

“Reflections”

Where we are going?

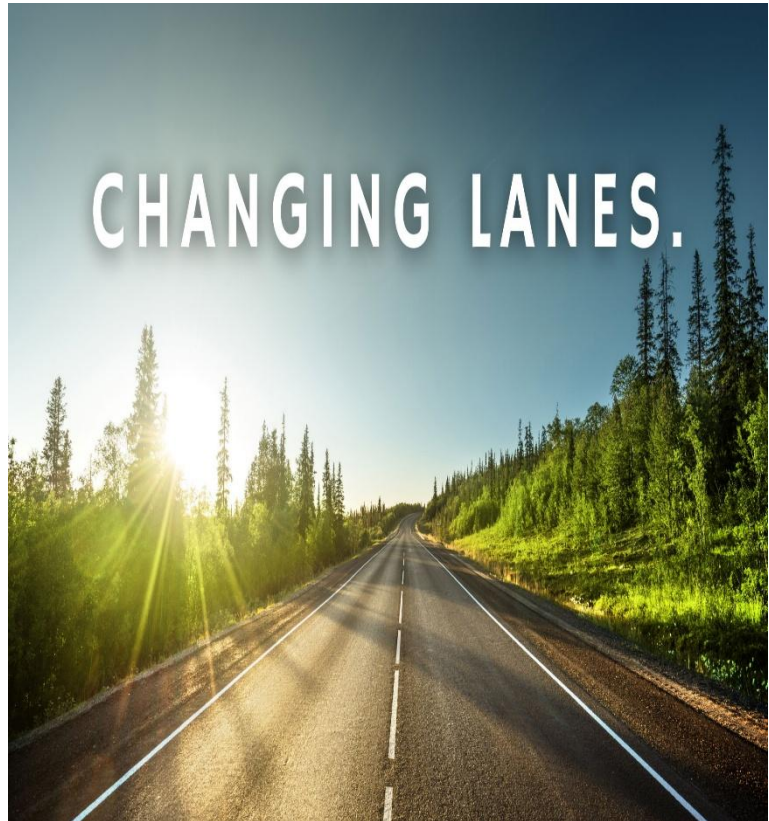
Someone once said, *“Where we come from is not as important as where we are going.”* That statement might sum up your thoughts about our need as a congregation to reflect on where we’re going and what God would have us do next. Why do we need to reflect on our congregation’s spiritual DNA? What do we even mean by Spiritual DNA, anyway? Why not simply chart a new direction forward?

Recently, as I’ve been visiting people, one of the comments I heard was similar to the thoughts above, but expressed in a more probing way, *“What does it matter where we’ve come from? Why not just set a new direction?”* The question came from someone in the business world, and it revealed a degree of frustration with a perceived lack of change, or willingness to change, the way we’ve been ‘doing church’ for decades. Maybe you share their frustration, but I want you to consider that the church shouldn’t be run like a business; our purpose and message are not subject to the ups and downs of the markets, and we don’t operate on supply and demand or profit margins. So, any changes that a local church makes in its vision or ministries shouldn’t be done simply because ‘the times have changed’ or ‘people’s’ tastes have changed.’

Are changes in ministries or direction needed from time to time? Of course, but usually these changes are necessary because the local church has lost sight of the specific purposes for which God brought them together in the 1st place. If that’s the case, then any changes that a congregation feels it needs to undertake must align with and embrace the unique identity and purposes for which God established it. In a very practical way, it means that we, as the English congregation of Chinese Gospel Church Toronto, must align with and embrace the unique spiritual identity and purpose for which he has brought us together. Simply put, how can we know where God wants us to go and what he wants us to do unless we know who we are? How has God uniquely created us to serve him? (Spiritual DNA)



That's an important concept to contemplate. CGC is unique, as is every local church. We have a distinctive imprint of God's grace and a specific call to serve where he has established us. So, if setting a direction for a church is intimately connected to their unique testimony of God's grace, then setting a direction isn't so much about doing something 'new' as it is about reinvigorating God's purposes for us and finding the best ways to accomplish that today. It's more like changing lanes on the highway. We've been in the far-right hand lane of the 407, slowly biding our time, but now we're going to change lanes, so we look in the mirror to see behind us, then accelerate to change lanes. We're not changing direction so much as we're changing the way we're driving. We have new purpose, new momentum.



How can we know where we're going unless we know who we are and where we've been?

Over the past few months, our congregational leadership has been diving deep into the makeup of our spiritual DNA (more on this to come) as a basis for seeking God's direction moving forward. It's the 1st necessary step before we start discussing future ministries. We've made some amazing discoveries that we'd like to share with you through information releases such as this and the Town Hall in November, but if you wish to share something, or just want to get a bit of the inside scoop on the process, please just ask one of the congregational leaders. We are open and eager to share! We also humbly ask that you pray along with us as we seek God's perfect will so that we can serve strong in the knowledge that Christ is most glorified when we are focused on his purposes for us.

May the Lord continue to strengthen and use you this week to bring glory to his name.

Pastor Kevin