



- SETTING THE STAGE FOR CHANGE

• Nothing seems to be working

- **John Mark Comer** (Bridgetown Church, PDX) interviewing **Jon Tyson** (Church of the City, NYC) on **the future of the church** (Oct. 13, 2021):

• **John Mark Comer...** “It’s not that Christianity is failing in the West, it’s that all of the other narratives in the West are failing too. The Progressive narratives are failing. The Right Wing narratives are failing. Capitalism is failing. Individualism is failing. The re-definition of marriage, family and gender is failing. And it’s creating massive anxiety, fear and outrage. People are freaking out. There’s an extraordinary moment right now where we don’t have to make Jesus beautiful right now. We just have to uncover the things that have stood between him and a true perception of his beauty.”



• **Jon Tyson...** “The future of the church is **discipleship**. Cultural Christianity will literally melt away. It’s gone in a lot of places. It will only further disappear. It’ll be conscious choices to follow Jesus. It will be genuinely deep formation, people genuinely wanting to become like Jesus because of the darkness of the world. I think it will be explicitly Christlike, not generically Christian. There will be a re-emphasis on the person of Jesus and the kingdom of Jesus as being the only hope...I think we’re going to start seeing two things happening at once: Discipleship will be better locally than it’s been in decades and more digital than it’s been in decades. It’ll be local and online. It will be formation and mission...and I think it’s going to get hard before it gets better. I think we’re moving into a time of further decline before we turn a corner.”



• Yet, few people are actually giving up

- **Staying focused...** In this Covid-19 environment, no one is really sure what’s going to happen next. Most local leaders are pressing in, trying new things, holding onto important relationships and trying to figure out the path forward for themselves and their congregation. Still, local leaders are praying together, sharing coffee with each other and, most importantly, not giving up. There’s a real sense that we are all in this together.

- **Staying, leaving and birthing new ministry...** We have recently had two lead pastors leave the community to other churches (Chris Davis and Dave Martin) and another local pastor lose his life to Covid (Marv Kasemeier). Yet, we have also seen two new churches start up in the past year (The Promise—Longview and The Potter's House), as well as a transition in leadership here at Evangel with Kevin & Nina Salinas moving into the lead pastor role and a brand new ministry, **CitiServe** starting January 2022. All in the midst of a pandemic that has literally changing the way we do life.

- GOD'S TIMING

- **God is using this current cultural moment to accomplish his "purposes"**

- **PURPOSES** - *noun*

- The **purpose** of something is the **reason** for which it is made or done. (synonyms: reason, point, idea, goal.)
- Your **purpose** is the thing that you want to **achieve**. (synonyms: aim, end, plan, hope.)
- **Purpose** is the feeling of having a **definite aim** and of being determined to **achieve it**. (synonyms: determination, commitment, resolve, will.)

- It is the **PURPOSES OF GOD** are what we are keying into, and boy are they powerful!

- *A person may have many ideas concerning God's plan for his life, but only the designs of **his purpose** will succeed in the end.* ~ Pr 19:21 (TPT)
- *It is the Lord **who directs your life**, for each step you take is ordained by God to bring you closer to your destiny.* ~ PR 21:24 (TPT)
- *It's as easy for God to steer a king's heart for **his purposes** as it is for him.* ~ Pr 21:1 (TPT)

- The **OPPORTUNITY** is right in front of us and CitiServe is being positioned by the Lord to make a difference.

- For the most part, pastors and church leaders rarely walk together. Overseeing a local congregation is a full-time job requiring focus, resilience and tenacity, and most pastors don't typically make time to develop deep relationships, especially with other pastors. **For pastors and ministry leaders of the 118 congregations in Cowlitz County who are hungry for relationship with other pastors, CitiServe can encourage, resource and help unite local churches and leaders.**

- WHAT IS CITISERVE?

- **This is what we will do...** "To walk with pastors and leaders as they walk with God...encouraging, equipping and uniting the church in Cowlitz County."
- **This is how we will do it...**The "Hub"... **CitiServe's** new website. You can find it at, citiservecowlitz.org
- **The body of Evangel has played a key role** in preparing for a ministry whose focus is to build bridges and establish a means for collaboration by simply living out their congregational vision:
 - Breaking down walls and build up people
 - Investing in the next generation of believers



- THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

- One of the greatest challenges will be to be unapologetically **HONEST** about the state of the church...yet full of **faith** and **hope**!
- It will also be challenging to stay **FOCUSED** and keep it **SIMPLE**.
 - The Lord keeps reminding us, “**I didn’t call you to create a powerful ministry...I just want you to walk with pastors and leaders as they walk with me.**”
 - *Set your gaze on the path before you. With fixed purpose, looking straight ahead, ignore life’s distractions. Watch where you’re going! **Stick to the path of truth**, and the road will be safe and smooth before you. **Don’t allow yourself to be sidetracked for even a moment, or take the detour that leads to darkness.** Pr 4:25-27 (TPT)*
 - *Within your heart you can make **plans** for your future, but the Lord chooses the steps you take to get there. ~ Pr 16:19 (TPT)*
- It will also be important for us to work hard at developing a **TEAM** approach to accomplishing our goals. I have found a way to pursue my destiny in God. For the past 30 years, **Evangel** has provided a way to live out the assignment God gave me. This new assignment, **launching CitiServe**, is opening the door for more of the same, but with a **laser-like focus on leadership support**. My hope is that others will find that **CitiServe** will provide the same kind of pathway to their destiny as well. I want to share this amazing opportunity with others. Some of these significant pieces of **CitiServe** are:
 - **Leadership Support...** **CitiServe** Board is already providing vision and leadership as we lay a foundation for this ministry.
 - **Technical Support...** Having the right people working to create smooth, intelligent pathways for people to connect and collaborate is essential to **CitiServe’s** success. **Rufina Berishev** has provided that support and will continue to bring technical innovation to this ministry.
 - **Creative Support...** Tons of content needs to be produced, much more than any one person can come up with. Setting the bar high for what **CitiServe** can do to create bridges between where pastors are and where the Lord would like to take them in ministry is an exciting challenge.
 - **Prayer Support...** We want to make prayer a primary pillar for the success of **CitiServe**. In my mind, this type of ministry will rise and fall on how integral prayer is to everything we do.
 - **Prophetic Support...** What we declare, we will see manifest. God has a lot to say about, to and through **CitiServe**. We will need bold, insightful and faithful prophetic voices to accomplish the task at hand.
 - **Financial Support...** **Congregational** support is essential. **Individual** support gives everyone an opportunity to be part of the team. **One-time-giving** makes room for the Holy Spirit to lead people to be involved.
- **The Last Word:** **The GOAL of CitiServe is NOT to fix a problem** (loneliness, discouragement, hopelessness, etc.), **but to restore a vital relationship between pastors leaders that has been HIJACKED by the spirit of the age** (insecurity, competition, division, etc). **Jesus didn’t come to earth to fix a problem, but to restore a relationship**. This is one of the inspirational finer points of **CitiServe** as well. Our responsibility is not to make something happen, but to cooperate with the Holy Spirit who is about to “change the expression of the church in one generation.”