spiritual path, where we set our hearts on things above. Financial priorities then take shape from the spiritual priorities.

One way of defining this is “Lifestyle Generosity,” a term used to describe a level of giving that affects one’s living. Always with us is the temptation to give in such a way that it makes little impact on how we live. The challenge of Lifestyle Generosity is to boldly and prayerfully find ways to do just that — to let our giving touch our living!

King David declared, “I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing” (2 Samuel 24:24 NIV). David understood that the value of the gift presented to God is determined by its value to the giver. The greater the gift’s value and significance to the giver, the greater its worth before the Heavenly Father. This is the spirit of Lifestyle Generosity. “If it is for my God, my gift must have meaning and value to me.”

Lifestyle Generosity is a level of giving that affects me: my plans, my activities, my attitude, and my approach to life. It means giving up something in one area so that I can give more of myself in another. The three keys to effectiveness in Lifestyle Generosity are:

## REASSESS LIFESTYLE

If I were to honestly reassess my lifestyle, are there places I could or should make changes so I could free up more resources?

## REARRANGE PRIORITIES

Does my lifestyle reflect my true priorities as a follower of Jesus Christ? How would I re-align my lifestyle to look more like what I really believe are my God-given priorities?

## REALLOCATE RESOURCES

Am I as concerned with freeing up resources for God’s purposes as I am for my own purposes? What would it look like for me to reallocate more of my resources for His church?

# STORED RESOURCES

## CONSIDER APPRECIATED ASSETS

Gifts of appreciated assets — typically investment securities or real estate — can be very advantageous to both the donor and to the church. By transferring ownership of the asset to the church, the donor avoids income taxes on the sale of the asset. Unlike gifts of cash that have already incurred an income tax, gifts of appreciated assets avoid the incurrence of capital gain tax. In addition, the donor receives an income tax charitable deduction for the full market value of the asset. That, in effect, makes these gifts less costly to give. Before making a commitment of this type, please consult your CPA, tax attorney, or other financial advisor.

## IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER

The IRA Charitable Rollover provision allows individuals who have reached age 70½ to donate up to \$100,000 to charitable organizations directly from their Individual Retirement Account (IRA), without treating the distribution as taxable income.

"IT IS NOT THAT I AM  
LOOKING FOR A GIFT.  
NO, I WANT TO SEE  
THAT YOU RECEIVE THE  
FRUIT THAT INCREASES  
TO YOUR BENEFIT."

**PHILIPPIANS 4:17**



# WHAT'S NEXT?

Throughout our *Kainos* journey, in addition to engaging in Sunday worship services and Life Bible Studies, keep these four actions in mind:



## **PRAY PERSISTENTLY**

Pray that God will do a new work in the hearts of His people at Houston's First and that we will joyfully follow as He leads.



## **COMMIT FULLY**

Help reach our goals by determining in your heart to fully engage and give — and encourage others to do the same.



## **CELEBRATE LOUDLY**

As God does new things in your life during this season, share your story enthusiastically with those around you.



## **GIVE GENEROUSLY**

Live and give in a way that stretches you to take your faith to a whole new level of generosity.

## **KEY DATES**

### **ADVANCE COMMITMENT NIGHT**

Sun, Oct 24 @ 5p — Sienna Campus  
4309 Sienna Parkway, Missouri City

The Houston's First family from every campus is invited to this special gathering at the Sienna Campus including a "Faith Groundbreaking" for the new facility. You will also have an opportunity to submit your *Kainos* commitment card if you are ready to do so at that time. Visit [HoustonFirst.org](https://HoustonFirst.org) and look for announcements at your campus for additional details.

### **COMMITMENT SUNDAY**

Sun, Nov 14 — Every Campus

Commitment Sunday is when the Houston's First family in every worship service at every campus will submit their generosity commitment to the *Kainos* vision. Leading up to that day, prayerfully seek God's will for how He wants to grow you and how He is leading you to participate. What a powerful moment it will be as we come forward to present our gifts to Him!

### **KAINOS REVEAL SUNDAY AND BIG GIVE SUNDAY**

Sun, Dec 5 — Every Campus

*Kainos* Reveal Sunday and Big Give Sunday is when the Houston's First family at every campus will hear the announcement of total pledges and anticipated gifts! Gifts to *Kainos* will be received from December 2021 through December 2023.

\ kī-'noss \

A

# KAINOS

*TEACHING WITH  
AUTHORITY*

***"They were all amazed, and so they began to ask each other, 'What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.'"***

**— Mark 1:27**

# KAINOS

# THE POWER OF TEAM

# 1 CHRONICLES 28:9-21

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

\ kī-'noss \



# KAINOS MOMENT

Each week, set aside some time to reflect on this devotional as you prepare for your *Kainos* commitment.

## TRUSTING GOD TO DO A NEW THING WITHIN US

Many of us are familiar with the powerful worship song called "Oceans." It was written a few years back, but its words are very powerful still today, as with many timeless worship songs and hymns based on Scripture. This piece is a beautiful worship song that so eloquently illustrates God's calling up on our lives and our response to Him. Let us be reminded of a few of these challenging lyrics.

*You call me out upon the waters  
The great unknown, where feet may fail  
And there I find You in the mystery  
In oceans deep  
My faith will stand*

Verse 2 continues with:

*Your grace abounds in deepest waters  
Your sovereign hand  
Will be my guide  
Where feet may fail and fear surrounds me  
You've never failed, and You won't start now*

Both of those verses describe what the Lord does for us. Then the pre-chorus and the chorus begin to declare what we will do in reaching out to Him.

*So I will call upon Your name  
And keep my eyes above the waves  
When oceans rise  
My soul will rest in Your embrace  
For I am Yours, and You are mine.*

Not only is the writer of this song declaring to call upon the name of the Lord in the midst of these unknown waters, but he then goes to the bridge; and in the bridge, he goes BEYOND that declares that he SEEKS to be led into a NEW place where his trust is without borders. As in, he is ASKING, he's DESIRING to be taken to this new, deeper, and unknown place...

He writes,

*Spirit, lead me where my trust is without borders  
Let me walk upon the waters  
Wherever You would call me  
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander  
And my faith will be made stronger  
In the presence of my Savior*

The original writers of these lyrics did not come up with this concept of trusting God into new and deeper places on their own. In fact, even this notion of SEEKING to be led into the new and the unknown is something that isn't new with the writing of this song. It goes back quite early, to the father of our nations, to the father of our Church, to the birthplace of so much off the descriptors and directives of how man should relate to God.

It is found in the story of Abram (Abraham)...

Reflect on this passage of scripture, Genesis 12:1-3:

*"The Lord had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'"*

Now, in order to understand fully the power of the beginning of Abraham's story, it is important to note what occurred in chapter 11, just prior to chapter 12. The world was in a very dark time spiritually. Genesis 11 is about the Tower of Babel, which symbolized humanity's rejection of God, their rebellion, and their wholesale worship of idols. There was one family line that belongs to God, the descendants of Shem, but it ends in chapter 11 with them living in a place of idolatry, consumed by the place. The final person in this line, Terah, has one son, Abram, and Abram is childless; his wife is barren. Terah's name literally means "mon," which is a Hebrew metaphor for "the end." In other words, as Genesis 11 ends, the last candle has flickered out. The darkness is about to swallow up the light.

So in the midst of this great darkness, God calls Abram and gives him this promise — that He wants to do a NEW thing within him — God promises Abram that He will bless him and give him a family. Furthermore, He promises that this family will become a blessing to the whole earth.

So what is God asking of Abram here? He says, "Go from your country, your people, and your father's household to the land I will show you." He is basically asking Abram to leave everything he has ever known so that He can do a NEW thing within him. He is asking him to trust God — without any type of reservation, without any type of restriction — and to allow God to lead him into this new place He will show Abram.

See, this whole *Kainos* initiative is birthed out off a strong belief, a strong conviction we have as followers of Christ that God still has promises for us as His people that are yet to be fulfilled — that He is always doing a NEW thing not simply THROUGH us but IN us. Reflect on this truth as we begin this *Kainos* journey together. God seeks to do something THROUGH us, and He also seeks to do something IN us. What might He be seeking to do IN you?

# THE GOSPEL'S POWER

SUN, OCT 17, 2021 | COLOSSIANS 1:1-23

## MEMORY VERSE

*"He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son He loves. In Him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."*

Colossians 1:13-14 CSB

**READ:** Colossians 1:1-23

## INTRO:

Colossae was located about one hundred miles from Ephesus. It was a meeting point of East and West, as an important trade route passed through here.

All kinds of philosophies could be found in this area. There was a large Jewish community in Colossae, and there was also a constant influx of new ideas and doctrines from the East. This was fertile ground for religious speculations and heresies.

The Colossian church began from the growth of Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus. This was an extremely important time in the history of the early church, as beliefs and accounts of Jesus' ministry were first being transferred from one generation who had known Him on earth to the next who had not.

## UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT:

Paul wrote this letter to the church in Colossae because a crisis had occurred that was about to destroy the ministry of the church.

Some new doctrines were being taught in Colossae that were invading the church and creating issues. So, Paul wrote this letter to the Colossians to refute these heretical teachings and establish the truth of the gospel of Jesus.

The heresy that threatened the purity of the Colossian church was a combination of Eastern philosophy and Jewish legalism, with elements of what Bible scholars call Gnosticism. Gnosticism comes from the Greek word *gnosis*, which means "to know." An agnostic is one who does not know. The Gnostics were the people who were "in the know" when it

came to the deep things of God. They were the "spiritual aristocracy" in the church.

This heresy promised people that spiritual fullness could be theirs only if they embraced the teachings and ceremonies prescribed. There was also a "full knowledge," a spiritual depth, that only those who participated could enjoy.

Added to this was a form of Jewish legalism. The teachers taught that the Old Testament law, especially the dietary laws, was also useful in attaining spiritual perfection. Definite rules and regulations told them what was evil and what was good.

This type of teaching undermined the very foundations of Christian faith, as these heretics attacked the person and work of Jesus Christ. To them, Jesus was merely one of God's many "forms" and not the very Son of God come in the flesh. The Incarnation means God with us; however, these false teachers claimed that God was at a distance from us.

Knowing this background, we can look at Paul's letter to the Colossians and get an overview of what he wrote.

Paul was a great encourager, and this letter is a good example of the grace of thanksgiving. In this section, he gave thanks for what Christ had done in the lives of the Colossian Christians. When you recall that Paul wrote this letter while in prison, his attitude of thanksgiving is even more astounding.

Once Epaphras had been saved, he shared this thrilling news with his relatives and friends back home. He multiplied its effect. Perhaps it would have been exciting for Epaphras to stay with Paul in Ephesus, where so many wonderful things were taking place. But his first responsibility was to take the gospel to his own home city.

Likely no section of the New Testament contains more focused doctrine about Jesus than this one passage. Because of the teaching of the false teachers during this time, people viewed Jesus as equally as they did other “spirits” flowing from other gods. The teachers said Jesus could be prominent but that He certainly wasn’t preeminent. So, Paul sees his role as not only telling believers the truth about the gospel but also about the truth of Jesus Himself — and how in fact He IS preeminent.

Paul talks about Jesus being “the firstborn over all creation” (1:15). In these days, the firstborn means more about rank than it does time or sequence. The firstborn has a right to priority. This was the coveted position in the family, but it didn’t necessarily

always go to the firstborn from a time perspective. Jesus is the firstborn — the highest rank — in all of creation, even though others preceded Him in time.

Because Jesus is the Creator, Jesus has absolute supremacy over all creation. This literally means He is over everything. He is before all things. This was quite contrary to what the heretics believed, so Paul takes this portion of the letter to strongly proclaim the preeminence of Christ and all that means for the believer.

## EXPLORE AND APPLY

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

#### KEY POINTS, PART 1 – vs. 1-7

- The gospel centers in a person, Jesus Christ.
- It is the word of truth.
- It is the message of God’s grace.
- It is for the whole world.

#### vs. 1-7

1. Why was Paul so intent on planting churches in new locations? (1:2)
2. What kind of fruit does God expect His children to bear? (1:6)
3. What did Paul focus on as he prayed for the Colossian believers? (1:3-7)

#### KEY POINTS, PART 2 – vs. 8-13

- Paul prayed for others and not for himself.
- The requests of Paul’s prayers center on spiritual blessings, not on material or physical things.
- Paul prayed for spiritual intelligence.
- Paul prayed for practical obedience.
- Paul prayed for moral excellence.

#### vs. 8-13

1. How did love motivate both Paul and the Colossians? (1:4, 8)
2. Identify three qualities Paul desired for believers. (1:9-11)
3. How do patience and long-suffering result in joy? (1:11, 15)

#### KEY POINTS, PART 3 – vs. 16-23

- Christ is the Creator of all things.
- Christ existed before creation began.
- All things exist for Christ.
- Christ holds all things together.
- Christ is the head of the church.
- Christ is the beloved of the Father.
- Christ redeemed and reconciled us.

#### vs. 16-23

1. How did Paul describe Christ in this passage?
2. As Savior, what did Christ do for us? Why is this so important?
3. What does preeminence mean, and why is it so significant that Christ was preeminent?
4. Compare our former state (before Christ) with our reconciled reality. (1:20-23).



# YOUR REFLECTIONS

This image shows a full page of blank white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

# THIS WEEK'S PRAYER FOCUS:

SEEKING GOD TO REVEAL WHO HE IS  
AND WHAT HIS WILL IS FOR OUR LIVES.

The definition of revelation is the act of disclosing something not before realized. God's revelation is His disclosure of Himself and His will.

The Lord desires to reveal Himself and His will to all who will seek Him. He invites us to experience Him in NEW ways and to encounter His love at a NEW level. As we position ourselves in prayer the scriptures tell us, "What no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human heart has conceived—God has prepared these things for those who love him. Now God has revealed these things to us by the Spirit..." (1 Corinthians 2:9-10a).

Therefore, let's pray that God would give us the Holy Spirit's revelation of Himself and His will. Take this scripture and personalize it as a prayer for yourself and others as the Lord leads you.

*"Heavenly Father, I keep asking that You, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give me the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that I may know You better. Holy Spirit, I pray that the eyes of my heart may be enlightened so that I may know the hope of Your calling, the wealth of Your glorious inheritance in the saints, and the immeasurable greatness of Your power toward us who believe."* (Ephesians 1:17-19)

God wants to do so much in us and through us. Ask God to show you any areas of your life that you are limiting His incomparably great power.

Read below Titus 3:4-7. Spend a few minutes meditating on this passage. Believe God to reveal Himself to you and use the following journal page to write down what He shows you.

*"But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to His mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. He poured out his Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior so that, having been justified by His grace, we may become heirs with the hope of eternal life."*

As you focus on what God reveals about Himself in this Scripture, spend a few minutes in responsive prayer, praising God for who He is and what He has done for you.

Look expectantly each day this week for how God demonstrates these qualities about Himself in your life and circumstances. He is indeed overflowing with kindness and goodness. He is rich in love and full of mercy! He is a generous God providing all things needed to do His will. Open our eyes, Lord, that we may perceive what You are doing.

# CONTINUED GREATNESS

# 1 CHRONICLES 29:1-5

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

\kī-'noss \

# KAINOS MOMENT

Each week, set aside some time to reflect on this devotional as you prepare for your *Kainos*

## STEPPING OUT BOLDLY IN FAITH FOR GOD TO DO A NEW THING

As we continue on in this *Kainos* journey, let's take a look at Acts 4. To set the stage for any who aren't as familiar with this passage, Peter and John are before the Jewish council called the Sanhedrin. These religious leaders were disturbed that Peter had healed a man who could not walk — and he had healed the man in the name of Jesus.

These religious leaders brought Peter and John in for questioning. (Note: It's thought by many scholars that where they brought Peter and John was the same place where Jesus had been brought to jail prior to His crucifixion. If you have been on an Israel trip before, you might remember going deep underground into the jail cell where it is believed Jesus was kept and tortured prior to the day He was crucified. So Peter and John were brought into this SAME place and faced potentially the SAME fate as Jesus did.) They were asked, "In whose name did you perform this healing?"

Let's read Acts 4:8-13

*"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: 'Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone." Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.'*

*When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were common, ordinary men,*

*they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."*

Now the Sanhedrin ended up letting Peter and John go — because they could not dispute the fact that this man who could not walk had been healed. And there were crowds and crowds of people (five thousand to be exact) who were praising God for this amazing miracle. There was this groundswell of believers accumulating that they could not hold these men in jail any longer.

So Peter and John go back to the people and ask them to pray. There is significant opposition to the ministry of Jesus. They ask God to give them a **boldness** as they speak and as they live. They ask God that He would empower them and embolden them to push back the darkness through their words and actions.

The place where they were meeting shook and they all became filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly.

And then THIS happened...

*"All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them. For those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was given to anyone who had need"*

There is so much to unpack in this passage, but we'll focus in on this: Here's the thing that these early believers had — a mindset of eternity and not a mindset of earth.

The courage, the boldness of Peter and John and what they did before the Sanhedrin is incredible. And that type of bold faith and bold prayers afterwards is what ultimately welled up in such extravagant generosity towards the local church.

See, the Gospel was so RECENT to these early believers. The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus had JUST happened.

A question to ponder: Do you ever feel far away from the Gospel? Do you ever feel like it is something that happened 2,000 years ago and isn't still happening today?

The spreading of the Gospel is urgent. The power of the Gospel is happening right now. Almost every single Sunday at our church, someone at one of our campuses or online (and many weeks it is a LOT of someones) are embracing the power of what Jesus

did for them and IS doing for them and they are choosing to surrender their lives to His Lordship and accept Him as their Savior. It's happening right now. Marriages are being healed, families are being restored, relationships are being reconciled. There is nothing "yester-year" about it. It is happening now!

And if that doesn't transform and renew our mindset into thinking about our stuff and our generosity in a new way, maybe it's time we got closer to the Gospel. Behold, God is doing a NEW thing — TODAY! Maybe it's time to get closer to the good news!

Reflect on your mindset. Do you have more of a mindset of earth or one of eternity? How might God be challenging you to think more recent about the Gospel in a way that impacts how you use your resources and your time more strategically for eternity?

\ kī-'noss \

**KAINOS**



# THE GOSPEL'S GOAL

SUN, OCT 24, 2021 | COLOSSIANS 1:24-2:3

## MEMORY VERSE

*"God wanted to make known among the Gentiles the glorious wealth of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."*

Colossians 1:27 CSB

**READ:** Colossians 1:24-2:3

## INTRO:

Don't you love a mystery? Whether in a novel, play or movie, figuring out the answer to the mystery is always a challenge. Paul writes that a mystery of the ages, "How is one properly related God?" is solved in the person and work of Jesus Christ. What the Old Testament prophets only foreshadowed, Christ revealed in His Person and work.

Geographically, God was not just interested in Israel, but the whole world (John 3:16). Theologically, salvation is not something we do through rituals and sacrifices, but is a free gift purchased by Christ on the cross (Ephesians 2:8-9).

## UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT:

This letter to the Colossians was written to warn believers against a big heresy of this day — the heresy that conflicted with the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Heretics told believers they needed something more than their relationship with Jesus to bring them to a genuine spiritual experience.

The false teachers in Colossae, like the false teachers of our own day, would not deny the importance of Jesus Christ. They would acknowledge His prominence, but not preeminence. In their view, Jesus was one of many beings that came from God and through which men could reach God. It was this claim that Paul spoke against in this passage.

You must remember, however, that the Colossians received this letter from a man — Paul — whom they had never met. This man was in prison, and he was contradicting almost everything they were being taught by other teachers. They knew that Paul had been involved in leading Epaphras (their pastor) to faith in Christ. However, the false teachers in Colossae had been causing doubts in the people's minds and discrediting Paul.

Anticipating this situation, Paul spends some time in this passage writing about himself and explaining his ministry — sharing the gospel, suffering for these Colossians, and interceding for the believers.

Beginning in verse 25, Paul introduces the concept of stewardship, also translated "administration, trusteeship, and commission." The concept is that God has entrusted us with a mission and supplied us with time, talents, and financial resources (1:27). We can accomplish this mission because of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (1:27) and "His strength that works powerfully in me" (1:29).

# EXPLORE AND APPLY

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

### KEY POINTS, PART 1 – vs. 1:24–29

- Paul shares the Gospel.
- Paul recalled for the Colossians their own spiritual experience, including alienation, reconciliation, and their hope in the Gospel.

### vs. 1:24–29

1. How did God's calling motivate Paul to overcome suffering and challenges? (1:24)
2. What are the implications to one of being God's steward (administrator)? (1:25)
3. How does God "make known" the Good News today? (1:27–28)

### KEY POINTS, PART 2 – vs. 2:1–3

- Paul suffers for the Colossians.
- Paul rejoices and intercedes for the Colossians.
- Paul sees his ministry to the Colossians as a stewardship from God.
- When viewed through a biblical worldview, our misery can become our ministry.

### vs. 2:1–3

1. Rather than being discouraged by Paul's imprisonment, the Colossians were to be encouraged. What resources for encouragement does Paul list? (2:2–3)
2. How does understanding Christ's wisdom and knowledge motivate us to mission?

\ kī-'noss \

# YOUR REFLECTIONS

[illegible]

# THIS WEEK'S PRAYER FOCUS:

## REVIVE MY HEART

Because of God's great love for us and His greatness as the One true God, He is worthy of our love. God deserves more than a casual, occasional, or half-hearted love, but our wholehearted devotion.

Spend some time reflecting on how He has shown His great love to you.

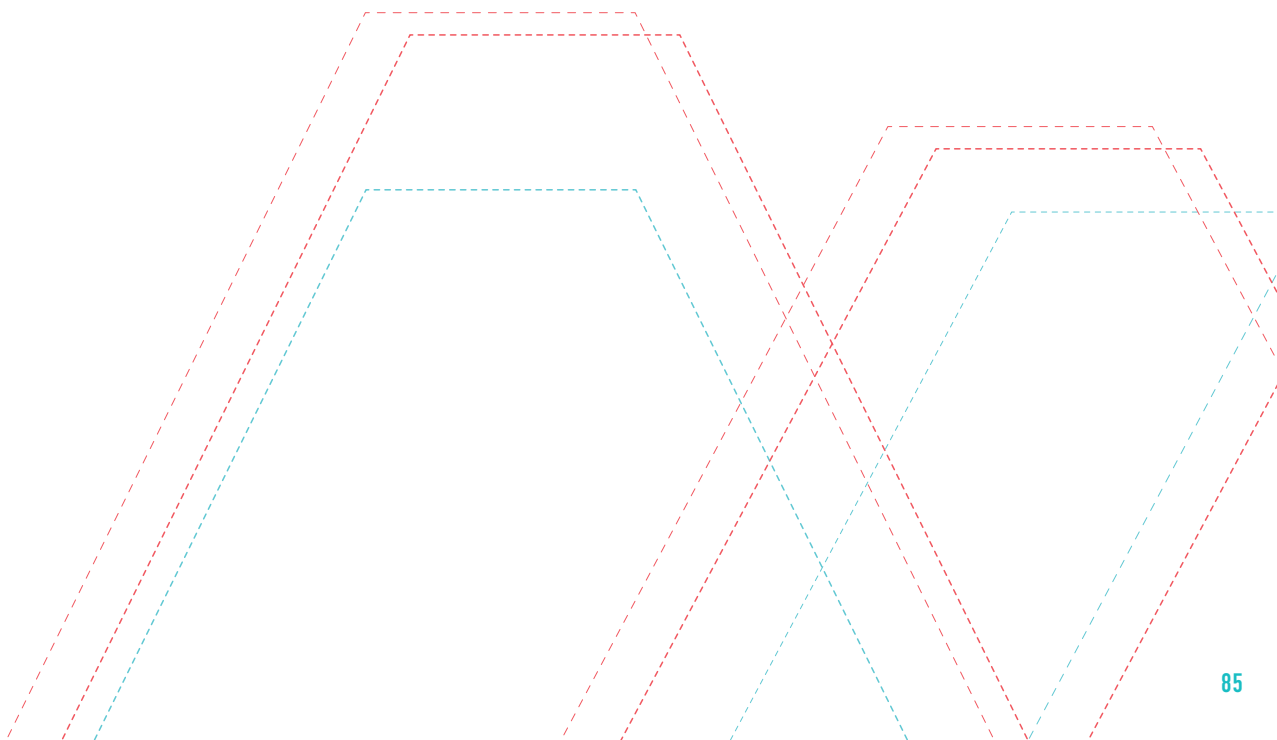
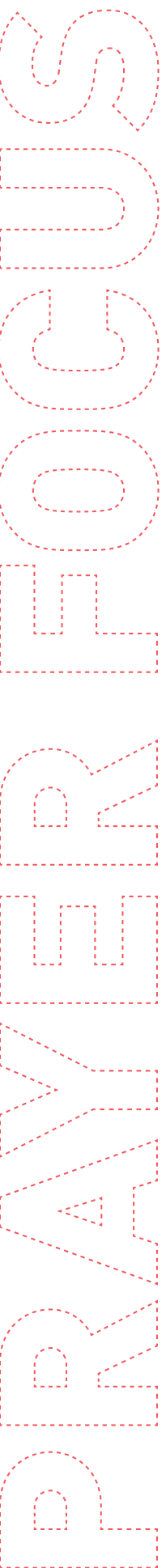
Jesus taught of all the commandments, the most important thing is to *"Love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, with ALL your soul, with ALL your mind and with ALL your strength."* (Mark 12:30; emphasis added)

Ask the Lord to reveal to you the areas of your life where your heart is divided, where you are not seeking His kingdom and righteousness above all other things (Matthew 6:33). Does He have all of you or just part? Do you worship Him every day in every situation or just on Sunday mornings? Are you obeying His commands? Are you seeking to honor Him in your thoughts, words, and actions towards others? Are you holding onto something you know is sin? Now consider journaling to process what He reveals.

Praise God! He has promised, *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1:9)

Spend time confessing your sins and return wholeheartedly to the Lord in these areas of your life.

Rejoice that in Christ you are a NEW creation, *"the old has passed away; behold, the NEW has come"* (2 Corinthians 5:17; emphasis added)



# THE JOY OF GENEROSITY

## 1 CHRONICLES 29:6-10

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

\ kī-'noss \



# KAINOS MOMENT

Each week, set aside some time to reflect on this devotional as you prepare for your *Kainos*

## EMBRACING GOD'S POSITION AND PRIORITY IN OUR LIFE

This *Kainos* journey continues to be a thrilling exploration of both what God is seeking to do THROUGH us as well as what He is seeking to do IN us. As we wrestle with our role as disciples of Jesus, let's look at a passage of scripture in which two men gave to God very differently. Consider the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4:2-5:

*"Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. And Abel also brought an offering to the Lord — fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast."*

Many translations even say in vs 5, 'The Lord accepted Abel's offering but rejected Cain's offering.' A strong statement indeed.

Some key words are found here in this passage. It says, "In the course of time, Cain brought 'some' of the fruits off the soil as an offering to the Lord." In the course of time. As in, not first. But actually quite the opposite of first. After all of the crops had been produced, after everything had been provided to Cain and he could see what had been given to him, then and only then he would give to the Lord. He was essentially a "leftover giver." He gave once everything had been accounted for, and then Scripture says he gave "some." Now here's the interesting thing: We don't know how much he gave — either in percentage or amount. It is possible that the percentage or the amount of his crops could have actually been a larger dollar value than the dollar value of Abel's first and fattest sheep. We don't know because the Scripture doesn't tell us. All we DO know is that Abel gave first, trusting that God would provide, and Cain gave AFTER God had already provided.

Now some of us may not know much about raising livestock, but it's essentially a commission-based job like many of the jobs some of us have today. What if the other sheep that year ended up being no good and died off and did not produce for Abel as those firstborn did? What if they got diseased or stolen before they could produce? He gave the firstborn and the best portions of the meat to the Lord, not knowing what the rest of the year would look like. Shouldn't Abel have ensured that he was ok and taken care of first in an economically uncertain industry like shepherding?

See, the only difference in how those two men gave is that one's giving governed the rest of his economic situation, and the other one's giving was governed by his economic situation. Which are you? Be as honest as you can. God seeks to do a NEW thing at Houston's First, and He doesn't simply seek to do something THROUGH us; He seeks to do something IN us as well. As you have been praying about your *Kainos* commitment, are you truly asking God what first and best would look like for you or for your family? Or are you consulting your spreadsheet of other pre-existing commitments first so that you can give God "some" "once you evaluate the harvest that will be produced.

This *Kainos* journey is not primarily about raising \$93 million dollars. If you feel that, then you've missed the point. This *Kainos* journey is about God doing something IN us as much as it is Him doing something THROUGH us. The commitment card you received for *Kainos* (reference pgs 64-65) is a discipleship tool — a facilitator of this theology of first and new. It is a tool that will cause us to pray about truly acknowledging God is first above all the other priorities in our life and that He seeks to do a NEW work within us. What might He be seeking to do in you?

# THE GOSPEL'S FORGIVENESS

SUN, OCT 31, 2021 | COLOSSIANS 2:4-15

## MEMORY VERSE

*"So then, just as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, being rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and over-flowing with gratitude."*

Colossians 2:6-7 CSB

**READ:** Colossians 2:4-15

## INTRO:

We need to reaffirm that the worldwide pandemic with its accompanying masks, lockdowns, and bans on public gatherings has produced isolation. Loneliness has produced another epidemic of drugs, suicide attempts, and stress.

Jesus Christ resides in us. We do not need to look anywhere else for our treasure or value. Paul writes to the Colossians because these false teachers said that Jesus Himself was inadequate and could not provide all they needed for a full spiritual experience.

Paul tells the Colossians that Jesus is the fullness of God and that they have been given fullness because of their relationship with Jesus. Paul tells them in this chapter not to look for other treasure when the true treasure is already theirs — in Jesus.

## UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT:

As he wrote this letter, Paul feared the Colossian believers would allow themselves to be deceived by people promoting false doctrine (2:9). He struggles in this concern because he knows these people have not yet met him personally and he fears they will not see his teaching with the weight of truth it deserves.

Paul teaches here how to avoid being deceived. Paul's objective is that believers be encouraged as they are united in love and settled in their understanding of the truth. These believers were under attack. However, they were standing strong. When the enemy attacked, the Colossians stood firm. They did not get their truth from the latest popular fads (2:18). They were "rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith" (2:7). The contrast between our former lives (2:13-14) and Christ's triumph (2:14-15) could not be more apparent.

# EXPLORE AND APPLY

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

### KEY POINTS, PART 1 – vs. 4–7

- We need to keep making spiritual progress.
- We should watch out for spiritual pitfalls.
- We need to draw on the things God has given us to gain spiritual strength.
- We need to be rooted in Christ alone.

### vs. 4–7

1. What are some of the descriptions of spiritual progress Paul talked about in this passage? What does each description teach?
2. Have you ever felt that you have stopped growing spiritually?
3. What are some of the consequences of being spiritually stagnant?

### KEY POINTS, PART 2 – vs. 8–15

- Make certain you have a biblical worldview rather than one based on the perspective of popular culture.
- Give thanks for forgiveness, redemption, and reconciliation.
- Understand that Christ's resurrection is the pivotal point not only of world history but also of your salvation.

### vs. 8–15

1. What are some modern equivalents to persuasive "arguments that sound reasonable" (2:4), "philosophy and empty deceit" and "human traditions" (2:8)?
2. Contrast basing one's worldview on the "elements of the world" instead of on Christ (2:8b).
3. How did Christ deliver you from "debt" (2:14) and provide His "triumph" (2:15)?

\ kī-'noss \

**KAINOS**

# YOUR REFLECTIONS

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across its entire width, providing a guide for handwriting or typing. The paper itself is a clean, off-white color.

# THIS WEEK'S PRAYER FOCUS:

## DEMOLISHING STRONGHOLDS

God reveals Himself through His Word and prayer. Anticipate today that He will take you to NEW levels of victory as you seek to obey Him.

2 Corinthians 10:4–5 identifies “strongholds” that can be at work in our lives. These strongholds are the well-fortified pathways of thinking, believing, or behaving that sets itself up against the knowledge of God. Any false thing that exalts itself in our minds can cause us to feel controlled, consumed, and overpowered. The thing about strongholds is they keep us from the NEW life we have been given in Christ Jesus. Praise be to God! He has given us the weapons that have divine power to demolish every stronghold.

*“Since the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments and every proud thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:4–5)*

Will you talk with God and ask Him to show you any stronghold that is holding you captive: fear, worry, doubt, idolatry, addictions...? Ask Him if your desire for comfort, security, or fulfillment is found in any other source than Him alone.

Ephesians 6:17–18 teaches us about the weapons of divine power. *“Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit—which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints.”*

Thank God for the NEW things He is revealing to you and spend time confessing any specific patterns of sin operating in your life. Ask Him to show you the Scriptures to pray and gain victory over these areas of your life.

*“The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock where I seek refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.” (Psalm 18:2)*

God Himself is our stronghold, He is the fortress that keeps us secure!

**Pray through these passages to encourage you:**

- Ephesians 6:10–18
- Galatians 5:1
- Philippians 4:6,19
- Proverbs 3:5–6

# IT'S ALREADY HIS

**1 CHRONICLES 29:14-17**

\ kī-'noss \



# KAINOS MOMENT

Each week, set aside some time to reflect on this devotional as you prepare for your *Kainos*

## GENEROSITY AS A CONDUIT OF GOD'S GRACE

Chapters 8 and 9 of Paul's second letter to the Early Church at Corinth is one of the longest continuous teachings on giving in the Bible. If you haven't read through both of those chapters in their entirety in a while, please do so. We won't be able to do them justice here in this *Kainos* Moment, but we're going to focus in on a key part near the end of chapter 9.

To give the context in this chapter, the Apostle Paul was writing to the church at Corinth about an offering they are being asked to give in order to help some of the poorer churches in Jerusalem. As you may know, Jerusalem was across the other side of the Mediterranean Sea from Corinth, and so these early believers were being asked to give to another church whom they would likely never meet and who was quite different than them in many ways.

Rather than spend loads of time on the rationale of why they should give to these churches in Jerusalem, however, Paul instead spends his time writing not about what they are giving TO but rather what they should be giving FROM. He seeks to disciple their hearts. He is far more concerned about the hearts and discipleship of the givers doing the giving than the gifts themselves. You see this all throughout chapter 8 as well as chapter 9, but let's pick it up right here in chapter 9 with verses 10-11:

*"Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God."*

Let's reflect for a moment and focus in on verse 11. You will be enriched in every way so that — what? You can feel more secure? No. So that you can feel more accomplished? No. So that you can have everything you desire? No. Paul says, "You will be enriched in every way so that you can be GENEROUS on EVERY OCCASION." We are blessed to be a blessing.

Paul continues on in verses 12-15:

*"This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of this service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"*

Paul is sharing that while this giving is certainly going to supply the needs of the Lord's people, i.e. the poorer churches in Jerusalem, that there is actually more going on here. See, generosity isn't merely paying for the mission. Generosity actually is the mission. Generosity accompanied by a gospel confession is a way of others experiencing God's grace flowing through us. In verse 14 Paul writes, "In their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you." It's not about us. It's not about our great frugality or even our great heart for generosity. It's about God's grace flowing THROUGH us that is the point.

So reflect on this question: What is the WHY behind your generosity? Are you merely giving TO a mission that you are funding? Or are you giving FROM a heart that is being changed by the transformative power of the Gospel, allowing others to hear about that "why" as you give? This *Kainos* initiative is an opportunity — a powerful moment — for others to see the NEW THING God is doing in us and through us, as we are conduits of His grace.

# THE GOSPEL'S FREEDOM

SUN, NOV 7, 2021 | COLOSSIANS 2:16–23

## MEMORY VERSE

*"If you died with Christ to the elements of this world, why do you live as if you still belong to the world? Why do you submit to regulations...?"*

Colossians 2:20 CSB

**READ:** Colossians 2:16–23

## INTRO:

On what do you base your value? Culture tends to lean into outward appearance: your significance comes from the clothes you wear, the car you drive, social media clout, or experiences. However, the Bible teaches that our value is based on our status "in Christ" and all else becomes tools and resources to accomplish the mission He has placed before us.

So, Paul writes to the Colossians "don't let anyone judge you" (2:16). Only our Ultimate Judge, God, can adequately know us and judge us by His standards. Back during the culture of greed in the 80s, a popular t-shirt/bumper sticker read "He who dies with the most toys, wins." A realist followed that up with "He who dies with the most toys is still dead." In the parable of the rich fool who focused on accumulation (Luke 12:16–21), Jesus concludes with "You fool! This very night your life is demanded of you. And the things you have prepared — whose will they be?"

We cannot base our life's priorities on measuring up to the standards of popular culture. Impressing others is not our life's goal. Jesus said, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you." (Matthew 6:33)

## UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT:

The false teachers in Colossae seemed to be teaching a "Jesus plus" heresy: Jesus plus ritual (2:16–17), Jesus plus philosophy (2:18), or Jesus as an add-on rather than the Head of the Body (2:19). In other words, they taught that Jesus was insufficient to meet our basic needs, whether spiritual, physical, or emotional. In fact, we find elsewhere that these early false teachers were preoccupied with material things. Peter described them as lustful, sensual, adulterers, with "hearts trained in greed" (2 Peter 2:14).

Beware when anyone says that "Jesus is insufficient, the Bible is unreliable, or the Church is unsustainable." In our culture that rejects absolute truth and wants to define morality as a personal choice, we must not only believe God's truth but also walk in it.

In contrast, Paul affirmed Christians are free from the world's system of judging value. We should not subject ourselves to legalistic rules that others use to determine "maturity." He made a clear distinction between God's truth and human traditions. While legalism, asceticism, vain philosophy, and human traditions have "a reputation of wisdom" (2:23), they have no practical value in achieving spiritual growth.

# EXPLORE AND APPLY

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

### KEY POINTS, PART 1 – vs. 16–19

- Don't judge your value by other's opinions.
  - Pseudo-religion may be worse than no religion.
  - If Christ is not Lord of all, He's not Lord at all.
1. How do people judge your spirituality today?  
How do measures used by church members differ from those outside the church?
  2. List some things that the world considers "spiritual," but are unbiblical.
  3. What are some day-to-day aspects of living in which we neglect to let Jesus be the Head?

### KEY POINTS, PART 2 – vs. 20–23

- Dying with Christ spiritually provides ultimate freedom in the physical realm.
  - Doctrines of God trump doctrines of humans.
  - Not everything that appears spiritual has practical value toward maturing spiritually.
1. How have we died with Christ to "the elements of this world?" (2:20)
  2. What are some "doctrines of men" that we confuse with God's truth?
  3. Why do some things have an appearance of wisdom but, in fact, have no practical value to the Christian?

# YOUR REFLECTIONS

This image shows a full page of blank white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for writing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# THIS WEEK'S PRAYER FOCUS:

## STRETCHING OUR FAITH

*"Teach me your way, Lord, and I will live by your truth. Give me an undivided mind to fear your name." (Psalm 86:11)*

Make this your opening prayer today. Spend time reflecting on God's faithfulness in your life. "Recount the answered prayers, the miracles He has done, and all of the ways that He has blessed you. When we recall His faithfulness in our lives, our faith is spurred on!"

As a church, we are entering into a NEW season of joining God in His activity in our commission, our community, and our compassion. This will require each of us to seek the Lord to know our part. Let's allow God to stretch our faith in NEW ways. How great it will be to see with our own eyes what He does as we put our trust in Him alone!

Prayerfully read the following scriptures:

*"Everyone must appear with a gift suited to his means, according to the blessing the Lord your God has given you." (Deuteronomy 16:7)*

*"'Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house. Test me in this way,' says the Lord of Armies. 'See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure.'" (Malachi 3:10)*

*"The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." (2 Corinthians 9:6)*

Ask the Lord to show you how He wants to stretch your faith and bring you into NEW territory in your journey with Him. Is there a way that you have held back what belongs to Him? Ask Him to give you courage to trust Him with all the resources He has entrusted to you so that you can experience a NEW awareness of His sufficiency.

Now take a step of faith. Believe God at His word. Believe He is who He says He is and that He will do what He says He will do. He does not change.

What does God say He will do if we bring our resources to Him? He will throw open the floodgates of Heaven. What we release into His hands, He pours back so much we cannot contain it! Floodgates are designed to regulate and control the passage of something. Consider that there are blessings held back in Heaven intended for us.

NEW

# TIME TO PARTY!

**1 CHRONICLES 29:20-22**

\ kī-'noss \



# KAINOS MOMENT

Each week, set aside some time to reflect on this devotional as you prepare for your *Kainos*

## GENEROSITY IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY

Randy Alcorn may be one of the most widely-read and biblically strong writers on the theology of eternal perspective. Many of us have likely read his piece *Treasure Principle* and possibly also his larger piece *Money, Possessions, and Eternity*. (If you haven't read either of these books, now would be a good time to load them onto your Kindle or pick up a hard copy from the bookstore!)

Both of these two books speak to the biblical truth that our life on earth is but a vapor but yet can have eternal significance if we'll let it. Both the Apostle Paul and Jesus spoke quite a bit about eternity, and while there is no percentage guidance on how much of our resources we should save on earth (the 10/10/80 plan isn't in the Bible!), there is a ton of principled guidance in Scripture on how we should think about our earthly resources in light of eternity.

Let's take a look at 1 Timothy 6 and begin with verses 6-10:

*"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."*

It's important to note here that Paul does not say money is a root of all kinds of evil; but rather that the LOVE of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Pastor Tim Keller often says, "Money isn't your idol; but money reveals what your idols are." If that were true about you, what would your money say that you value?

Paul continues on in, encouraging Timothy to flee from an earthly perspective and embrace an eternal perspective. He writes in verses 11-12:

*"But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses."*

One of the lines on the *Kainos* commitment card says, "Gifts from my/our stored resources." God is challenging ALL of us to consider what those might be. What resources that God has already given us — savings, possessions, stock, property are we holding onto for earthly purposes but could be better utilized if released to God for eternal purposes?

To be clear, having wealth isn't wrong or bad. Not in the slightest. Paul says to not put your hope in wealth; he never says not to have it. Wealth can be a powerful tool for the Kingdom when handled rightly and in a godly fashion. Paul writes in verses 17-19:

*"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life."*

See, your home might be the largest home on the block or the smallest home on the block, and it doesn't matter. The question isn't "How large is your home?" but rather, "Are you stewarding your home? Are you honoring God with your home?" Are people IN your home on a regular basis who

don't yet know Jesus? Are you leveraging your home as a tool for eternity and not just for earth? You might have one car or you might have five cars, but do you have people IN your cars who don't know Jesus? Do you lend people your car(s) who don't know Jesus as a way of ministering to them and showing them God's love?

You might have a large savings account or a small savings account or NO savings account, and it doesn't matter — but are you asking God, "How can I use what you have given me to invest in the Church and in eternity and point others to you?"

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 8:12 when he is speaking to the early church in Corinth about generosity, *"For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have."*

Too many of us are too focused on what we do NOT have, and it is keeping us from honoring God with what we DO have. God has given each of us some very specific things — some very specific resources — and He wants us to use them for His glory and the expanding of His kingdom? Are you? How better could we be doing this as we think about our *Kainos* commitment? Does our *Kainos* commitment reflect this?

# WE ARE AN UNFINISHED PEOPLE

SUN, NOV 14, 2021 | COLOSSIANS 3:1-17

## MEMORY VERSE

*"Let the word of Christ dwell richly among you, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."*

Colossians 3:16-17 CSB

**READ:** Colossians 3:1-17

## INTRO:

The first two chapters of Colossians are mostly focused on doctrine, and in this chapter, Paul focuses on the practical application of the doctrines he has been teaching. The pagan religions of Paul's day said little or nothing about this — about personal morality. In the false teaching doctrine, a worshipper could bow before an idol, put his offering on the altar, and go back to live the same old life of sin. What a person believed had no direct relationship with how he behaved, and no one would condemn a person for his behavior.

So, the Christian faith brought in a whole new way of thinking — that what we believe has a very close connection with how we behave! Essentially, if we share the life of Christ, we must follow His example. He cannot live in us by His Spirit and yet permit us to behave in sin. In this section, Paul gives the Colossians instructions on how to truly live in Christ.

## UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT:

As the false teachers attacked the supremacy of Jesus, they made Him less than fully God and attempted to seduce believers into thinking that genuine spirituality is found in obtaining more knowledge or keeping more rules. Paul told us something different in chapter 2 of this letter — that Jesus IS fully God — and that as Christ followers we ARE given fullness in Him. Now in chapter 3, we learn the truth about our spirituality as Christ followers.

Paul tells these believers they have been "raised with Christ" (3:1). The reference here is to how we identify with Jesus in His death, burial, and resurrection. Paul refers to this earlier in chapter 2, vs. 12-13. Because of our identification with Jesus, we have been granted new life, detailed by Paul in this section. Paul tells us that since we have been raised, we are to "set our minds on things above" (3:2). In contrast to false teachers who did not teach the proper preeminence of Jesus, Paul reminds us that Jesus is seated in the position of honor, majesty, and authority.

Becoming "heavenly minded" requires us to "put to death" certain worldly pursuits (3:5-9) and to "put on the new self...according to the image of the Creator" (3:10); this, in Latin, is Imago Dei, the image of God which means our identity is not in a religion, race, color, or language but "in Christ" (3:11).

Worship has been defined as our mind's attention and heart's affection being tuned to God. One of the primary barriers to worship is "greed" (covetousness) which is equated with "idolatry" (3:5). As Jesus said, "You cannot serve both God and money" (Matthew 6:24b). Jesus provided the basis for this dichotomy in a previous verse, "for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21).

***You may think that God is not interested in raising money because He owns it all. However, God is vitally interested in raising His children in the image of Christ. As Randy Alcorn said, "Generosity is God's way of driving a stake into the heart of the spiritual monster called materialism."***

# EXPLORE AND APPLY

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

### KEY POINTS, PART 1 – vs. 1-11

- Seek heavenly things.
- We died with Christ.
- We live in Christ.
- We are raised with Christ.
- We are hidden in Christ.
- We are glorified in Christ.

1. What does Paul teach about our position in Christ as a believer?
2. What is one aspect of your life that has changed since you became a believer?
3. Did you notice that Paul equates greed with idolatry? Why do you think he does this?

### KEY POINTS, PART 2 – vs. 12-17

- Embrace the grace of Christ.
- You are one of God's chosen ones.
- God set you apart.
- God loves you.
- God has forgiven you.
- Let the Peace of Christ, the Word of Christ, and the Name of Christ dwell in you richly.

1. What qualities does God want us to have, and what does each mean?
2. What is the evidence of letting Christ's peace rule in your heart? Do you feel that this currently characterizes you? Be as honest as you can.
3. How can we tell that Christ's Word is dwelling in us? Would others say this about you if asked?

\ kī-'noss \

# YOUR REFLECTIONS

[illegible]

# THIS WEEK'S PRAYER FOCUS:

## THE LORD PROVIDES

*"And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19*

Let's spend time acknowledging all the good things that have come from His hand for His purposes. Enter His presence today with thanksgiving for all He has entrusted to you. Make a list of all He has put into your hands and how He has supplied all your needs. Be careful not to think only of material things, but also spiritual blessings such as understanding, abilities, assignments, the Gospel, and people.

When Paul was encouraging generous living in 2 Corinthians 9: 8,10-11, he reminds us that *"And God is able to make every grace overflow to you, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work...Now the One who provides seed for the sower and bread for food will also provide and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all generosity, which produces thanksgiving to God through us."*

Because of God's generosity to us, we can express our gratitude to Him through embracing a lifestyle of generosity. Do you believe God wants to bring you into a NEW level of living and giving?

*"Look, I am about to do something NEW; even now it is coming. Do you not see it? Indeed, I will make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert." Isaiah 43:19 (emphasis added)*

Regardless of your current reality, God wants to do a NEW work in you to accomplish His purposes and plan through you.

Meditate on these scriptures today, linger with the Lord in prayer, offer up these resources He has provided you and ask Him how He wants you to use what He has entrusted to you.

(Prayer Guide content provided by  
Raye Anne Edmonds & Dana Grindal)





\ kī-'noss \

**KAINOS**

