

Reading

Shema: **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments (ten commandments in Deuteronomy 5:6-21) that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Matthew 22:34-40

³⁴ Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. ³⁵ One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

³⁷ Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

(need Bible and *Built to Last* book)

Introduction

- Today, we are starting a series on WVPC's Core Values

[[slide]]

- Radical Hospitality
- Passionate Worship
- Intentional Faith Development
- Risk-Taking Mission and Service
- Extravagant Generosity

[[\slide]]

- Our core values help us to connect our lives with God and with each other.
- WVPC's core values are:
 - Radical Hospitality
 - Passionate Worship
 - Intentional Faith Development
 - Risk-Taking Mission and Service
 - Extravagant Generosity
- These are on our web site.
- We give them to new members.
- But what do they mean to us personally?
- How can they help us in our faith?

Too Corporate?

- Before we begin with How WVPC's values relate to you, we have to ask **what are** core values?
 - The term "core values" **may not** be familiar to you.
 - I did a search of the Bible and the term "core value" does not appear in any of the 43 different translations of the Bible that I searched.
 - However, if you have worked for a **large** corporation, you've heard the term "core values" before.
 - Defining corporate values was popular in the 90s.
 - Books like *Built to Last* by Collins and Porras came out that tried to help visionary companies get everyone in their company working together with a **common set** of values.
- [[slide]]
 "The organization's essential and enduring tenets—a small set of general guiding principles"
Built to Last by Collins and Porras
- [[\slide]]
- Collins and Porras define Core Values as:

"The organization's essential and enduring tenets—a small set of general guiding principles;"¹

- This is same thing that in 1963 Thomas J. Watson, Jr. CEO of IBM called beliefs.²
- Many well-known companies have defined their core beliefs:
 - Sam Walton of Wal-Mart: "[We put] the customer ahead of everything else... If you're not serving the customer, or supporting the folks who do, then we don't need you."³
 - James Gamble of P&G : "When you cannot make **pure** goods of **full** weight, go to something else that is honest, even if it is (something as honest as performing manual labor such as) breaking stone."

1 James C. Collins and Jerry I. Porras, *Built to last : successful habits of visionary companies*, 1st ed. (New York: HarperBusiness, 1994), 73.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., 74.

OT values

- Looking again at the Bible, the **Old Testament's version** of Israel's core values is given in the **Shema**, (Deuteronomy 6:4–9) that Sam just read is.

[[slide]]

- There is only one God
- Love God with all your heart
- Remember the ten commandments
- Pass them on to your children
- Put them where you can see them always.

[[\slide]]

- Deuteronomy 6:4–9 is called the Shema (שמע), because “**shema is the first** word of passage in Hebrew.
- Shema means “observe”. “**d**); *keep, discharge an office,*”⁴ “especially D (and R) *keep and do Dt 4:6*”⁵
- The Shema says:
 - There is only **one** God
 - Love God with **all** your heart
 - **Remember** the Lord's commandments
 - **Pass** them on to your children
 - Put them where you can see them **always** – on your body, doorposts, and gates.
 - Put them on your bathroom mirrors, one your screen desktop, on your coffee mugs!
- They are unlike commandments which can be **both** positive and negative.
- Notice that our core values are **positive** statements of what we should do.

4 Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, [*Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*](#) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 1037.

5 Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, [*Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*](#) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 1037.

Drifting from our values

- As the Shema says, it is important to always keep our core values **in front of us** and visible to us.
 - That is why we are going over our core values again.
 - One time is not enough
 - They keep us aligned with God.
 - We must remember them lest we begin to fall away from God and we sin.
- The Old Testament gives us examples of people who ignored their core values.
- King David forgot the Shema in **2 Samuel 11** when he committed **adultery** with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah.
 - He ignored the commandment to **not covet** his neighbor's wife.
 - Then he forgot the commandment to **not murder** when he had Uriah killed.
- King Solomon, despite his original closeness with the Lord, **angered the Lord** later in his life when he has more than one god and built a **high place** for other gods (1 Kings 11:9).
- These are examples of why, if we are to be **faithful** Christians, we **must remember** our core values!

NT values

- The Old Testament is not the only place we see core values.
- Jesus stated the New Testament version of the Shema in Matthew 22:34-40 – the greatest commandment—which Sam also just read.

[[slide]]

- Love God with all your heart, secondly
- Love your neighbor as yourself

[[\slide]]

- Love God with all your heart, secondly
- Love your neighbor as yourself

[[pause]]

Why five values?

- If we are convinced that core values can be helpful,
- We may ask **why** do we need 5 core values? Can't it just be to "love Jesus"?

- No-one here could find fault with a goal of loving Jesus.

- However, people often need a little bit more detail on their goal. Too much detail gets **confusing**, too little detail can be **vague** and is more of a motto than a core value.
- For WVPC, we have chosen **five core** values as the right level of detail.

- For WVPC, they keep us both **working together** and from **drifting** in our values because we have a common focus.

- Core values must be **clear enough** that we can test them against what we do.
- Core values must stand the **test** of time.

WVPC's Values

- WVPC's core values connect to Jesus's two Greatest Commandment:

[[slide]]

Greatest Commandments		WVPC Core Values
• Love God with all your heart		Radical Hospitality
• Love your neighbor as yourself		Passionate Worship
		Intentional Faith Development
		Risk-Taking Mission and Service
		Extravagant Generosity

[[\slide]]

- In the Greatest Commandment, Jesus says not only **what** we do but **how** we do it.
- If we view obedience to God only as doing things,
 - then we can fall into the **trap** of being legalistic—what does it mean to “love God”?
- Jesus did not just say “love God”.
- But Jesus echoed the Shema and said **how** we should love God – “**with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.**” (Matthew 22:37).
- We must love God with **everything** about us.
- There is **no legal limit** to what we must do. We must be all in!

[[slide]]

Friendliness
Worship
Faithfulness
Missions and service
Giving

[[\slide]]

- In the same way, WVPC's could have said that we value

Friendliness
Worship
Faithfulness
Missions and service
Giving

- Just a collection of nouns and we could argue about what fulfilling each of these means.

- Like Jesus did, we have included **how** we should do these things:

[[slide]]

Friendliness	Radical Hospitality
Worship	Passionate Worship
Faithfulness	Intentional Faith Development
Missions and service	Risk-Taking Mission and Service
Giving	Extravagant Generosity

[[\slide]]

Friendliness	Radical Hospitality
Worship	Passionate Worship
Faithfulness	Intentional Faith Development
Missions and service	Risk-Taking Mission and Service
Giving	Extravagant Generosity

- WVPC shows our love of God and of neighbor through the practice of our five core values.
- They challenge us to go beyond the usual, the ordinary.
 - Their application is not static but new every day.
 - Every day the Holy Spirit may inspire us to apply our core values in a different manner or in different situation.
 - What the Holy Spirit calls us to do may not always at first be comfortable. They may challenge us and our comfort zone.

Our challenges

- For example:

[[slide]]



[[\slide]]

- Radical Hospitality: Do we
 - Sit quietly when we are with strangers
 - or do we engage with strangers
 - Eat alone
 - or invite others (Boones hospitality ministry).
 - Serve and leave
 - or engage with those whom we serve
 - Last month at The Refuge—where we serve meals to the homeless—my wife Celeste went over to the table where she had eaten and said good bye. Someone said “Wow, first time that anyone who served comes and wishes them well instead of just leaving.”

[[slide]]



[[\slide]]

- Passionate Worship: Is our worship
 - Isolated
 - or is it a connection with God and praising God with those worshipping around us?
 - A habit, something to checkoff for the week
 - or something that we look forward to each week?
 - Only what we get out of the service
 - or is it about what we put into it the service?

[[slide]]



[[\slide]]

- Intentional Faith Development: Is it
 - Only growing **our** own faith
 - or are we **helping others** grow in their faith
 - (Children, bible studies, small groups)?
 -
 - Static, we think that we know everything
 - or alive, we are still learning every day
 - (the Bible is the first **collaborative** document. Here is something new in here that the Holy Spirit has shown me every day.)

[[slide]]



[[\slide]]

- Risk-Taking Mission and Service: Is our service
 - Minimal or alive
 - Do we only do what is comfortable
 - or take risks (CZ – serve at CZ and talk to the scary Jr High Schoolers)
 - When we serve the homeless at City Team of The Refuge, do we also engage the people we serve in conversation.
 - Just serve ourselves
 - or serve others (visit shut ins, talk with neighbors, invite non-Christians to activities).

- Lastly

[[slide]]



[[\slide]]

- Extravagant Generosity: Is our giving
 - Static
 - or changed because of Doug's series on monetary giving
 - Do we give both time, money and energy?
 - Do we give only when others see us give
 - or when only God sees what we do?

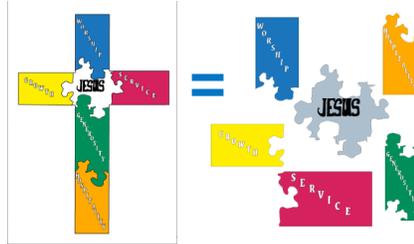
[[pause]]

One act, many values

- We can see that one action can reflect multiple values. For example, inviting someone to our bible study.
 - Can be a risk-taking mission,
 - it develops our faith and their's
 - and it demonstrates hospitality.

- A few years ago, when we last looked at our core values, we used this image of a cross:

[[slide]]



[[\slide]]

- This image shows that our values **connect** with each other and ultimately come together in Christ.
- Our **values** are a puzzle that fit together to make up our **living faith**.

Challenge

- My challenge for this week is to map / what we do / to WVPC's core values

[[slide]]

My Activities/Actions		WVPC Core Values
• • • • •		Radical Hospitality Passionate Worship Intentional Faith Development Risk-Taking Mission and Service Extravagant Generosity

[[\slide]]

- I'm a visual person, so I'm going to **suggest** a visual tool that might help you do this.
- Look in the **bulletin** and you will find a little box to fill out.
- Write down 5 of your faith oriented activities in the left-hand column.
- They don't have to all be done as part of WVPC but they should all be what you do.
- Then **draw a line** to connect them to the WVPC core value list on the right.

Example

- For example, you might write down “attend Sunday worship”.
- Everyone can do this because you are all here.

[[slide]]

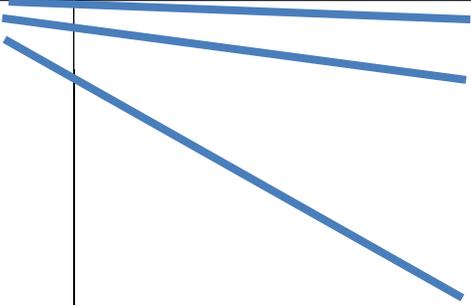
My Activities/Actions		WVPC Core Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Sunday worship • • • • 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radical Hospitality Passionate Worship Intentional Faith Development Risk-Taking Mission and Service Extravagant Generosity

[[\slide]]

- This activity connects to Passionate Worship.

- After writing down your activities, **sit back** and take a look.
 - If you don't have **enough** activities, consider what other activities you can do.
 - If you don't **strongly** map to a WVPC value, consider how to change the quality of what you do to reflect more of the core value. For example, **how can** you put more "passion" into worship?
- Commit to become more engaged in worship (**worship**).
- Perhaps your giving is weak. Give more financially or volunteer to help with the service (**Generosity**).
- Perhaps you don't engage others around you in the service, make it a point to greet someone you don't know or who looks like they could use a smiling face (**hospitality**) or invite them to a meal with you

[[slide]]

My Activities/Actions		WVPC Core Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Sunday worship • • • • 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radical Hospitality Passionate Worship Intentional Faith Development Risk-Taking Mission and Service Extravagant Generosity

[[\slide]]

- If we take these easy steps, our chart begins to look like this one with strong connections to multiple values:
- See how embracing both the noun and adjective of a core value helps grow our faith?
- Also notice that our core values are not numbered. **No value is more important** than any other value.

- How do we determine what to do?
 - Listen to the Holy Spirit
 - Pray for guidance
 - Look for opportunities that seem to drop into your lap
 - Mediate on the two greatest commandments: How can I love God today and how can I love my neighbor.

- Trust God that these new activities will be more rewarding for us and that they will lead us closer to Jesus and further God's kingdom.

Jesus' example

- We certainly have a good example of demonstrating WVPC's core values in Jesus.
 - Radical Hospitality
 - Jesus associates even with those who he should not be associating with.
 - Jesus was condemned for eating with the sinners and tax collectors in Mark 2.
 - He invites the little children to him in Matthew 19:13.
 - In John 13, Jesus washes the feet of his disciples.
 - Throughout scripture, Jesus heals many strangers.
 - He touches the unclean, the outcasts of society.
 - Passionate Worship
 - Jesus often prayed (Luke 5:16)
 - In John 17, in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prays to the Father. He prays for us, that we would know the Father as Jesus does.
 - Intentional faith Development
 - From the beginning of his ministry on the Earth, Jesus teaches his disciples, the crowds and through Scripture He teaches us.
 - Jesus also tells in Matthew 5:19 **“but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”**
 - Risk-Taking Mission and Service
 - Jesus came into this world to serve. In Mark 10:45 Jesus says:
 - ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,”**
 - Jesus tells us to risk everything for him. In Matthew 16:25 He says:
 - ²⁵For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.**
 - Extravagant Generosity
 - He gives us eternal life. Jesus says in John 10:28 **“²⁸I give them (us His sheep) eternal life, and they shall never perish;”**
 - Jesus not only risked everything, but He paid the ultimate price for each of us.
- With an example like Jesus, how can we not want to grow in our practice of these 5 core values.
- How can we not want to be more like Jesus?
-

Conclusion

- So let's recap:
- Our core values help us help us **to connect** our lives with **God** and with **each other**.
- They are a small set of essential values that **keep** us on track and prevent us from **drifting** away from our faith
- They have both a noun and an adjective component to them – **what** we should value and **how** we should act on it.
- The application of our core values is **alive**. We will have **new opportunities** every day.
- They are **challenging** as a faith which is alive should be.
- Lastly, I challenge you this week to **map your activities** to WVPC's core values and see where you are called to grow.

Prayer

- Please join me in prayer

- Dear Jesus
- You have shown us how You gave everything for God.
- You have left us instructions so that we might also give our all to God.
- Open our hearts. Show us where we need to grow.
- Our desire is to grow closer to You.
- We pray that through the Holy Spirit, we will see what we should today to be closer to You.
- We ask this in Jesus' name.
- Amen

Benediction

Sources

Collins, James C. and Jerry I. Porras. *Built to last : successful habits of visionary companies*. 1st ed. New York: HarperBusiness, 1994.

i Unless otherwise specified, all scripture is from *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011).