

The most popular Tribal Church posts

December 28, 2012

Here are the 12 Tribal Church posts people read the most this year:

1) Love and Lent. “Our pastor had an affair and confessed it in his sermon. He stood up in front of the church and let the gathered members know that he had succumbed to temptation, but he was ready to just ‘move on.’”

2) Dealing with inappropriate comments. “I started in the pastorate in my mid-twenties. I was short and good-natured, and I received awkward comments quite a bit. I don’t as much any longer. I got better with reaction time and gained some tools to deflect the comments.”

3) Would Jesus dispense contraceptive pills? “God is concerned with the health of women. God cares about teenagers who end up in a lifetime of poverty. Jesus healed the bleeding woman 2,000 years ago, and I think if he walked the streets today, he just might hand her a packet of pink pills. ”

4) Changes in the PC(USA) dues structure. “As common sense dictates, an insurance company needs a good percentage of healthy people in order to do well. Why would our insurance plan give incentives to retirement-age clergy to work longer while making it cost more for clergy with dependents?”

5) Preaching lessons at a fundamentalist Bible school. “When a white man steps into the place where he belongs, he has an internal power with which he was born. But an entirely different power emerges from women who have been told that they are not allowed to speak in church—and suddenly rise behind the pulpit..”

6) Power games. “Do you know the rules of power? You might want to learn the rules in order to use them, to know when they are being used on you, or to reject them. Whatever you decide, just know that around every boardroom in America, they’re playing the game. And you’ll be playing it (even when you don’t realize it) at

your church.”

7) Living with two loves. “Our economic model is breaking down. A church with 50 households can no longer support one pastor. Even when a minister is willing to live frugally, the cost of education and medical benefits keeps getting higher. So, many people jump to bivocational ministry as the answer.”

8) Forgive us our debts. “You might be on a preparation committee that thinks that a candidate needs that extra training before they ought to be ordained. If you are, then let me tell you something that the seminary student under your care can’t tell you: students can’t afford it any longer.”

9) Planning for a vital future. “Why are we losing congregations? There are many factors. If I’m painting with a broad brush, I’d say that it is because we are largely rural, white and older. What can we do to ensure a vital future? Focus on urban church planting.”

10) Ministry in the midst of wounds. “As important as it is to minister from those wounded places, to preach about real emotional issues, and to write from a place of spiritual depth, there is also danger in it—for us and for our communities.”

11) The spiritual nature of social media. “What have you gained from online worship and community? How has it impacted your life? What are the negative aspects of it? ”

12) Love made visible. “Once you finally get a job, then you need to get a ‘real’ job. Then you can expect to be laid off at least once in your life. Then you have to retool and enter the workforce again.”