

Attention: To all who want their church to be the best it came be in reaching others.
The following is what I call "Brother C's Manifesto."

I was written by my late father, Clayton lies.
I've left it in his unique handwriting. I still love coming across a document or file that features his script.

Daddy loved the Lord and he loved his church, Dry Creek Baptist.

I'm not sure of the reason or date for this lengthy essay on what makes a real church.
I simply know each I read it, I'm impacted by his thoughts.

"Though dead, he speaketh still."

I KNOW WE SHOULD NOT COMPARE CHURCHES OR TRY TO MEASURE THEM UP AGAINST ONE ANOTHER IN MINISTRY OR NUMBERS. HOWEVER, SINCE I AM IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH ALL THE CHURCHES AND THE KEY CHURCH LEADERS IN OUR ASSOCIATION (46 CHURCHES) I SEE THE DIFFERENCES. I SEE THE STRENGTHS AND THE WEAKNESSES, SOMETIMES VERY GLARING CHARACTERISTICS.

I CAN IMMEDIATELY SEE THAT DOY CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH IN SCOPE OF MINISTRY GOES FAR BEYOND ANY ASSOCIATIONAL CHURCH OUR SIZE. THIS IS TRUE IN PRACTICALLY EVERY ASPECT OF CHURCH GROWTH, EVEN IN GIVING AND BUDGET. THIS IS IN NO WAY TO SAY WE MEASURE UP TO THE BIBLICAL STANDARDS OF CHRIST'S CHURCH, NOR IS IT TO SAY WE HAVE NO GLARING WEAKNESSES, BECAUSE WE DO.

I HAVE STUDIED MUCH ABOUT WHAT HAS MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN BEING A CHURCH THAT IS ABLE TO BE SO BLESSED. I AM PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN PUTTING THESE COMPONENTS DOWN IN WRITING FOR TWO REASONS. (1) THAT WE MIGHT NEVER TAKE ONE STEP BACKWARD IN OUR PURSUIT OF BEING MORE THE SERVANT CHURCH. (2) SO THAT THE YOUNGER MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCH MIGHT REALIZE WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE AND MORE FULLY APPRECIATE THE BLESSINGS WE NOW ENJOY AND REALIZE THAT THESE BLESSINGS MUST CONTINUALLY BE PASSED ON AND SHARED WITH OTHERS.

I AM GOING TO LIST SOME THINGS AS THEY CAME TO MIND THAT I FEEL CONTRIBUTE MUCH TO WHERE

WE ARE TODAY. THEY ARE NOT LISTED IN ANY DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE BECAUSE I AM SURE JESUS' REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPORTANCE WOULD BE FAR FROM MINE.

(1) A WILLINGNESS TO STEP OUT IN FAITH AND GIVE NEW IDEAS A TRY.

A WILLINGNESS TO GO INTO A BUS MINISTRY IN 1970, BEFORE BUS MINISTRIES REALLY GOT BIG. A WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE A BUS MINISTRY AFTER BUS MINISTRIES HAVE BECOME ALMOST EXTINCT. A WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THOSE WHO GREATLY OPPOSED THIS IDEA TO BE PATIENT.

A WILLINGNESS IN 1971, TO RE-BUILD IN A NEW AREA AND LEAVE MANY OF THE PREVIOUS MEMORIES AND TIES TO THE PAST BEHIND. THE WILLINGNESS OF MANY OF THE OLDER MEMBERS TO SUFFER THE MENTAL HURT OF THE MOVE AND GO ON AND BE FAITHFUL.

A WILLINGNESS THROUGH THE YEARS TO CONTINUALLY BE TRAINING NEW AND UNCHURCHED CHILDREN AND YOUTH HOW TO ACT IN CHURCH AND PATIENTLY AND SOMETIMES PAINFULLY ATTEMPTING TO LEAD THEM TO CHRIST AND HELP THEM GROW IN THEIR NEW WALK.

(2) A WILLINGNESS TO MAKE ALL PEOPLE FEEL IMPORTANT IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH ARE IMPORTANT AT DRY CREEK. THEY ARE NOT PUT DOWN OR TALKED DOWN TO. THEIR SPIRITUAL, SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL NEEDS ARE IMPORTANT, AS ARE THEIR FEELINGS. THE CHURCH HAS STRIVED TO SEE THEY HAVE A COMPLETE PROGRAM WITH THE BEST LEADERS AVAILABLE.

YOUNG PEOPLE KNOW THAT YOU CAN HAVE A GOOD TIME WHILE SERVING THE MASTER. DAY CREEK BUDGETS THRU THE YEARS SYMBOLIZE THE IMMENSE IMPORTANCE WE PLACE ON OUR CHILDREN AND TEEN-AGERS.

OUR SENIOR CHURCH MEMBERS ARE RESPECTED AND LOVED AND ENCOURAGED TO KEEP ON CONTRIBUTING TO OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH THEIR EXPERIENCE AND GODLY KNOWLEDGE.

OUR DOORS ARE OPEN TO ANY IN NEED OF A CHURCH HOME. MANY OF OUR KEY LEADERS TODAY ARE FOLKS WHO NO LONGER FOUND IT POSSIBLE TO ^{HAPPILY} SERVE IN THEIR FORMER CHURCH HOMES. THIS IS A SAD AFFAIR WHEN THIS HAPPENS, BUT I PRAY OUR CHURCH WILL CONTINUE TO SEE THAT WE WELCOME THEM WITH OPEN ARMS, HELP HEAL THEIR HURT AND CURE THEM FOR OUR OWN.

(3) A WILLINGNESS TO HELP ANY AND SHARE ALL.

DAY CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH IS, HAS BEEN AND SHOULD EVER BE THE LEADER IN CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE, IF FOR NO OTHER REASON ^{THAT} THE WAY WE HAVE BEEN BLESSED BEYOND COUNTING. OUR CARING FOR THE NEEDY (WHETHER PART OF OUR CHURCH OR NOT) IS PERHAPS THE MOST BIBLICAL THING WE DO (MATTHEW 25:34-40). FROM MY ASSOCIATION WITH THIS CHURCH IN 1960 TO NOW, I FEEL LIKE WE HAVE STEADILY GROWN IN MINISTERING TO THOSE IN NEED. EACH TIME WE HAVE INCREASED OUR EFFORTS, WE HAVE BEEN BLESSED MANY-FOLD. MAY WE NOT

FAIL TO MULTIPLY OUR EFFORTS THIS YEAR AND EVERY YEAR FOR THIS IS WHAT BEING LIKE JESUS IS ALL ABOUT. I SEE VERY LITTLE BENEVOLENCE IN MANY OF OUR CHURCHES, AND I SEE THEM AT OR NEAR SPIRITUAL DEATH.

DRY CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH HAS PROCLAIMED THROUGH THE YEARS THAT THE FACILITIES THAT GOD HAS BLESSED US WITH ARE TO BE SHARED WITH ALL (CHURCH OR UNCHURCHED, REGARDLESS OF DENOMINATION), FREELY AND WITH LOVE AND APPRECIATION FOR BEING ABLE TO DO SO IN JESUS' NAME.

OUR CHURCH HAS SHOWN A RESPECT FOR THE OTHER CHURCHES AND DENOMINATIONS IN OUR AREA, WISHING THEM WELL IN THEIR CHRISTIAN ENDEAVORS AND LETTING THEM KNOW THEY EVER HAVE A FRIEND IN US. THIS HAS BEEN DONE THROUGH PERIODS WHEN WE HAVE NOT BEEN SHOWN THIS RESPECT BY SOME WE HAVE TRIED TO BEFRIEND. LET US THANK GOD THAT WE SEEKED NO RETALUTION IN WORD OR DEED AND BY THUS DOING WAS ALLOWED TO GROW IN HIS STRENGTH, AND FEEL GOOD WITHIN OURSELVES.

(4) A WILLINGNESS TO DO MISSIONS.

DRY CREEK ACCEPTS AND BELIEVES IN THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF MISSIONS. THERE IS THE REALIZATION THAT WE MUST DO WHAT WE CAN TO GIVE TO AND DO

NOT MANY STEPS IN THOSE DAYS

MISSION MINISTRY, EVEN THOUGH WE MAY BE OVER-
INTERMED BECAUSE THE NEEDS ARE SO IMMENSE
AND OUR ABILITY SO LIMITED.

IN THE EARLY SIXTIES, WHEN OUR YEARLY
BUDGET WAS UNDER \$5,000, WE SET IN MOTION
A YEARLY ONE-HALF PER CENT INCREASE IN MISSION

→ GIVING UNTIL WE HAVE REACHED THE PRESENT
PER CENTAGE GIFTS TO THE CO-OPERATIVE PROGRAM,
DRY CREEK BAPTIST CAMP AND BEAUREGARD BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION. GOD HAS TRULY BLESSED THIS STEP IN FAITH.

FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS WE HAVE ATTEMPTED
TO SPONSOR HANDS-ON YEAR-ROUND MISSION TRAINING FOR
THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF OUR CHURCH. OUR TIME AND
OUR FINANCES HAVE BEEN WELL INVESTED AS REFLECTED
IN THE ENTHUSIASM FOR MINISTRY AND GROWTH
EXHIBITED BY OUR TEEN-AGERS.

I HAVE LISTED FOUR (4) THINGS ABOVE THAT
I FEEL ARE KEYS TO BEING A SERVANT CHURCH
OR SERVANT PEOPLE. I WILL LIST SOME OTHER
ELEMENTS OF OUR CHURCH WHICH MAY NOT
SEEM AS IMPRESSIVE OR AS IMPORTANT BUT ARE A
GREAT PLUS IN OUR SPREADING THE GOSPEL:

(1) DRY CREEK CAN BE PROUD OF THE WAY WE
HAVE INCREASED OUR BUDGET (AND ESPECIALLY
MINISTRY ITEMS) EVEN IN YEARS WHEN THINGS WERE
NOT OPTIMISTIC TO MEETING BUDGET NEEDS.

(2) THE FACT THAT FOR 18 YEARS (WITH THE

CHURCH HAS LONG REALIZED THAT THE FEELINGS OF OUR FAMILY AND VISITORS ARE SO VERY IMPORTANT TO US AND TO OUR LORD. GOOD WILL ONCE SOURD CAN TAKE YEARS TO RESTORE OR NEVER BE RESTORED, ERASING HOPE OF MINISTRY.

(8) DRY CREEK IS A PLACE WHERE AN INDIVIDUAL'S THOUGHTS ARE IMPORTANT AND ARE READILY HEARD. THE WILLINGNESS TO SHARE ONE'S THOUGHTS ARE ENCOURAGED EVEN WHEN THEY ARE NOT ^{THE} FEELINGS OF THE MAJORITY. MANY PITFALLS HAVE BEEN AVOIDED IN PAST YEARS, BECAUSE SOMEONE WAS WILLING TO SPEAK OUT UNDER THE HOLY SPIRIT'S LEADING.

(9) DRY CREEK BAPTIST ENDORSES THE TEAM CONCEPT. THERE ARE NO ^{BIG} POSITIONS OR LITTLE POSITIONS, NO BIG JOBS OR LITTLE JOBS. IT'S JUST EVERYBODY DOING WHAT HE OR SHE IS CALLED TO DO AS GOOD AS THEY CAN IN THE STRENGTH OF THE LORD AND HELPING AND ENCOURAGING THE PERSONS WORKING ON THE LEFT AND RIGHT.

ALL THE TIME I HAVE SPENT WRITING THIS ONE THOUGHT WOULD NOT LEAVE MY MIND. WE HAVE GOT FAR TO GO, WE WOULD ALL ADMIT. HOWEVER, LET US GUARD AGAINST TAKING ONE STEP BACKWARD - NOT EVEN A BABY STEP. WE DID NOT GET WHERE WE ARE AS A CHURCH BY TAKING A LOT OF GIANT STEPS FORWARD. THERE WERE SOME GIANT STEPS ALONG THE WAY BUT

Mostly it was those small steps.—Each building yearning on the successes and failures that we had been through. Today we can see our blessings as if they are an immense and beautiful monument for us to behold. I can almost hear Jesus say, "This is but a token to what you could have had or can claim in the future."

Let us vow to double, triple and on and on every ministry we have—increasing everything in quantity and quality. Let us pray more and more for the leadership of the Holy Spirit and praise more and more the increase He will give.

I have been careful not to deal in personalities that have added so much to the growth of God's church in Dry Creek, as tempted as I was to do so.

I do feel led to introduce the young people and newcomers of this family to a special person who supplied so much inspiration to me upon coming to Dry Creek as a young man of 26 years. Her name was Bertha Lindsey Showe and though she died of cancer only two or three ^{years} after I came to know her, she blessed my life forever. This lady radiated Jesus and I think all the qualities of her life helped point the direction our church was

BEGINNING TO TAKE AND THE PATH OF MINISTRY WE
ARE ON TODAY.

~~NOT~~ NOT EVERYONE WHO READS THIS ARTICLE
WILL UNDERSTAND IT OR ^{SOME} MAY EVEN DISAGREE
WITH MUCH OF IT. PLEASE ALLOW
ME TO BE THE VOICE OF THE INDIVIDUAL WHO
MAY BE A LITTLE DIFFERENT BUT LOVES DRY
CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH SO VERY, VERY DEARLY.

YOUR FRIEND
Clayton Shu