

BUILT TO LAST



THE RIDGE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

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We are getting ready to go on an exciting journey together as a church. Over the last two years, God has blessed us with amazing growth. We have tripled in almost every area! Growth is a gift from God. For a reason only God knows, He continues to trust us with more and more people.

To continue to capitalize on the growth God is putting in front of us, we are going on a two-year journey called **BUILT TO LAST**. On the following pages are the pillars of **BUILT TO LAST** that I believe God is calling us to pursue.

Why should we go on this journey? We believe the solution for all the brokenness, pain and hurt in our communities is life-giving local churches. The local church is God's plan for capturing people's hearts and turning them toward Him. Changed hearts mean changed lives. A changed life is a person who is **BUILT TO LAST**.

My challenge for you is this: Consider what it means to make the kind of investment that will last beyond you. What God is calling us to do is big and bold. My prayer is that we respond to His vision to make an impact that lasts.

Thank you for being a part of what God is doing at The Ridge. I look forward to an exciting season together.

God Bless,

Mark Weigt

> MOMENTS AT THE RIDGE

JANUARY

Mark and Donna Weigt moved from Southern California to start The Ridge.

MARCH

Launch team of 12 people met for the first time.

OCTOBER

First service at The Ridge Cinema in New Berlin.

JUNE

Raised \$28,000 in one day to build a church and feeding center in the Dominican Republic.

FEBRUARY

Moved from the cinema to Whitnall High School with average attendance of 500 people.

MARCH

450 people generously committed 2.2 million in our Crazy campaign.

JANUARY

Closed on the Greenfield Walmart space and renovations began.

MARCH

1,100 people attended our opening weekend services in the renovated Walmart space on Easter Sunday.

SEPTEMBER

Average attendance exceeds 1,400.

DECEMBER

Four Christmas Eve services drew 3,000 people.

MARCH

Added a fourth service.

MAY

First "A Night to Remember" prom.

JUNE

A record 128 people were baptized in one day.

2006

2007

2010

2011

2013

2014

2015



419 people baptized since we moved into our campus

\$597,000 given away to date

502 people currently serving

1,354 adults and kids currently attending each weekend

DID YOU KNOW?

Only 20% of churches are growing
and of that, average growth is less than 5%. Our growth is 13.1%!

BUILT ^{TO} LAST

STRENGTHEN

OUR CURRENT FOUNDATION - \$3.4 M



➤ We have tripled in growth over the last two years. We want to make sure that we have the proper ministry budgets and staff to train leaders and create systems needed to keep momentum.

STRENGTHEN

THROUGH MULTIPLICATION - \$800,000



➤ New churches and campuses reach a higher percentage of unchurched people than existing ones. This is why we are launching two new campuses - an online campus and a physical location approximately 15-20 minutes away from our current campus.

\$6 MILION OVER 2 YEARS

STRENGTHEN

THE NEXT GENERATION - \$1.2 M



➤ Because of our current space limitations, we need to expand the kids' area so we can keep growing. The long-term health of a church is directly related to the growth and life change happening in the kids and students area. They are the future.

STRENGTHEN

THOSE IN NEED - \$600,000



➤ We want to be known as a church that loves our community. Over the next two years, we are going to unleash a wave of generosity to help those in need locally and globally.



STRENGTHEN

OUR CURRENT FOUNDATION - **\$3.4 M**

RESOURCE a proper ministry budget and staff to keep pace with growth.

CREATE leadership development systems to properly train our leaders.

EQUIP ministry teams with the proper technology needed to do ministry.

GOALS

STAFF → 1 full-time staff per 125 attendees

GROUPS → 80% of attendees actively participating in a group

SERVING → 70% of attendees actively serving on a team

BAPTISM → 200+ baptisms per year

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT → 1 leader for every 10 attendees



DID YOU KNOW?

An average church has one full-time staff person per 125 people.
The Ridge has only seven full-time employees (a 1 to 193 ratio).



STRENGTHEN

THROUGH MULTIPLICATION - \$800,000

LAUNCH an online campus with online pastor and online Ridge groups.

LAUNCH a second physical campus within a 15 minute drive.

CAMPUS: A place to gather and experience The Ridge outside of the current Ridge Campus in Greenfield. Think "one church with several locations." Same message, same feel, same welcoming approach...it's everything you love about The Ridge, just in another location.

ONLINE CAMPUS: A gathering place for people to experience a Ridge service electronically in real-time via a smartphone, tablet, laptop or smart TV. The vast majority of people visit a church online BEFORE visiting in person so an online campus is critical to encourage new visitors to try out one of our physical campuses. And, an online campus also provides our current Ridge attenders an opportunity to connect with The Ridge while traveling.

DID YOU KNOW?




- New churches and/or new campuses reach more unchurched people than established churches do.
- More than 70% of individuals under the age of 40 would rather live without television than without the internet.
- Over 600 people a month use the Ridge App to listen to and/or watch our messages.



STRENGTHEN

THE NEXT GENERATION - \$1.2 M



DOUBLE the children's area to accommodate growth.

ADD a special needs room and special needs ministry teams.

PROVIDE needed technology and structure to ensure the safety of our kids.

DID YOU KNOW?



- The day we moved in to our current building was the day we outgrew our kids space.
- We serve 280+ kids each Sunday in Ridge Kids and 60+ students in Ridge Student Community.
- Approximately 1 out of 20 Ridge Kids have special needs.
- 85 percent of all people who accept Jesus do so before the age of 18!



STRENGTHEN
THOSE IN NEED - **\$600,000**



THROUGH RESTORE, OUR CULTURE OF SERVING, WE WILL PUT OUR FAITH INTO ACTION TO:

SUPPORT TWO CHURCH PLANTS FINANCIALLY

- Locally - a multi-ethnic church in Wauwatosa through Stadia.
- Globally - a church plant with an international partner.

INVEST IN NEXT GENERATION

- Locally - school partnerships and child focused organizations.
- Globally - Compassion International Child sponsorships.

TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES

- Locally - “A Night to Remember” special needs prom, Live Big serve week and LoveMKE a multi-church serving initiative focused on families in need.
- Globally - Deepen current relationships with GO Ministries in the Dominican Republic and develop new holistic, international partners.

DID YOU KNOW?



- The Ridge gives away more than 10% of all tithes and offerings it receives.
- Stadia has planted more than 235 churches in the US and more than 90 churches in South America.
- Wisconsin has more than 3,000+ homeless families.
- 87% of people in Milwaukee do NOT attend a church.

> ONE FUND INITIATIVE

You may have been part of church campaigns in the past that asked you 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 your regular offering to the "General Fund." The **BUILT TO LAST** initiative is different.

The **BUILT TO LAST** initiative is about the one mission we're on as a church - helping people find and follow God. This simply means there will be one fund to which we give generously to at The Ridge.

For the next two years, our **BUILT TO LAST** generosity initiative will increase our one fund and allow us to make an impact that lasts in our community and beyond.



NEXT STEPS TOTAL COMMITMENT \$6 MILLION OVER TWO YEARS

SO HERE'S WHAT WE ARE ASKING OF YOU

PRAY

First and foremost we are asking that you pray and seek God's leading on what He is asking of you. Prepare your heart to hear from Him and then listen to what He says.

DISCUSS

Talk with your spouse, your family and your Ridge Group about what this commitment will mean for this next exciting season of your life.

COMMIT

Please mark your calendar for **Commitment Sunday, November 15** and prepare to experience an incredible worship service that will forever be remembered as a defining moment for our church and for your own faith. We are asking that you make a sacrificial commitment to radical generosity – whatever it is that God leads you to do. Follow His leading – nothing more, nothing less. It is an awesome God that we serve and He is going to show up in huge ways.

BUILT TO LAST JOURNEY

The **BUILT TO LAST** Journey is a tool designed to help a person move from money being their God to money being a tool for God's Kingdom.

The **BUILT TO LAST** Journey focuses on behaviors and attitudes of our hearts rather than on amounts or percentages.



FIRST-TIME GIVER

This type of giver is someone who decides to give for the first time. This is someone who decides to give something and trust God and the leaders of the Church with this gift.



CONSISTENT GIVER

This type of giver is someone who decides to give something and to give it on a consistent basis. This often requires planning, and sometimes this might be a reason for someone to set up recurring gifts online or to become disciplined with giving through regular envelopes or checks.

Each step of the **BUILT TO LAST** Journey represents growth in a lifestyle of generosity and sacrifice. These are not steps you slowly ascend to get to God, but simply a way to evaluate your growth in generosity. Scripture encourages us to grow in every facet of our walk with Jesus, including the grace of giving. (2 Corinthians 8:7)



INTENTIONAL GIVER

This type of giver begins asking questions like, "Why am I giving more to my cell phone bill than I am giving to God? Should I be giving to God more than I give for my mortgage each month?" This giver starts to make their giving an intentional choice that reflects how they feel about it in relation to other things they spend their money on.



LEGACY GIVER

A Legacy Giver is no longer asking the question, "God, how much are you asking me to give?" A Legacy Giver is asking the question, "God, how much are you asking me to keep?" Much like a Sacrificial Giver makes a commitment that will govern his/her monthly and annual decisions, a Legacy Giver makes a lifetime or longer-term giving commitment that governs his/her larger decisions like homes, cars, investments and the like.



SACRIFICIAL GIVER

This type of giver begins to ask the question, "Am I giving in a way that changes me? Am I giving in a way that causes my lifestyle to be different to reflect the transformation Jesus is making in me?" A Sacrificial Giver's commitment to giving actually governs the rest of his/her lifestyle. A Sacrificial Giver has a giving commitment that is "larger than their current situation" so that they have to adjust the rest of their expenditures to meet that commitment.

> YOUR COMMITMENT

COMMITMENT
SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 15

GIFT CHART \$6 M OVER TWO YEARS

GIFTS NEEDED	GIFT LEVEL	ANNUAL GIFT	MONTHLY GIFT	GIFT LEVEL TOTAL
1	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$20,833	\$500,000
1	\$250,000	\$125,000	\$10,417	\$250,000
2	\$150,000	\$75,000	\$6,250	\$300,000
4	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$400,000
7	\$75,000	\$37,500	\$3,125	\$525,000
10	\$65,000	\$32,500	\$2,708	\$650,000
15	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$750,000
18	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$1,250	\$540,000
30	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$1,042	\$750,000
45	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$417	\$450,000
48	\$7,500	\$3,750	\$313	\$360,000
50	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$208	\$250,000
MANY	\$2,500	\$1,250	\$104	\$275,000
				\$6,000,000

Every time you give to The Ridge, December 2015-December 2017, your gift will go towards **BUILT TO LAST**.

Your total commitment includes your annual giving, plus your expanded generosity to **BUILT TO LAST** over a period of two years from December 2015 to December 2017.

\$ _____ What I/We normally give in a year

+

\$ _____ My/Our expanded annual generosity for Built to Last.

=

\$ _____ x2 YEARS = \$ _____

+

Gifts from my/our stored resources \$ _____

↓

MY/OUR TWO YEAR COMMITMENT
DEC 2015-DEC 2017 \$ _____

BUILT to LAST

STUDY GUIDE

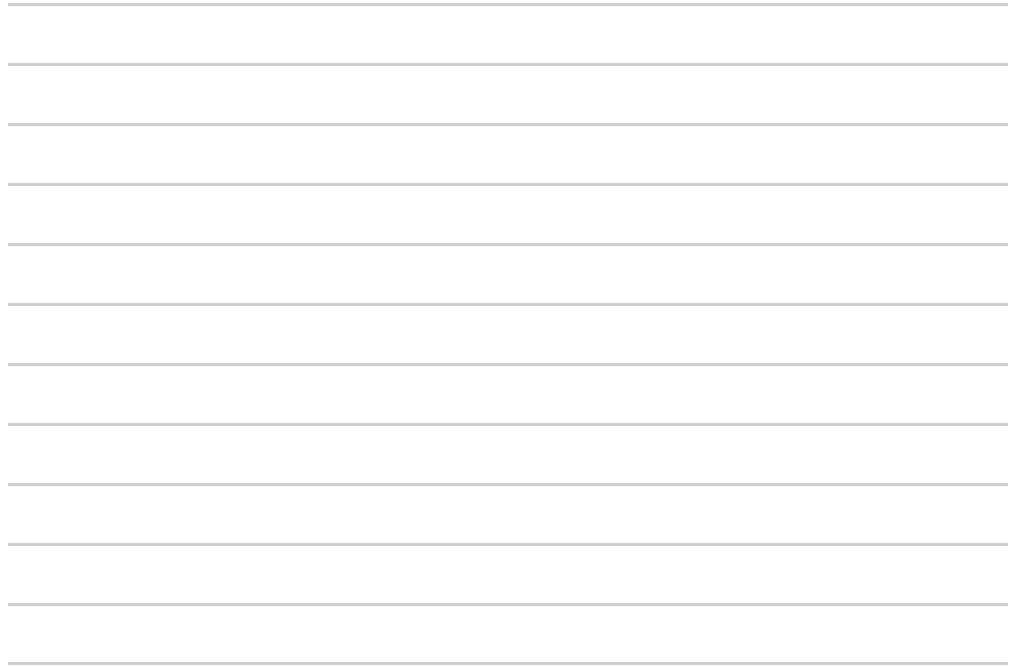
> HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

BY YOURSELF

Through the next four weeks, devote a few minutes each weekday to read the suggested verses from the reading guide along with the devotional content and pray. The most important part of your time is reading the Bible, reflecting on what you read and journaling in the pages provided. The cool part is that the entire Ridge Community Church will be doing this together for the next four weeks. (Consider joining one of our **BUILT TO LAST** Short-Term Groups by stopping by our Resource Center or visiting theridgecc.com/builttolast.)

WITH A GROUP

We were never meant to go on this journey alone. Being a part of a small group at The Ridge is one of the most important aspects of your spiritual growth. We hope you will use the next four weeks to meet with a small group of people who also want to be “**BUILT TO LAST**.” Each week has a section designated to be used as part of a group. If you have never been in a small group before, this is a perfect time to join. To find a group, stop by the Resource Center, email groups@theridgecc.com or visit theridgecc.com/builttolast.



WEEK 1 - VISION

GROUP DISCUSSION

Over the course of the next four weeks we are going to go on a journey that will challenge you in many areas of your life. We encourage you to stay committed to continuing on this journey with us and as you do, it is our prayer that you will find yourself not only challenged but also inspired to build a life that lasts.

As you read through the accounts of Jesus' life you can't escape this simple but often overlooked question, Why would Jesus spend so much time with people who were clearly not God fearing to the neglect of the more religious? As we explore Luke 15 to find the answer to this question, we'll uncover the driving force behind our church's past, present and future direction.

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. What is something of value that you lost? What were the emotions you felt when you realized you had lost it? How long did you look for it?

2. What are some things in your life that you value currently? How would your life look different without those things?

KEY POINTS FOR WEEK 1

- God values you
- Establishing value of something
- Building to last requires building with materials that last

LOST THINGS MATTER - READ LUKE 15:1-7 (NIV)

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and

WEEK 1 - VISION

GROUP DISCUSSION

neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

"Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

REFLECTION QUESTION 1

What are your initial thoughts and observations from these verses?

ESTABLISHING VALUE

The value of something determines the time we give to searching for it, the energy we give to searching for it, and the price we are willing to pay to retrieve it.

REFLECTION QUESTION 2

Why do you think Jesus used three examples of "lost items"? What does Luke 15 show us about how much God values those who are disconnected from Him?

Who do you know that is disconnected from God whom you would love to begin to find and follow Him?

READ LUKE 19:10

"For the Son of Man came to seek and save what was lost"

Jesus clearly affirms His mission in this verse shortly after telling the parables in Luke 15. A mission tells us what we are called to do. A vision tells us what the world will look like when our mission is accomplished.

- The Ridge Mission Statement is “Helping People Find and Follow God”
- The Ridge Vision Statement is “To build churches that transform families in Southeastern Wisconsin and beyond”

REFLECTION QUESTION 3

What would our family, community, and world look like if we at The Ridge were passionately pursuing this mission and vision for the next two years? What role can you play in helping?

BUILDING TO LAST

As we explore what it means to live in a way that is “Built to Last” we understand that this requires a common vision for where God is leading our lives and The Ridge over the next two years. The people of God are at their best when they share a vision and work together passionately and expectantly toward that vision. Today is your chance to prayerfully consider the vision that God has for The Ridge, your Ridge Group, and for you.

REFLECTION QUESTION 4

Have you considered what God’s mission and vision for you might be? How does that connect with the mission and vision of The Ridge? How can this group pursue this mission together?

READ LUKE 6:46-49

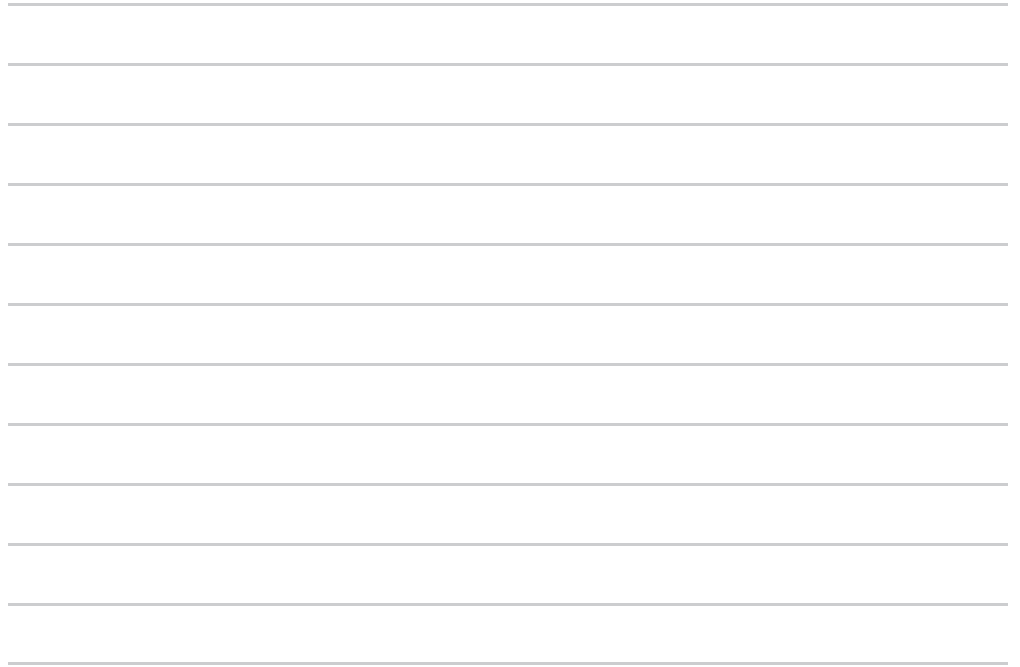
“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”

REFLECTION QUESTION 5

What does Built to Last mean to you? What behaviors and attitudes need to change to do so? How can this group help?



MESSAGE NOTES



WEEK 2 - TRANSFORMATION

GROUP DISCUSSION

God is asking us to come to Him so that He can transform us in such a way that we can be all in for the mission, for our vision, and to the ends of the earth. Where might that begin for you?

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The idea of transformation sometimes seems rather grandiose – as if God needs to radically change who we currently are in order for us to be more like Him. The truth is that sometimes transformation comes through multiple small transformations within us – transformational choices of sorts. Do you resonate with this? Are you averse to transformation? Do you feel like you have already been transformed?
2. What do you believe about transformation? Do you believe that we are transformed by the renewing of our mind in Christ?
3. What does transformation look like as it relates to our giving?

KEY POINTS FOR WEEK 2

- What we have is not our own
- Jesus desires for it to cost us something when we follow Him
- We worry and spend money on needless things. Matthew 6:25-34
- Generosity has the power to transform how we relate to others and how others relate to God. Acts 2:42-47
- When we are new in Christ, we no longer live for ourselves; we live for Him. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

WHAT WE HAVE IS NOT OUR OWN

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-12

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you—a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds

WEEK 2 - TRANSFORMATION

GROUP DISCUSSION

of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant—then when you eat and are satisfied, be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

What we have is not our own. We often just take the first part of this passage without the second part. The second part of this passage reminds us that the things we have were given to us by God and yet so often we forget the Source of our possessions. We criticize the Church and other of God's people when they ask us to give, citing things such as, "Don't they know how hard I worked for this?" or "Didn't they just ask us for something last week?" This not only shows our inability to recognize from Whom our blessings come from, but it also shows our lack of respect for those whom God has put in authority over us in the local church. Do we really feel that way? Do we really doubt and question their ability to ask for and utilize God's resources for the furthering of His Kingdom. Our thoughts and actions might suggest that....

REFLECTION QUESTION 1

It is often said in teachings on giving, "God owns it all." Do you believe this? How does this truth play out in your life currently? Be specific.

JESUS DESIRES FOR IT TO COST US SOMETHING WHEN WE FOLLOW HIM

Read Luke 9:18-27

Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "God's Messiah." Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. "Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

Jesus desires for it to cost us something when we follow Him. He knows that in order for us to truly follow Him, it will cost

us something. Often when we think about giving and the Church, we get frustrated or cynical because we want it to not cost us as much as “they” are asking it to. We want things to fit into our box of what we feel like giving and the Church should be. Our calibration of how we think about our giving should begin from a place of recognizing who Jesus is and that He is asking us to take up our cross daily and follow Him.

REFLECTION QUESTION 2

If we’re honest, we sometimes don’t want it to cost us anything when God or the Church asks us to sacrifice. We would prefer for it to be easy because we’re already doing so much. We serve a lot, we give a lot, and we pray a lot. But our sacrifice is nothing compared to what Jesus did for us on the cross. Are you ready to listen to God to see what He might be saying that He wants you to sacrifice for Him in this season so that you can be BUILT TO LAST in your generosity?

WE WORRY AND SPEND MONEY ON NEEDLESS THINGS

Read Matthew 6:25-34 (NIV)

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than

they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

We worry and spend money on needless things. Money isn’t our idol. Money reveals what our idols are. An idol is a false treasure which we place our hope in, and we are treasuring things above God Himself when we decide to place our treasure in them. What do you worry about and spend money on unnecessarily?

Clothes to make you beautiful or handsome? Special types of food for every situation to prove that you are ‘healthy’ or a ‘foodie?’ Or do you spend money on security because you want to have control over the future? Jesus says, “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” If we truly take a hold of this passage, it can be quite convicting and transformational for us. We need to take a hard look at what we are seeking above God Himself and determine what it will take for us to seek Him first.

WEEK 2 - TRANSFORMATION

GROUP DISCUSSION

REFLECTION QUESTION 3

Take a look at what you spent over the last month (or take a longer period like a year if you wish). What were the top 5 things you spent money on? Housing? Food? Clothing? Entertainment? Was charitable giving in your top 5? If not, why not? Do your spending priorities reflect your actual priorities? If not, what would it take for them to better reflect them? What changes do you need to make? (Actually take time to calculate this out, whether in your small group as an estimate or at home as an actual.)

GENEROSITY HAS THE POWER TO TRANSFORM HOW WE RELATE TO OTHERS AND HOW OTHERS RELATE TO GOD

Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the

believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Generosity has the power to transform how we relate to others and how others relate to God. This passage is potentially one of the most profound points in Scripture in sharing with us what a church community could and potentially should look like. We seek to encourage people to live in this type of way, in which we are in such close community with one another that we would give as anyone had need; however, this is a very difficult thing to do. It requires us to actually be BUILT TO LAST by God. In order to live like the Early Church in Acts, a few things must be in play. First, we must be living in such close communion with one another that we are vulnerable enough to let others know of our needs, and we must have open ears and hearts enough to hear those needs as voiced by others. Second, we must be living in such a way that we have enough margin in our own resources to be able to share with others. And third, and possibly most importantly, we must see our possessions as not our own and thus live with a continuous "open hand"

of stewardship towards those in our realm of influence. Generosity has the power to transform how we relate to others. Generosity also has the power to transform how others relate to God. When we are generous beyond human comprehension or human sense, others are baffled and see that Christ must be in us in order for us to live in this type of way. In this sense, generosity becomes evangelism.

REFLECTION QUESTION 4

In Acts, when Paul talks about the Early Church, how generous they were, how devoted they were, and how transformative their generosity was, what thoughts and aspirations come to mind for you? Are there some goals you want to make for your generosity in response to this?

WHEN WE ARE NEW IN CHRIST, WE NO LONGER LIVE FOR OURSELVES; WE LIVE FOR GOD

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves

but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

When we are new in Christ, we no longer live for ourselves; we live for Him. There is hope in this truth, as well as challenge. We aspire to live for Him, don't we? We want to be new and live in Christ truly and fully. We do desire it. But if we really embrace that, then it means that we are therefore no longer living for ourselves. Are you truly new in Christ in this way, or might you need to renew your commitment to Him? Is the old self truly gone? If Christ's love truly compels us, we therefore should be responding accordingly in our devotion to Him. Falling more in love with Him makes us more generous. Is this true of your life?

REFLECTION QUESTION 5

Have you ever thought of your giving as having the ability to actually transform you, to keep you centered and grounded in what you truly value? If you were to make a challenging Built to Last commitment in your giving, how would that transform and change other things that you currently spend your money on? What would that do to your "spending portfolio" of sorts?



WEEK 3 - SACRIFICE

GROUP DISCUSSION

God is asking us to give in a way that changes us. Truly doing this requires us to be BUILT TO LAST by God. What will that look like for you?

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is something you would say you have sacrificed in your life? What did that mean for you?
2. What is something that would be very difficult to give up – something that if you were asked to give it up, you're not sure that you could?
3. Have you ever been changed by a sacrifice that you've made?

KEY POINTS FOR WEEK 3

- Give from what you have. Exodus 35:20-29; 36:1-7
- Do not give to the Lord that which costs you nothing. 2 Samuel 24:18-25
- Sacrifice is more about what you're not giving rather than what you are giving. Mark 12:41-44
- Sacrifice is dying to self and not for the faint of heart. 2 Corinthians 4: 7-12, 18

GIVE FROM WHAT YOU HAVE

Exodus 35:20-29; 36:3-7

Then the whole Israelite community withdrew from Moses' presence, and everyone who was willing and whose heart moved them came and brought an offering to the Lord for the work on the tent of meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments. All who were willing, men and women alike, came and brought gold jewelry of all kinds: brooches, earrings, rings and ornaments. They all presented their gold as a wave offering to the Lord. Everyone who had blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen, or goat hair, ram skins dyed red or the other durable leather brought them. Those presenting an offering of silver or bronze brought it as an offering to the Lord, and everyone who had acacia wood for any part of the work brought it. Every skilled woman spun with her hands and brought what she had spun—blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen. And all the women who were willing and had the skill spun the goat hair. The leaders brought onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece. They also brought spices and olive oil for the light and for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense. All the Israelite men and women who were willing brought to the Lord freewill offerings for all the work the Lord through Moses had commanded them to do...

...So all the skilled workers who were doing all the work on the sanctuary left what they were doing and said to Moses, "The people

WEEK 3 - SACRIFICE

GROUP DISCUSSION

are bringing more than enough for doing the work the Lord commanded to be done." Then Moses gave an order and they sent this word throughout the camp: "No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary." And so the people were restrained from bringing more, because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work.

Give from what you have. The remarkable thing in this passage is the multitude of different types of gifts that were given for the construction of the tabernacle – jewelry, garments, anointing oil, skilled labor. Whatever each person had to offer, they gave. So much so, that Moses had to stop the giving because it was too much!

Often at times, our first objection when being asked to give is to say that we can't give because we don't have. Or "if I had more, I would give more." Or "if I had a job that paid better, then I could give." If, if, if. Well, do you still eat? Do you still have clothing for yourself? Do you tell your mouth and your body that if you had money, then you would eat and have something to wear? No, you somehow figure out how to do those things with your resources. But why do we see our giving in a different way? Why isn't our giving as high a priority as other things so much so that we would see it as something that we would do regardless of our financial

picture? "Not having" or "Not having as much" are no excuses not to give. God isn't even asking us to give in that way. He is asking us to give from what we have. What do you have, and are you giving it?

REFLECTION QUESTION 1

Take money off the table for a second. Think about the other resources that you have purchased or that you have in your possession – your home, your clothes, your electronics, your season tickets to Brewers baseball, or maybe to the Packers. Do you honor God with those resources by giving them over to Him? Do you use your home as a resource for the Lord? How could you better do that? Do you lend your car anytime someone is without? How are you honoring the Lord with what you have?

DO NOT GIVE TO THE LORD THAT WHICH COSTS YOU NOTHING

Read 2 Samuel 24:18-25

On that day Gad went to David and said to him, "Go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." So David went up, as the Lord had commanded through Gad. When Araunah looked and saw the king and his officials coming toward him, he went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" "To buy your threshing floor," David answered, "so I can build an altar to the Lord, that the plague on the people may be stopped." Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take whatever he wishes and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. Your Majesty, Araunah gives all this to the king." Araunah also said to him, "May the Lord your God accept you." But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them. David built an altar to the Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the Lord answered his prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

Do not give to the Lord that which costs you nothing. As David is building this altar for the Lord, he knows that the sacrifice won't mean anything (and won't even be a sacrifice by pure definition) if it doesn't cost him something. He knows that it won't be honoring to the Lord and that the Lord won't see it in the same way. When we give to the Lord, sometimes only we know whether it is a sacrifice or not. A person can give a very large amount to the church and it not be honoring to God if it didn't really cost them anything. God wants us to give in a way

that changes us, in a way that honors him with giving up part of us. Yes, this is bold and radical. But that's what He's asking of us. He is asking us to truly be **BUILT TO LAST**.

REFLECTION QUESTION 2

What would it take in order for you to truly give in this way? What is holding you back?

SACRIFICE IS MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE NOT GIVING RATHER THAN WHAT YOU ARE GIVING

Mark 12:41-44

Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on."

Sacrifice is more about what you're not giving rather than what you are giving. This is such a powerful passage and one that is often trivialized because of its over-usage in the Church. But listen in to what Jesus is truly saying here. It's not about what the woman did give; rather, it's about what she didn't give.

WEEK 3 - SACRIFICE

GROUP DISCUSSION

She didn't give nothing. Pardon the double-negative there, but listen in: she kept nothing for herself. That is what's so remarkable about this story. She kept nothing for herself and gave all that she had to live on. When you give, stop and think about what you aren't giving and why. If someone looked at the other xx% of what you don't give and asked you why, would you have a good reason for it? If the poor widow in this story Jesus told asked you about your remainder, would you feel confident in sharing your story with her? God is asking us to view our devotion to Him in totality not in fractional terms. He doesn't care about percentages or amounts. He cares about the heart. The condition of our heart is not found in 10% or even in 20%. It's found in what we do with 100%. That doesn't mean we're supposed to give all that we have. That's not the point. But we are supposed to honor God with all that we have, so that we could say to Him that we have pleased him with how we spent the other xx%. Could you say that? Or are there some changes to be made?

REFLECTION QUESTION 3

As you think about what you're not giving and why, does this cause you to want to rethink some of your spending? What areas immediately come to mind that you would not feel

comfortable "explaining" to someone when asked why you didn't give that portion?

SACRIFICE IS DYING TO SELF AND NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

2 Corinthians 4:7-12, 16-18

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you...

...Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far

outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Staying financially afloat isn't easy in this world we live in. Particularly when other people are involved like a spouse or children or even other friends, parents, or relatives to consider, money can often at times cause our relationships to go sideways quite quickly. It becomes an unhealthy measure of so many things – success, worthiness, security, admiration, and being in debt. The way our life is entangled with this thing called money can beat us up from all sides sometimes. Why not do it differently now. It isn't easy. Not one bit. If it was easy, then Jesus wouldn't have talked about it so much in the Scriptures. He knew it would be hard. But it's that important. Don't miss this. It's one of the key markers of how much we value God above ourselves – our ability or inability to be selfless and give ourselves and our lives over to Him, our call to be BUILT TO LAST.

REFLECTION QUESTION 4

Some sacrificial choices we make are large, and others are small. There may be a large choice that you've made in your past that you need to revisit or reverse having to do with a home purchase, a car purchase, or some type of investment purchase. Is there something you feel is preventing you from having true, sacrificial giving?

REFLECTION QUESTION 5

Other choices are smaller and yet their impact over time (sometimes even a short period of time) can make a large difference. Things like choosing not to go out to eat as often, not purchasing new clothes for a period of time, or choosing to make other spending allocations in a more judicious way are all things that can reflect our choice for our giving to be more sacrificial.

List below some of the smaller (let's call them 'daily' instead of small because their impact is not small) daily choices that will make a sacrificial difference in your giving:



WEEK 4 - COMMITMENT

GROUP DISCUSSION

Making a commitment to something causes that decision to become a priority amongst all other distractions, good and bad. In order to make a commitment to financial giving, we have to be BUILT TO LAST to that commitment and place it in higher priority than our other financial commitments.

What will that mean for you?

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is the most "committed" person you know? To what are they committed?
2. What does commitment mean to you? To what are you committed?
3. When has commitment cost you or caused you to rearrange things?

KEY POINTS FOR WEEK 4

- Commitment requires focus. 2 Timothy 4:1-8
- What you are committed to reveals the nature of who you are. Matthew 6:19-24

- Committing to a life of generosity is not the American dream. It's the heavenly call. Luke 12:13-21
- Commitment allows God to do immeasurably more than all we could ask or imagine.
- Ephesians 3:14-19

COMMITMENT REQUIRES FOCUS

2 Timothy 4:1-8

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his Kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day - and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

WEEK 4 - COMMITMENT

GROUP DISCUSSION

Commitment requires focus. As you seek to make a commitment financially, it will require you to forsake other pursuits, to turn from other things you may have previously done. It will be hard. It will feel like you are being pressed from all sides, and you will be tempted to turn away. Because your commitment is not a legal document and has no collateral like a home or other possessions tied to it, you will feel as though you can 'let it go' when hard times come. But this commitment to God is bigger than those legal commitments. And the collateral is your life. When Paul says to Timothy to "be prepared in season and out of season," he is warning Timothy that keeping the faith won't always be easy. Keeping your word will require changing things around a little bit, doing things on Someone Else's time instead of your own. It will feel different, and it will require unashamed, unwavering commitment to God who has called you to give in this way. So stand firm, and know that He is God.

REFLECTION QUESTION 1

What makes you nervous as you think about making a two-year Built to Last commitment to generosity. How can your small group be praying for you to help you overcome this?

WHAT YOU ARE COMMITTED TO REVEALS THE NATURE OF WHO YOU ARE

Read Matthew 6:19-24

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

What you are committed to reveals the nature of who you are. Think about what you are truly committed to financially – things that even in a season of drought will still get paid. You only have \$x,xxx in a certain month to cover all of your expenses. Who gets paid first? Likely it will be the things that you can't stand to lose. For you, what are those things? Your home? Your medical expenses? Your cell phone? Your gym membership? When things get tight, we are forced to prioritize. And we often prioritize that which is

most important to us. Does your giving to God fall into that category? Jesus writes, "For where your treasure is, there your hearts will be also." What He means is that you will do anything for the things you treasure. You'll work harder, you'll spend smarter, you'll do anything for what you treasure. Do you work hard to have the house you have, or do you work hard to be able to give big? Where does your giving truly fall in your line of commitments?

Jesus shares with us that a treasure in heaven is one that cannot wither away. Every other treasure we invest in is temporary. Every single one – even relationships. Investing in God's Kingdom is the one thing that won't wither away.

REFLECTION QUESTION 2

Have you ever totaled up the total investment you have made in the Church? Have you ever thought about your cumulative giving like that? God sees it like that. As you make your commitment to Built to Last, see this as an extravagant investment into a lifetime of giving that you are making into the Kingdom. How does this change how you think about your giving?

COMMITTING TO A LIFE OF GENEROSITY IS NOT THE AMERICAN DREAM. IT'S THE HEAVENLY CALL! Luke 12:13-21

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed

me a judge or an arbiter between you?" Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."' "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

Committing to a life of generosity is not the American dream. It's the heavenly call. There is a passage in Proverbs that says, "The world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller; but the world of the generous gets larger and larger." (Proverbs 11:24) A generous couple once shared, "God continues to give us more resources because He knows what we're going to do with them." It's amazing how giving away seems to result in abundance. It may not even mean abundance in wealth, for those who seek wealth are rarely those who receive it. But it may mean abundance in relationships, abundance in opportunities, abundance in ministry impact, abundance in significance. With the way you handle your resources, would you say you are committed to a life of giving away, or a life of storing up? Be honest. Sometimes storing up and retaining control of our resources is acclaimed by many as a wise thing to do. It is said that you are "providing for your future." While part of that may be true, to what degree are you providing for your future at the

WEEK 4 - COMMITMENT

GROUP DISCUSSION

expense of investing in the Kingdom now? Is your balance of saving versus giving a healthy one?

REFLECTION QUESTION 3

Some people struggle with spending too much, and other people struggle with saving too much. Both are indicators of our desire to want to live the American dream and control our situations rather than to turn them over to God. Do you resonate with this passage and struggle with excessive saving?

COMMITMENT ALLOWS GOD TO DO IMMEASURABLY MORE THAN ALL WE COULD ASK OR IMAGINE

Read Ephesians 3:14-19

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted

and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Commitment allows God to do immeasurably more than all we could ask or imagine. Allow this passage to be a final encouragement and inspiration as we seek to honor God with our Built to Last commitments. All He asks is that we first trust Him. He has provided promises to us, but He is now asking us to respond. Will we? Will we honor Him with all that we have and all that we are? Will our commitment be something that causes us to say we are standing before Him with confidence, knowing that we have made a decision that causes us to rely only on Him? His power will be at work within us, so long as we commit our lives to Him. Immeasurably more generosity. Immeasurably more commitment. Immeasurably more impact both in us and through us. This is **BUILT TO LAST**.

EXERCISE AND REFLECTION TO DO AT HOME PRIOR TO COMMITMENT WEEKEND

List out the financial commitments that you currently have – those that go beyond a one-time payment but that have a time duration to them. Examples would be a home mortgage, a lease agreement, a car loan, a cell phone contract, your child's tuition for school, your own tuition for school, etc.

Now list out the commitment you are planning to make for the Built to Last initiative. Where does it fall in the priority of these other commitments? Do you need to change or modify one or more of these other commitments in order to be able to fulfill your Built to Last commitment? What if you wanted to raise your Built to Last commitment? What would that require? Is there a financial commitment you currently have that appears to be prioritized above your ability to make a sacrificial giving commitment to help more people take next steps with God?

If someone who didn't know you looked at your financial commitments, what would they say that you value? Would that statement be true about you? Or is there something that needs to be explained or modified?

"Choose this day whom you will serve." (Joshua 24:15)
Choose to make your giving to God the type of priority you want it to be. What will that mean for your **BUILT TO LAST** commitment?

If you keep this commitment over the next two years, what type of spiritual change will that cause in you?

How will you leverage this change to influence others such as your children, your co-workers, your friends, your family, others in your circles of influence?

Pray over your commitment as you prepare to turn in your card on Commitment Weekend.

Prayer is the most important thing in this whole process, and prayer is what gives us the heart of Christ within us. Now let's do this, Church. Let's **BUILD TO LAST** as we help more people find and follow God!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

WHY DO WE NEED TO EXPAND THE KIDS' SPACE?

The day we moved in was the day we outgrew our kids' space. To continue to grow, we need more space to create a safe and fun place for kids to find and follow God.

WHAT WILL THE NEW KIDS SPACE LOOK LIKE?

We are doubling our current kid's space to 12,000 sq ft. The new space will have a separate entrance and will be completely remodeled to be fun, safe and inviting. Our finished kids' space will truly allow us to invest in the next generation knowing God.

WHY AN ONLINE CAMPUS?

People live behind a screen. Studies show a person's first visit to a church is online. We want to provide an opportunity for people to experience a weekend in a context they're familiar with. We believe we can connect with a larger group of people with an online campus than we would ever connect with in a traditional way.

HOW WILL PEOPLE CONNECT ONLINE?

Our online campus will be extremely interactive. We will have an online pastor that will engage with our online community. Our online pastor will be there to answer questions, facilitate discussion, provide prayer and care when needed and when ready bridge them to a physical location.

WHERE WILL THE SECOND CAMPUS BE LOCATED?

Our second campus will be located in a 15-20 minute drive from our current campus. We are following growth trends and will use that information to help us determine the best location for our new campus.

WILL WE BUILD OR RENT OUR SECOND FACILITY?

We will most likely rent or lease a facility and operate as a portable location.

ABOUT MY COMMITMENT

HOW LONG IS MY COMMITMENT

We are asking that everyone make a two-year (24 month) commitment. The commitment period will begin December 6, 2015.

DOES MY COMMITMENT INCLUDE WHAT I NORMALLY GIVE?

Yes. During this two-year period, every contribution will go towards **BUILT TO LAST**. As you consider your commitment, you'll want to factor in what you normally give on a weekly basis, what you give to Live Big and any other charitable gifts. In this season of expanded faith, generosity and sacrifice, we will also include our expanded giving to the initiative. Every weekend becomes a day to celebrate and contribute toward what God is doing in us and through us.

IF I AM IN DEBT RIGHT NOW, SHOULD I STILL GIVE?

If you are someone currently seeking to make payments to pay off debt, we commend you for making progress on that. And you should continue to do so. That does not however take the place of giving financially. Giving isn't about what God wants from you. It's about what God wants for you. Find joy in giving at the same time as you are finding joy in paying off debt and becoming financially free!

WHAT ABOUT LIVE BIG?

For those of you that participated in Live Big last year, be sure to include anything you might want to give to Live Big for 2015, 2016 and 2017 in your **BUILT TO LAST** commitment.

SHOULD I MAKE A COMMITMENT EVEN IF I HAVE NEVER GIVEN TO THE RIDGE BEFORE?

If you have never given financially to The Ridge before, **BUILT TO LAST** was crafted specifically with you in mind. Built to Last is a "one fund" initiative, meaning that it is different from a traditional capital campaign where you are called to give an extra gift above and beyond your normal giving – thus creating TWO STEPS for people who aren't yet giving. **BUILT TO LAST** is a call to selfless generosity for absolutely everyone at The Ridge. If you have never given before, this is your chance to join in the journey. We really hope you will.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'M BRAND-NEW TO THE RIDGE?

BUILT TO LAST is about the vision for our church. We believe that the local church is one of the most compelling missions to give towards and we would really love for you to make The Ridge your home and join us in **BUILT TO LAST**. If you are ready for it, this is a perfect time for you to put a stake in the ground and make this your church. We need you on the team!

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who **built his house on the rock**. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its **foundation on the rock**.

—Matthew 7:24-25 NIV





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