**LET’S ASSESS IT!**

**1 Corinthians 14**

Lesson 15 - Systems

Premise: Ministry is a movement. To fulfill God’s plan and purpose for our lives and for the life of our church, we cannot become complacent or stagnant. We must get *On the Move*! To accomplish this, we must honestly examine who we are, where we are, and what we are as a ministry, and with boldness, begin making the necessary changes to fulfill God call (Ephesians 2:10).

**DISCUSSION**

**Assess, Evaluate, Examine**

**DISCUSSION/DISCOVERY**

What are we assessing, evaluating, and/or examining?

* Our Statements
* Our Systems
* Our Structure
* Our Strategies

Our Systems

When we talk about “systems” we are talking about the way we interact as a ministry. How we do what we do; the logical processes and procedures that direct our actions.

Critical to successful function is well-thought out and clearly communicated processes and procedures.

Systems require good processes to support optimized function.

**Systems Defined**

a regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a unified whole.

**Process Defined**

a series of actions or operations conducing (leading) to an end.

Genesis 1 God’s Process in Creation

Notice the duration of Creation – 6 days

* Day 1 Light and Time (3-5)
* Day 2 Atmosphere/Firmament (6-8)
* Day 3 Dry ground/Plants (9-13)
* Day 4 Sun, moon, & stars (14-19)
* Day 5 Birds & sea creatures (20-23)
* Day 6 Land animals/Mankind (24-31)
* Day 7 Sabbath – Rest/Restoration (2:2-3)

Properly functioning systems need **measured processes**. Duration! Start/End. Measured.

Measured processes aid in assessment and evaluation. We can clearly see where the target was hit or missed.

Proper planning **facilitates functional processes**. Functional processes enable viable systems.

**DISCOVERY**

Planning the Processes

Critical to functional processes is proper **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

How many times have we had a good idea for a ministry event or an outreach project, that we felt should have continued in perpetuity, yet it faltered or failed after the initial attempt? Why is this?

Remember when we began this series (Let’s Assess It) we started talking about “counting the cost”?

“Counting the Cost” has everything to do with **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**. This is not simply accounting. It is planning!

\*Why in your opinion are people (particularly in church) sometimes “***planning-averse***”?

Planning holds me **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

Planning makes me **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

Planning keeps me **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

Some years ago, a young man approached the foreman of a logging crew and asked for a job. "That depends," replied the foreman. "Let's see you fell this tree." The young man stepped forward and skillfully felled a great tree. Impressed, the foreman exclaimed, "Start Monday!" Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday rolled by, and Thursday afternoon the foreman approached the young man and said, "You can pick up your paycheck on the way out today."

Startled, he replied, "I thought you paid on Friday."

"Normally we do," answered the foreman, "but we're letting you go today because you've fallen behind. Our daily felling charts show that you've dropped from first place on Monday to last on Wednesday."

 "But I'm a hard worker," the young man objected. "I arrive first, leave last, and even have worked through my coffee breaks!"

The foreman, sensing the boy's integrity, thought for a minute and then asked, "Have you been sharpening your ax?" The young man replied, "I've been working too hard to take the time."

– K. Hughes

You may be one who works effortlessly, gives generously, and serves tirelessly. Yet your work has “fallen off or fallen behind”. Perhaps it is time that you take a look at your axe!

Planning keeps the “axe from becoming dull”.

We must avoid the temptation of becoming “too busy” to sharpen our axe.

Don’t allow the predictability of habit to relieve you from staying fresh. Just because it happens annually, doesn’t mean it has to be the same from year-to-year.

Furthermore, don’t expect last year’s results from this year’s crops! This tends to be a major contributor to poor attitudes regarding planning.

Even our planning requires **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**!

\*Using our Genesis 1 reference, do you think God just thought the creation at a moment’s notice?

Take a look at Job 38:4-7. “Where were you when I established the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. 5 Who fixed its dimensions? Certainly you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? 6 What supports its foundations? Or who laid its cornerstone 7 while the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

The Creation is the product of God’s planning!!!

Preparation is critical to planning. Planning is vital to functional processes. Functional processes enable viable systems.

1 Corinthians 14:40

**DIRECTION**

Assess – Evaluate - Examine

Spend some time this week repeating/memorizing our Mission, Purpose, and Vision Statements

How much time do you allow yourself in planning?