

Sacred Roots: Signs of the Times, Vision & Mission (Week 1)

Unearthing Who We Are, Planting Who We Will Be

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I. Introduction: Sacred Roots

*“Moving forward is not **forgetting** who we are; it is **embracing** who we are”*

This is a Pioneering Church (Then... How About Now?) 3 Signs of the Pioneer

- **Leads the Way - Exploration and Discovery**
- **Breaks New Ground - Vision & Imagination**
- **Explores Unchartered Territory - Risk Taking & Resilience**

Impact & Legacy: What is your impact at First Baptist? What is the legacy you are proud to leave and/or uphold?

- Story- The children of Issachar and their ability to understand the times (1 Chronicles 12:1; 23; 32)

Of Issachar, those who had _____ of the times, to _____ what Israel ought to do

The Tribe of Issachar

The Bible provides some additional insights about the **tribe of Issachar** and its characteristics. Here are a few passages that mention Issachar:

Genesis 49:14-15: In Jacob's blessing to his sons, he speaks of **Issachar's productivity and willingness to work.** Jacob describes Issachar as a strong donkey, "couching down between the sheepfolds," indicating their agricultural expertise and ability to bear the burden of labor.

Numbers 1:28-30: When Moses conducted a census of the Israelites, the tribe of Issachar is listed among the twelve tribes. They are mentioned as having a total of **54,400 men fit** for military service.

Numbers 26:23-25: In another census taken later in the wilderness, the tribe of Issachar is listed again. This time, they have **64,300 men fit for** military service.

(A Growing Group)

Deuteronomy 33:18-19: In Moses' blessing to the tribes, he speaks of Issachar's **prosperity and blessing**. He describes them as being satisfied with their portion of land and enjoying abundance, as they would "suck of the abundance of the seas and treasures hidden in the sand."

While the Bible does not provide extensive details about Issachar as it does for some other tribes, these references highlight their unique characteristics and contributions within the Israelite community.

Discussion:

1. In relation to 1 Chronicles 12:32 How would you define "understanding the times"? What does it mean for us today?

Vision: Seeking God's Direction (What We Will Accomplish)

- The importance of having a clear vision for a church's mission

Proverbs 29:18- Where there is no _____ the people _____

Inverse: Where there is _____ the people _____

Takeaway: Lives are on the line!

Biblical Examples of People with Vision:

1. **Moses:** In the book of Exodus, Moses encountered God through a burning bush and received a vision and calling to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt (Exodus 3:1-10). God revealed His name to Moses and gave him **specific instructions** for his role as a deliverer and leader.
2. **Isaiah:** The prophet Isaiah had a remarkable vision of God's glory and received a **commissioning to be** a messenger to the people of Israel. In Isaiah 6:1-8, Isaiah sees the Lord seated on His throne and experiences a profound encounter with God's holiness. He then responds to God's call, saying, "Here am I! Send me."
3. **Ezekiel:** The prophet Ezekiel had several visions throughout the book bearing his name. In Ezekiel 1, he sees a vision of God's glory with heavenly creatures and wheels, which serves as a **powerful initiation into** his prophetic ministry. **God commissions** Ezekiel to speak His messages to the exiled Israelites.

The Significance of Vision

Discussion:

1. Why is it important for a church to have a clear vision for its mission? How does it help guide the activities and decisions of the church?

2. What is the vision of this church? Does it have an informed understanding of the times?

Mission: Living out the Vision (How We Will Accomplish It)

- The relationship between vision and mission, emphasizing the need for alignment.
 - Vision Fuels the Mission
- Explore biblical passages that highlight the church universal mission, such as the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) and the call to love and serve others (Mark 12:30-31).

Discussion:

1. What is the mission of this church? Does it have an informed understanding of the times?

Conclusion & Notes:
