



FORWARD

"1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Ephesians 4:1-3

“Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 3:13-14

If we are going to help the church
move forward, history cannot hinder us.

“The most pervasive and common thread among the congregations was that they lived for a long time with the past as hero. They held on more tightly with each progressive year. They often clung to things of the past with desperation and fear. And when any internal or external force tried to change the past, they responded with anger and resolution: “We will die before we change.”

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"3 "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day. 4 I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women, 5 as the high priest and the whole council of elders can bear me witness. From them I received letters to the brothers, and I journeyed toward Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished."

Acts 22:3-5

We cannot lead in fear of history repeating itself or in hope that it will.

The number of churches of Christ in the United States has fallen 9 percent, while the US population increased by 22 percent.

Why do we care if the doors are open?

"Being the Church, being the people of God means being God's leaven in this our humanity. It means proclaiming and bearing God's salvation in this our world, which is often lost and needful of having encouraging answers, answers that give hope, that give new energy along the journey. May the Church be the place of God's mercy and love, where everyone can feel themselves welcomed, loved, forgiven, and encouraged to live according to the good life of the Gospel. And in order to make others feel welcomed, loved, forgiven, and encouraged, the Church must have open doors so that all might enter. And we must go out of those doors and proclaim the Gospel."

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If we want to help our congregation
move forward, we need to understand
why our doors are open.

"19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:19-20



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