

**Rooted in the Word**  
**Mission, Vision, and Values Part 3**  
**Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026**  
**By Ryan Perry**

**Scripture**

**Hebrews 4:12**

***[12] For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***

**2 Timothy 3:16–17**

***[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.***

**Let's Pray**

**Introduction**

In 1848, a carpenter by the name of James Marshall was building a sawmill on the American River when he noticed something glimmering in the riverbed. **So he stepped into the water and discovered that what he was looking at was gold.**

Now his boss, John Sutter, tried really hard to keep it a secret because he knew that if this news got out, people would come from all over to mine gold, which would not only destroy his land but also diminish his workforce.

Unfortunately, he wasn't successful, and by the end of 1848, President Polk confirmed the discovery in a written letter to Congress.

**Once this happened, all restraint was lost.** And beginning in 1849, roughly 300,000 people from the Eastern U.S., Latin America, Europe, and China flooded to California in search of gold.

This group became known as the "Forty Niners" (for all you football fans), and they literally transformed San Francisco from a tiny port town into a booming metropolis.

It practically happened overnight, and it was all built on the hope and promise of gold in the mountains of California.

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If you have been with us the last couple of weeks or have been listening online, then you know that I have been walking us through the new mission, vision, and values that we believe God has given us as a church.

Two weeks ago, I unpacked the new mission and vision that we believe God is calling us to pursue here at LEFC. Then last week, I talked about the first of our 5 core values that not only identify our strengths and what's important to us, but serve as a guide for how we will accomplish this mission and vision in this church and within the Coulee Region. Here's what we have learned so far:

## **Mission**

**Loving God and inviting people to follow Christ.**

## **5-Year Vision**

**We are a growing household of God that equips and sends backyard missionaries into the Coulee Region.**

And the first and most important value that will inform and guide this mission and vision is **worship**. We will be a church that prioritizes:

## **Value 1**

### **Worshiping our Sovereign Father**

But how do we know that this mission, vision, and value are the most important things that we should be doing as a church? Did the committee just conjure them up out of thin air? Did we merely go with our gut? Or did we look to some other source for guidance and instruction?

Well, I'm very pleased to tell you that we didn't simply go with our gut. If we did, this whole thing would look a lot different and would probably feel a lot easier to accomplish by our own strength.

Instead, there were two things that really led us in the process of putting all of this together. One, we spent a lot of time in prayer, talking with the Lord about what he wanted for LEFC (**This will be our sermon in two weeks**). Two, we immersed ourselves in the words he has already spoken to us in the Bible.

Because we believe that the word of God is infallible, and that he gave it to us to show us who he is, how we can be in a relationship with him, **and as a guide for what we should be doing as his people.**

This brings us to the second value that we believe is true at LEFC, while also being something that we need to be pursuing. To be a church that is:

## Value 2

### Rooted in God's Infallible Word

Or to say it another way:

**Main Idea: Because the Scriptures are God's perfect, powerful, and everlasting truth, we build our lives on His Word.**

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You see, when 300,000 people flooded to California in search of gold, they built a whole city and state infrastructure on a dream. **That there was gold in California, and they could get rich off of it.**

Now, did some people get rich during this gold rush? Yes. However, most of the miners who came in search of gold eventually left poorer and more in debt than when they arrived.

Also, when we look back at the historical records, we can see that there were a lot of unintended consequences that came with trying to build a society and economy on gold.

- Lawlessness abounded at a time when there were very few legal structures in California. **In fact, this is why it became known as the Wild West.**
- The native people were displaced, attacked, and often massacred as gold settlements were created.
- The environment was highly damaged and stripped of its resources without any concern for conservation.

This means that many came in search of a dream that wasn't real, and it left them and their surroundings worse off than before they got there.

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And yet, the Word of God will never do that to us. Because it is perfect in all that it teaches, it is powerfully at work in our lives, and it will endure forever and never let us down.

That's why, this morning, we are going to look at what it means to be rooted in God's infallible word and how we, as a faith family, should be building our lives upon it.

The place we need to begin this morning is with our own hearts and what we believe to be true about the Bible.

## **1. Trust that the Bible is God's perfect, powerful, and everlasting truth**

### Illustration

Again, when the gold rush began in 1849, roughly 300,000 people flocked to California with hopes and dreams of getting rich on gold. However, for most of them, they were putting their hope in the unknown.

Sure, they knew that gold existed in California, but they didn't know how much, nor did they know if they had the ability to find it, or the know-how to actually dig it up and turn it into a profitable business.

In many ways, their dreams were built on incomplete and unsubstantiated information.

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But when we put our hope and trust in the Word of God, we are not trusting in something that is incomplete or unsubstantiated. In fact, the Bible is the greatest and most historically reliable document ever created.

- It has more ancient manuscripts in existence than any other historical document. We have more than 24,000 ancient copies of the New Testament alone.
- The vast majority of historians agree that the New Testament was written within the lifetime of many eyewitnesses who could have refuted the writers if they were false.
- Archeology consistently confirms and does not contradict the biblical record.
- It's internally consistent even though it was written over 1500 years, by 40 plus authors, across three continents, and in three different languages.
- The Bible gives us the best and clearest explanation of human behavior and why the world works the way it does.
- It has endured and has profoundly shaped humanity and human history in a way that no other text has.

Based on this information alone, we could probably conclude that the bible is reliable and should be trusted.

But if we are truly going to trust the Bible as God's Word and truth, then it's also important to know what the authors themselves thought about the scriptures and their purpose. Look with me at the first part of 2 Timothy 3:16, which says:

***[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God...***

Or in Matthew 4:4, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy and says,

***“Man shall not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”***

Paul, Matthew, Jesus, and the book of Deuteronomy make it clear that scripture comes from God and should be considered his very words that were given to his people so that they would know how to live.

Likewise, we should also believe that the 66 books of the Bible are the very words of God, and that they are perfect, powerful, everlasting, and true. In fact, let's briefly look at what scripture says about itself, as it relates to each of these aspects.

The Bible is Perfect

**Psalm 19:7**

***[7] The law of the LORD is perfect,  
reviving the soul;  
the testimony of the LORD is sure,  
making wise the simple;***

Everything that God spoke through human authors and put down on paper in the Bible is flawless and without error, according to scripture. This means that it never makes mistakes, and it will never be wrong or proven to be wrong.

The Bible is Powerful

**Hebrews 4:12**

***[12] For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword,  
piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning  
the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***

**Isaiah 55:11**

***[11] so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;  
it shall not return to me empty,  
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,  
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.***

The Word of God is living and active and will accomplish the purposes that God has for it both in our lives and in the world.

And there is never a time when it will come up short in our life or in the lives of others, because it never returns to God without completing its intended task.

The Bible is Everlasting

**Isaiah 40:8**

***[8] The grass withers, the flower fades,  
but the word of our God will stand forever.***

The scriptures are unchanging, immovable, and eternal. Therefore, they will powerfully and forever accomplish the purposes for which they were spoken.

The Bible is True

**John 17:17**

***[17] Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.***

If the Bible was said to be flawless, powerful, and eternal, and yet its words did not speak truth, then we would have no reason to trust it, nor would we want to follow what it says.

But the consistent testimony of scripture from beginning to end is that it is giving us a complete, comprehensive, and true picture of everything that God wants to tell us about himself, the world, humanity, and how we are supposed to live as his people.

**Application**

This is why, at LEFC, we believe everything that the Bible teaches. We trust everything that it says about God and our need for a Savior, and we put our hope in all of the promises that God has given to us in it.

Because we know that it is the very words of God that he has given to us for our good, our flourishing, and for the building of his kingdom.

Which means that we will not only trust everything that it says, but we will proclaim and teach all that it contains.

## 2. Teach the whole counsel of God's Word

### 2 Timothy 3:16–17

***[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.***

#### Illustration

When James Marshal first found gold in the American River, his boss at the time, John Sutter, did all that he could to keep it a secret. Now, was he motivated by greed, so that he could keep it for himself? Maybe!

But from what we know, he did it because he knew that it was going to be bad for the land and his workers, and that it would lead to the many negatives that we pointed out earlier, including lawlessness, financial ruin, and the destruction of native populations.

**So he worked hard, though unsuccessfully, to keep the discovery hidden.**

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However, when it comes to the Bible, we're not dealing with a book or an ideology that does any of those things. In fact, it is quite the opposite. It actually gives us an accurate and reliable understanding of reality (why things are the way they are), and it's the only book that has the power to save us and transform our lives.

As it says in James 1:21:

**[21] Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.**

And when we look at 2 Timothy 3:16, it tells us that scripture is:

Profitable and good for teaching us (who God is and what he wants). It reproofs us and lets us know when we are wrong. It corrects us and shows us the right way to think and live. And it trains us to think, act, and speak in ways that honor God and reflect Jesus in the world.

And if we look through the scriptures, we can see the various ways that it does this transforming work in our lives.

Teaches us About God

**Deuteronomy 32:4**

***[4] “The Rock, his work is perfect,  
for all his ways are justice.***

***A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,  
just and upright is he.***

The Bible shows us the perfections and the grandeur of God. That he is perfectly holy, powerful, just, faithful, and upright in all his ways. Which is important because it not only reveals to us that he is worthy of being followed, but it also shows us that we have fallen short of his perfection. **Which means that we are sinful and in need of a Savior.**

Shows us our sin and need

**Romans 3:23**

***[23] for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,***

**Psalm 49:7–8**

***[7] Truly no man can ransom another,  
or give to God the price of his life,***

***[8] for the ransom of their life is costly  
and can never suffice,***

The scriptures are crystal clear on this point. God is holy, and we are not. Therefore, we are sinners who have fallen short of his perfect standard, and we are unable to save ourselves.

And yet, despite that bad news, the Bible doesn't leave us to wallow in the pit of despair. Because God tells us in his perfect and everlasting Word that we not only need a Savior, but he has provided him for us through His Son Jesus Christ.

Reveals Christ our Savior

**Romans 6:23**

***[23] For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

## John 3:16–17

***[16] For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. [17] For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.***

**Yes, God is clear in His Word that we are dead in our sin.** But he is also just as clear that he has provided a rescue for us by sending his son Jesus Christ to die in our place and to be the rescuer of our souls so that we can spend an eternity with God in his kingdom.

This is truly the best and greatest news that we all need. Our eternity has been bought and secured by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

However, scripture doesn't only tell us about the good and eternal life that is to come. It also tells us how to experience God's goodness today.

Instructs us on living the good life

## Deuteronomy 10:12–13

**[12] “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, [13] and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, **which I am commanding you today for your good?**”**

As Christians, God wants us both to believe in him and follow him. And it is through his Word, by the Power of the Holy Spirit, that both of those things become a reality. He uses the Bible to bring us to faith, and to show us how we should be loving him, serving him, and walking in his ways.

**He does all of this, as I said last week, for his glory, and so we can experience the best and greatest life possible.**

## Application

This is why we take the Bible seriously here at LEFC. We believe that these 66 books contain the true and powerful words of God, and we believe that it is God's main way to save people and to transform them into the image of Christ.

Therefore, we believe that an important part of **“loving God and inviting people to follow Christ”** is helping others to see, believe, and encounter the living God of the Bible.

This means that we are going to be a church that teaches and proclaims every part of the Scriptures. We will not shy away from any of it, including the parts that many in our culture don't like.

**Because we believe it is God's living revelation to us, and that it contains everything we need for life and godliness until we are with Jesus in our heavenly home.**

And so, if you are a part of this faith family, you are going to hear and be taught from the entire council of God's Word. And with it, you are going to continually be encouraged to go beyond merely reading and knowing it on an intellectual level.

Because to fully experience the good and transformed life that God has for us, the Bible tells us that we need to not just know the word, but we need to **"Abide in the Word."**

### **3. Abide in the Word of Christ**

**John 8:31-32**

***[31] So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, [32] and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."***

#### Illustration

During the Gold rush, the reason that the gold prospectors were called the 49ers is primarily because they started coming to California in **1849**. And yet, when we look at the history of this group of people, this name came to mean so much more. Because gold and the search for gold profoundly shaped their hopes, beliefs, their actions, and their very way of life. So "The 49ers" wasn't simply a name; rather, it became an identity.

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Now, when we talk about "abiding in Christ or in the Word of Christ" as Christians, very often it conjures up in our minds this idea of "resting" or "sitting." So we imagine ourselves, like John, at the last supper, reclining and resting on Jesus.

Now, to be sure, when we use the word "abide," there is a restful aspect to it. In fact, the word itself means **"to sit, dwell, to stay, or to remain."**

So it is only natural to conclude that when we abide (dwell) in Christ and in the Word of Christ, we are called to be at peace and to rest. As it says in Psalm 91:1:

***[1] He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide (rest) in the shadow of the Almighty.***

However, we need to realize that the word “abide” also means to “continue” and to “endure.” Which means that we aren’t just stopping to take rest or take a nap with Jesus (even though a nice restful nap sounds good).

**Instead, we are continually working, by the Power of the Holy Spirit, to live under the shaping authority of Jesus’ teaching and really all of the scriptures.**

So that, like gold during the gold rush, it would shape our hopes, our beliefs, and our actions.

This means that we aren’t supposed to just read the word, but meditate on it so that it would confront us, convict us, encourage us, and change our desires and affections to the very core of us. As Paul writes in Colossians 3:16:

**[16] *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.***

It also means that we submit to its authority so that God and His Word can have the final say over our beliefs, values, and conduct. As it says in James 1:7:

**James 4:7**

**[7] *Submit yourselves therefore to God.***

And finally, it means that we mine the depths of the Word so that we can know and love God.

**John 17:3**

**[3] *And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.***

**John 14:21**

**[21] *Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.***

**Application**

We are supposed to know and follow the scriptures so that our entire lives would be shaped by God and His Word.

Because when our lives are conformed to the image of his son Jesus Christ, we will experience the lasting joy and rest that God has planned for us, and we will brightly shine his greatness and goodness to those in our own backyards.

## **Conclusion**

Church, this is why you can be assured that whenever you come to participate in the faith family of LEFC, we will do everything we can to be a people who are **“Rooted in God’s infallible word.”**

Because we do believe that the Bible contains the living and active words that God has spoken to his people.

We wholeheartedly trust that they are perfect, powerful, everlasting, and true in every way. And we know that God works through his word to draw the lost to himself, to transform lives, and to instruct his people, so that we can experience the full and everlasting life with him.

Therefore, in everything we do as a church, the word will be central, it will be proclaimed, and it will be our mission to call all people know and to live by all that it says.

Because we know that the Bible always accomplishes its purposes, and that God will use it to complete his good and perfect work in the world and in all who know and love him.

Once again, as it says in 2 Timothy 3:16-17:

***[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.***

Church, let’s be a people who build our lives on His Word.

## **Let’s Pray**