

Session 1

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Date: 28 October 2017

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[0 : 0 0] Well, good morning folks. Are we well? Excellent. Well, thank you so much for coming today. It is a real joy to see you here. And it's a real joy to see you. Can we just have a show of hands once more if this is your first day away? That is very exciting to see. That's probably about a third of the hands in this room are up, which is a real thrill for, I guess, us as a leadership team and us as a church family to welcome so many new people here. But it's just a real testament to God's goodness to us as a church. And to that we are forever thankful. This is my third day away. And I'm always struck, I don't know if you noticed this as you came in the front door, by the inscription that's above the door.

Did anyone see it? Yeah, prepare to meet your God. That's really cool. And I guess I hope that that's my prayer for this day is that that would be true for us as a church today. I love these days away because they are great just to spend time with family and to make new friends, to reacquaint with old friends, to just spend some time in the busyness of life just away with church family. But I tell you that the real reason, not only why I enjoy these days, but the real reason that I need these days. And I'm always reminded a couple of years ago, we, Alex and I, our first car when we got married was a Volkswagen Fox. I don't know if anyone knows what Volkswagen Fox is. Tiny little car. And we used to absolutely love that tiny little car. And you could feel it when it used to go above 60 in the motorway.

It was one of those kind of cars. Loved it. But we took it for, I remember a couple of years ago, four years ago, taking it for an MOT. And the garage phoned me back and the guy goes on the phone and goes, right. And you think, that's not a way that you want to start that conversation, is it? You're just thinking, how much? How much is it going to cost? And it was all right in the end. But one of the things that he pointed out is that the wheels on this Volkswagen Fox, our wheel alignment was totally out. What it meant with the car wasn't quite going straight. And I realized this when he talked me through it, that actually I was having to oversteer to make it go straight. That's not good for your tires. And the guy said, listen, one of the things we need to do to this car is we need to realign it. We need to realign it so that it goes straight and it works. And I guess I reflect on that episode all the time. And it reminds me a bit about my life as a Christian. Because I should have explained as well, we live in this area of Edinburgh that's just got cobbles everywhere, cobbled roads, and it's the cobbles that had knocked the alignment out. And actually it makes me think just about my life and the cobbles of life that can come along and just maybe the busyness of life, the things that go on and just slightly knock us as Christians.

And they take our alignment, our focus away from what we're trying to do. And I guess I love days like this because they are time away from the busyness of life, time away from the city that allow us to realign ourselves with what we're trying to do as a church. And I guess I just wanted to spend five minutes this morning just thinking about what it means to align ourselves with what we're trying to do as a church. So Deb, do you want to put the first slide up?

Here's our vision statement as a church. This is what we're all about. Just take it in a little bit. Bruntsfield Evangelical Church exists to glorify God through life's being transformed by the grace of Jesus Christ. So we want to glorify our great God because he's worthy of all praise.

[3 : 33] Worthy of all praise. And one of the ways we recognize that he is at work in our lives, he's adopted us as his sons, he's saved us, he's put a spirit to live in our hearts. And the process that he's involved in in our lives now as his people is transforming us more into the likeness of Jesus Christ for the glory of God. That's how great our God is. That's how we want to glorify him.

Now I'm really, I'm really simple. You may have noticed that in my sermons. I like things that alliterate. I like things that make sense to me. And one of the things I love about this vision statement is that we try to really simplify it into inputs and outputs to help us visualize what it may look like in our everyday life. So if you've got your booklet, I should say that'll be on your front of your booklet as well. Deb, do you want to just pick up the next one? So here's really just the the outworkings of that vision statement. Here are the three things on the left that we're going to devote ourselves to as a church. It's not something that we've come up with. It's straight out of Acts 2. We're going to devote ourselves to prayer, to words, and to fellowship. So we're going to devote ourselves to seeking our great God in prayer, to devoting ourselves to his words, and to devoting ourselves to each other as a church family. And we hope and we pray and we know that as we devote ourselves to those things that we should begin to see outputs. We should begin to see fruit in our life. So here are the five things on the right that we believe we should see as fruit in our lives as we devote ourselves to prayer, word, and fellowship. To cherish God's word more deeply.

Remember all these things are individual and corporate. Cherish God's word more deeply. Serve God's people more graciously. Fulfill God's mission more thoroughly. Walk with God in prayer more dependently. Be conformed to Christ's image more fully.

Now I just want to, this morning, all we're going to do today is we're just going to take one of these outputs and we're going to think a bit about what that will look like in our lives. So here's the output here. Here's the fruit to fulfill God's mission more thoroughly.

There we go. Well then, you go ahead and do it. I want to be able to go.

[5 : 47] Let's see what happens next. If I get a Jewish teacher, my name is Andrew Lucas, welcome to this test. You've got a Buddhist Sh favour of people named Michael Keisheis también.