

The Church of God and the Challenge of Our Times

My Heart for the Church Today

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, Aug. 24, 2014

I. The Highlights of What God Reminded Me of During My Time Away on Sabbatical

A. Even in a Fallen, Broken World God has Given Us Some Amazing Things to See and Enjoy!

B. Reading Good Books Changes My Life and Keeps Me Growing Instead of Just Getting Older

- The #1 book that does that for me is – the Bible!
- *Fearless: True story of a Navy Seal Team Operator, Adam Brown* – Eric Blehm
- *A Praying Life* – Paul Miller
- *A Loving Life* – Paul Miller
- *End of Reason (A Response to New Atheists)* – Ravi Zacharias
- *Contemplative Pastor* – Eugene Peterson
(5th time to read this over past 20 yrs)

C. God Doesn't Need Brad Bigney to Build His Church But He Does Graciously Choose to Use Me

D. I Want to Keep Doing the Hard Work of Shepherding and Not Fall into the Trap of just Trying to Herd God's People – which Ultimately just Hurts God's People

II. A Vision of What I'm Most Excited about for the Next 15 Years

I'm asking God to raise up a generation of Christians who have:

- The courage to risk
- The confidence to speak up
- And the heart to sacrifice

Because they're committed to:

- The truth of God's Word
- The mission of God's church
- And the mercy of God's Son – Jesus Christ

A. Courage and Risk – Acts 4:1-31

B. Mercy and Compassion – Luke 15:11-24

Questions to Consider:

- Are you willing to stand for Christ – and to risk?
- Are you willing to speak up?
- Are you willing to make the sacrifices necessary with your money... and your time... and your own sense of 'safe' living – to follow me as I follow Christ?