



### **BILLIONAIRE PRIORITIES**

- Richard Branson and Jeff Bezos – rushing into space
  - 7/11 “Billionaire Richard Branson reaches space in his own ship.”
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- *What do you think about this?*
  - *How is this a priority for the wealthiest?*
  - *What do you think of those who ask why they are not seeking to solve poverty or hunger as a priority?*

**COMMENTS:**

- I don't want to judge them... How much is envy or judgement?
- Some encourage others to make a difference. (ie, the Gates.)
- I love it because they are seeking to answer questions about the impossible.
- It's hard to reconcile Bezos' treatment of his employees and his pursuit of this project.
- Entrepreneurs look toward the money before the people.

### **CONGREGATIONAL PRIORITIES**

- A congregation that has clarity of identity knows well and is able to articulate its priorities.
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- *How clearly defined are your congregation's priorities?*
  - *Are others than the pastor able to articulate the priorities?*
  - *What connection do those priorities make with neighbors?*

*COMMENTS:*

- When we talked about changing the church name, people got really concerned -- holding on to the identity was a priority.
- We are identified as a “loving congregation.” Getting beyond that simple statement is difficult.
- To have clarity of identity you need a robust vision.
- One off priority action can water down your vision and focus.
- It’s hard to shift the legacy priorities. “The organ and music is god here!”
- The symptoms can be mis-identified as the problem.

## **COVID - RHEOSTAT**

- Rheostat – “an electrical instrument used to control a current by varying resistance.”
  - “Covid precautions are not an on and off switch, but more like a rheostat.” -D
- The Delta variant is now prominent in every state.
- The rate of infection is growing again in our region.
- People fully vaccinated are testing positive.

*LISA ALLGOOD INFORMATION FROM MONDAY, JULY 12*

- The Delta variant is in all 50 states and currently makes up more than 50% of new cases in the US and 80% of new cases in the Midwest
- The Delta variant is 60% more infectious than the original variant Alpha, and about twice as infectious (200%) as the original virus. That means it has and will continue to spread very rapidly, particularly in unvaccinated people.
- Those who have both doses of an mRNA vaccine are more than 80% covered against Delta. Those who only have one shot are about 30% covered. The J&J shot is also effective at about 65% coverage.
- The Delta variant has shown that it can evade certain elements of the vaccine.
- New COVID cases in the US are above 20,000 per week for the past several weeks. Hospitalizations and deaths are also increasing in 42 states.
- 99% of deaths are in unvaccinated people.
- The Delta variant has infected some vaccinated individuals. Generally symptoms are mild but they can still be infectious.
- Globally, although this varies greatly by country and region, 25% have received one dose and 12% have received two doses.
- Spikes are beginning globally, again primarily in unvaccinated individuals.

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- ***How are you experiencing this time?***
  - ***What rheostat like experience are you having with this?***

**COMMENTS:**

- I have experienced a “brain fog” while having COVID.
- As an employer, when can I require vaccinations of employees?
  - You can at anytime, with care and standards set by the organization. As with all things, personnel policies need to provide provisions for exceptions and appeals.
- Regarding rheostat, once the standards were lax, it is almost impossible to restrict again.

## **REAL TENSIONS CHURCH LEADER FEEL**

**Cary Nieuwhof | “5 Very Real Tensions Every Small to Mid-Sized Church Leader Feels”**

[\[LINK\]](#)

### **1. THE DESIRE TO KEEP THE CHURCH ONE BIG FAMILY.**

- “This pressure is huge. ...The reality is even when our church was 40, those 40 people didn’t know each other—really.”
- “The goal is not to create a church where everyone knows everyone. Create a church where everyone is known.”

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- ***What have you done or are you doing to create a church where everyone is known?***
  - ***How might talking about the church as one big family not well serve the church?***

**COMMENTS:**

- We may find ourselves in a mindset of family order as in our actual family.
- Being relatively new to the church the family concept puts me in an “in-law” position. At times this makes me feel like the “family” doesn’t need me.
- This past Sunday we had visitors who were being left out during fellowship because everyone was talking to their “friends.”
- As siblings in Christ we are equally received and accepted. Even when people leave, they are still considered family.
- Koinania – community that is vibrant.
- During the pandemic the deacons and elders have their group that they maintained community with, by reaching out to them regularly.

## 2. THE PEOPLE WHO HOLD POSITIONS DON'T ALWAYS HOLD THE POWER.

- “...but often there are people—and even families—whose opinion carries tremendous weight.”
- “This misuse of power is unhealthy and needs to be stopped.”
- “When the people who are gifted to lead get to lead, the church becomes healthy. When we got healthy, we grew.”

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- ***How have you experienced this dynamic, what did you do or not do with it? Why did you choose action or inaction?***

### COMMENTS:

- We have changed the places people are serving.
- Legacy families often hold power that has nothing to do with being in official position.
- We have tried to move to selecting people who are gifted and graced for the positions they are being asked to serve.
- My last church had a mis-abuse of power. I felt useless and disillusioned. Since arriving in Florida I have been healing and finding hope. My current church is more interested in people, than power.

## 3. THE PASTOR CARRIES EXPECTATIONS NO HUMAN CAN FULFIL.

- “Many small church pastors are actually more burnt out than large church pastors.”
- “The key here for those who want to grow past this is to set clear expectations of what you will spend your time on.”

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- ***What tactics have you employed to put boundaries around your capacity, time, and expectations?***
- ***What do you do when others disagree with your choices?***

### COMMENTS:

- You need to be able to delegate and empower the other leaders in the church.
- Communicating our boundaries and being clear on them.
- Go into the position with a clear understanding of what you can do.
- Churches need to be honest when presenting the MIF – ambiguity and misinformation automatically sets up incoming pastors for failure.
- Having real conversation to watch out for over-functioning and under-functioning expectations.

## 4. TRADITION HAS MORE PULL THAN VISION.

- “The past has a nostalgia to it that the future never does.”

- “The challenge for the leader is to cast a vision that is clear enough and compelling enough to pull people from the familiar past into a brighter future.”

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- *What do you do with members or leaders that want to live in the past when it comes to nostalgia and your church?*
- *How does “Clarity of Identity” help you pull people into a bright future?*

**COMMENTS:**

- A compelling vision moves people toward the future.

**5. THE NATURAL DESIRE TO DO MORE NOT LESS.**

- “Often the key to reaching more people is doing less.”
- “By doing a few things well and creating steps, not programs, you will help more people grow faster than almost any other way.”
- “Complexity is the enemy of progress.”

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- *What does progress look like for you? How is it/is it not connected to growth?*
- *If you were to name a singular focus or target for your church, what would it be?*

**COMMENTS:**

- There is plenty going on in simplicity.
- How do you build to the vision that is cast rather than programs that seem to add more opportunity?
- A sense of worth does not come from a full calendar.
- Don’t compete.

**ALONG THE WAY...**

1. Breathe deep.
2. Dance like no one is watching.
3. Watch the snacks.
4. Ask: Where do I see God in all this?

**Let’s all keep talking –**  
**Every Tuesday at 10am and 3pm**  
[www.vibrantpresbytery.org](http://www.vibrantpresbytery.org)

