

I. RoadVision: Innovate

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II. Our vision is to be a church that Innovates.

- A. I don't know whether or not we are going to make this a written part of our Vision or not, but after I preached last Sunday I felt the need to explain more of my Vision for ministry and the calling that I have felt on my life.
- B. Even though I was raised in a traditional church and most of my training has been in the very traditional mode, there has always been a side of me that just could not settle for doing things the same way they have always been done.
- C. Quite frankly, this is a blessing and a curse.
- D. When I see things that no longer work, I am ready to change.
- E. Whether or not you can see it as the Vision of CrossRoad Church, it is definitely how I am wired.
- F. There has been a lot of support these past 2 weeks as I have shared the first two elements of our Vision
1. To be a church that invites you to 'come as you are.'
  2. That inspires imperfect people to connect with a perfect God through a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- G. Tim's email: Pastor Gee, I spoke w/ you briefly before the service- I am the guy that has been "missing in action " at church for 20 years, and attending CrossRoad since November. I thought I owed you one of those Monday feel good e-mails you were talking about in your service. I was in desperate need for rehab, and am so glad that I have found a church with so many people who are interested in helping me find my way. Jim Young says he was drawn to me, and I am thankful for his mentoring. He made me feel so welcome--as you must know it is difficult being the new guy. I also met Ben Goldsmith who I immediately felt comfortable with as well, and valued both as they prayed with me. I am a new creature with training wheels excited to graduate to a big bike in the future, and am inspired by your messages emphasizing that we are all imperfect. As the bumper sticker says "you will fit in". I think I do! Its nice to feel loved--I saw it ooze out of the church last Sunday. Thanks!  
P.S. I have a 12 year old Jack Russell myself--greatest personalities in the dog world!
- H. I firmly believe the Missional/Outreach Church that we desire to be must be Innovative in all areas of ministry.

III. Innovation is fueled by \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Craig Groeschel, in his book IT: How Churches And Leaders Can Get It and Keep It, chapter Innovative Minds ask the question : Could you come up with a hundred thousand dollars in cash by the end of this week?
- B. Most of us would balk at the request as impossible.
- C. Then he frames it slightly differently: Suppose I told you that your special loved one is very sick...Now imagine my telling you that the doctors are certain that your loved one has no chance of living beyond the month unless you get them a very rare shot by the end of this week. And because of the scarcity of the shot, it is very expensive.  
You are probably thinking, money is no object! If this shot will cure my loved one, I'll do whatever it takes!  
Remember a couple of minutes ago you thought finding a hundred thousand dollars in a few days would be impossible. But now, your perspective has changed. Even though it will be different, you'll find a way to get the money...Why are you now willing to go to such extremes? Because you just got motivated....  
Reflecting God, innovative believers tend to have it. And it is borne out of their passion to please God, reach people, and help those in need. At our church, we encourage people to do anything short of sin to reach those who don't know Christ. With increasing passion comes increasing creativity to reach people.

**D. Innovation is fueled by Motivation.**

E. *(Mark 2:1-12 NRSV) When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. {2} So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. {3} Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. {4} And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay.*

F. Innovative churches are motivated to do whatever it takes to get people to Jesus.

#### IV. **Innovation is messy!**

A. I can pretty much bet money that the guys on the roof didn't have a plan on how to patch it.

B. I am pretty sure they didn't bring a shop vac to clean the mess they had created.

C. Innovation is almost always messy. Physically and Emotionally.

D. The most innovative and creative people I know usually leave the biggest messes. It is very frustrating. You are always having to clean up after them.

E. If you are going to buy into our vision that welcomes imperfect people to come as they are. It is going to be messy.

F. The cleanest churches I know are empty.

#### V. **Innovation threatens the status quo**

A. *{5} When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." {6} Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, {7} "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" {8} At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? {9} Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk'? {10} But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"--he said to the paralytic-- {11} "I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home." {12} And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"*

B. When Jesus sees the initiative of this man's friends, he speaks out Redemptively: *{5} When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."*

C. The Pharisees, the religious gate keepers, weren't dialed into Jesus' having the ability to forgive. *{6} Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, {7} "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"*

D. Jesus is often accused of blasphemy. Anything that is not the way we have always done things is usually a form of blasphemy.

E. Men and women were burned at the stake just for translating or owning a translation of the Bible that was not in Latin.

F. For over a thousand years, the only people who could read the Bible were scholars, people who knew Latin.

G. The Status Quo was Latin, and people fought to preserve it.

H. Fortunately brave men and women risked their lives.

I. *{8} At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? {9} Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk'? {10} But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"--he said to the paralytic-- {11} "I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home." {12} And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"*

J. The Pharisees wanted to enter a theological debate, Jesus and the man's friends just wanted him to walk.

K. *(Mat 12:10-14 NRSV)* a man was there with a withered hand, and they asked him, "Is it lawful to cure on the sabbath?" so that they might accuse him. {11} He said to them, "Suppose one of you has only one sheep and it falls into a pit on the sabbath; will you not lay hold of it and lift it out? {12} How much more valuable is a human being than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath." {13} Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and it was restored, as sound as the other. {14} But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.

L. Isn't it interesting that the Pharisees saw healing a person on the Sabbath as against God's law, but it was OK to plot Jesus' murder.

## VI. Innovation will use any means to reach an end.

A. Craig Groeschel: With-it ministries are filled with people so passionate, they're driven to become innovative. They'll become like others or do unusual things to reach those who are far from Christ or to help those who are hurting.

B. *(John 9 NRSV)* As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. {2} His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" {3} Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. {4} We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. {5} As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." {6} When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, {7} saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

C. The use of saliva for medicinal purposes was common in the ancient world.

D. *(Mark 7:32-34 NKJV)* Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. {33} And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. {34} Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

E. Forming mud to place on the man's eyes was also associated with pagan practices of magic at the time of Jesus. Biblegateway.com

F. {16} Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided.

G. Jesus was willing to use even a pagan custom, a cultural means that would help a man receive his healing.

H. The religious people said you can't heal like that. That's not spiritual.

I. That's what I love about Jesus. He is not afraid to get his hands dirty to heal someone.

J. Innovative churches are not afraid to get their hands dirty to reach people who are broken, imperfect, disenfranchised, disqualified...

## VII. Innovation leads to \_\_\_\_\_, and requires \_\_\_\_\_.

A. I have watched people leave CrossRoad when our Innovation gets a little too muddy for them.

B. It didn't take long before people challenged our use of Rock and Roll Worship, the use of secular songs.

C. A whole wave of people left when we based an Easter Celebration around the music from Jesus Christ Superstar.

D. The Matrix series I did in 2001 spoke to a lot of people in their 20s and 30s and by and large was tolerated among people.

1. Our crowds grew during that series, but criticism came when a friend couldn't justify using an R rated movie even though we carefully edited the clips.

E. Fallen Angel, with its powerful depiction of Spiritual Warfare was too edgy Rock and Roll and depicted the depravity of humanity too realistically

F. A very close friend left because the set we used for the musical Boondocks was a Fish Camp and a bar was part of the scene.

1. The sad thing is, that person never came to the musical.
2. There are people here today because of that production.

G. We have made mistakes too, but never intentionally.

H. We did a series a few years ago that used an Eagles song, and the day we rehearsed it I realized the lyrics weren't appropriate.

1. Scott Coleman re-wrote it.
2. But we never corrected it on the video presentation.

I. One of the most innovative series we have ever done, Behind the Manger, used a lot of tongue-in-cheek humor and set up a VH1 behind the Music feel.

1. It was a mistake to use Angel in the Centerfold.
2. I didn't use my best judgment when I reviewed it.
3. It should never have caused the kind of critical backlash that it did.

J. That leads to this point. ***Innovation leads to mistakes, and requires grace.***

K. Innovation is risky. It offends people. It requires change, openness and grace.

L. Innovative people work under the banner that it is easier to get forgiveness than it is permission.

M. My vision is to give permission first! Try new things, risk offending religious people in order to reach the irreligious.

### VIII. The Church is built on Innovation

A. Paul said it best, *(1 Cor 9: NRSV) {22} To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. {23} I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.*

B. Paul was committed to whatever it took to save people, not to please people.

C. When John Wesley, the architect of the Methodist Church, discovered Salvation by faith through Grace. God gave him a heart for all those people outside the walls of the church.

D. On March 29, 1739, he wrote in his journal what he felt when he heard George Whitefield preaching in the fields outside of London: I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example Sunday; having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin, if it had not been done in a church.

E. On April 2, 1739, he wrote in his journal: At four in the afternoon, I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people.

F. Innovation goes even further back. 2000 years ago, God decided to take a huge risk, to get His hands and feet dirty, to enter a culture that was filled with sin and rebellion.

G. He sent his own Son Jesus Christ, who ate and drank with sinners. He touched them, he loved them, He forgave them and then he died for them. A very undignified death on a cross.

H. God himself, God in Flesh, God in Blood.

I. It was and still is the most innovative, creative, risky, messy way to save the world.

### IX. Servers and Singers Come Forward

### X. The Lord's Supper