



Ministry Presuppositions

How can we fulfill our calling to advance the cause of Christ in our city? In the following, there is a summary of our strategy for what we want to see God do in and through this church. In setting forth this vision we are guided first by several presuppositions:

- *We believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ is a source of life-changing power because it is God working. The power of the gospel can justify the guiltiest sinner in the court of God, and it can transform any life, any family, any institution, any culture, any society.*
- *We believe that Jesus Christ expects his kingdom to grow, both in quantity, as more and more people acknowledge his lordship over their lives, and in quality, as people mature in their submission to his lordship. Therefore, we are hopeful because cynicism is contrary to the power of Christ in His gospel.*
- *We believe that this church does not exist only for us, but for our friends, neighbors, and associates who do not know Christ. Being a small, intimate group would be more comfortable, but our mission calls us to leave our comfort behind to serve those who are without Christ.*
- *We follow a risen Savior who went through crucifixion and so we expect His plan of redemption to include suffering. This is realistic because: 1) to really love someone is costly as we inherently give ourselves for their benefit; and 2) the expansion of God's kingdom in this world has always been violently contested by forces of spiritual darkness. It is war.*
- *We believe in the power of prayer, expecting God to accomplish surprising things when his people express their dependence upon him. Therefore, we are boldly asking God to do things in us and through us in Lakeland that are so identifiable as His work alone that we know we could not possibly achieve them in our own wisdom and strength.*