A Sabbatical Thought While on Lookout Mountain:
The first ten years of every church are always the most exciting. Why? Because everyone has a common purpose and a common vision. There is excitement, freshness, purpose, anticipation and the majority of the people are often more willing to sacrifice. But after that there seems to be a dulling of the spiritual senses that sets in. So today, August 4, let’s start all over. Let’s ask the Lord to reset the clock for 2019 and beyond. The next ten years can become like the first ten years if we are willing to sacrifice again. Consequently, we will never see our church flourish, unless today’s congregation is willing to sacrifice as yesterday’s congregation did.

Four priorities that have built our past 25 years – and those that will build our future:

1. The priority of our conduct

   Philippians 1:27a (NKJV) Only let your conduct be worthy…

   John MacArthur:
   “To live in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ is to live a life consistent with God's revealed Word. That includes living a life that corresponds to the divine truth Christians profess to believe, preach, teach, and defend. The church's greatest testimony before the world is spiritual integrity. When Christians live below the standards of biblical morality and reverence for their Lord, they compromise the full biblical truth concerning the character, plan, and will of God. By so doing, they seriously weaken the credibility of the gospel and lessen their impact on the world.”

   Something to consider - one of the greatest weapons you can use against the devil is a consistent life.

   Think about it…as Christians, we must never live beneath our theology.

   A.W. Pink
   “The church that does not evangelize will eventually fossilize.”

   Think about it…far too many people see the gospel as a task and not as a treasure.

   Think about it…the church is the only place on earth that exists for the benefit of non-members more than to its members.
2. The priority of our unity  
*Philippians 1:27 (NKJV)* Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

3. The priority of our courage  
*Philippians 1:28* And not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.

Think about it…Adversity does not make us what we are, but rather adversity reveals what we are.

4. The priority of our suffering  
*Philippians 1:29* For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake. Having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.

Four personal questions that we must all answer here at Clements:

1. Is our sense of the Great Commission still red hot?  
2. Are we focused on unchurched people or ourselves?  
3. Have our methods (not the mission) to reach the lost become outdated?  
4. When was the last time you actually invited and brought one person to church?

Something to never forget - what got us here won’t necessarily get us there.

**Pastor Tim’s heartfelt message to our church:**  
While the mission of the church is eternal, our strategy should shift from generation to generation. In today’s world it needs to shift even faster than that. The challenge in long term leadership is that the methods we introduced in 1994 may have been effective when we introduced them, but it’s not 1994 anymore, it’s 2019.

As 2020 approaches we must remember that the churches that love their methods more than they love their mission will die.

*who’s your ONE?