



### **Focus on the Future**

#### **Guest Predictions: Pastor John Zoller**

*Guest Predictions is a regular feature in which we ask leaders in a number of professions questions that affect us all.*

***John Zoller has been the Pastor of Mount Hope Baptist Church ([www.mthopebaptistchurch.org](http://www.mthopebaptistchurch.org)) for thirteen years, having previously served two churches in upstate New York for eighteen years. He is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and has done doctoral work at Denver Seminary. John has been married to his wife Alice for forty years, and has three married children and six grandchildren. He loves serving the Lord and the family of Mount Hope as well as music and photography***

**Q: What changes in your professional environment in the past 3-5 years have you found to be the most beneficial?**

**A:** E-mail, the cell phone and the Internet are good things if they are kept under control. The ability to communicate easily is a big plus—it has allowed me to work from home while caring for elderly parents.

**Q: What changes have been the most troubling to you?**

**A:** Electronic communication devices make people less willing to relate to each other on a personal level. It's easier to remain isolated from other people, without touching lives directly or having genuine relationships.

TV, electronic games and the internet can be so time-absorbing that they pull us away from each other. It's easy to become unaware of people when engaged in activities that require no initiative, no investment of self or creativity, or to become obsessed with games, porn, or even information. The wealth of information leads to a new problem—how do you know what's true?

Often in the church today, success is measured by numbers—a standard which dictates how a church relates to people and to issues that confront our culture. Emphasizing elements of entertainment in services displaces personal participation and commitment.

**Q: How will globalization affect your professional area in the near term?**

**A:** We have been happy to welcome into our family a number of those who are part of distant cultures.

Globally we see a visible shift in political, economic, military and moral power from West to East and Far East, from tolerant democracies to restrictive “democracies” or totalitarian states. The economic consequences will greatly reduce our ability to help other nations.

**Q: What significant challenges might be anticipated in your professional area in the next few years?**

**A:** We don't want our building project to distract from our immediate mission of helping people. Completed, the first building will change how we serve the Mount Hope family and those in our County.

Funding the building project seems far beyond our means, but God is in control and will provide for us in His time.

**Q: What are the greatest challenges confronting young professionals in Western culture today?**

**A:** Thinking people are offered dozens of religious and philosophical alternatives from which to choose a foundation for their living, from Christianity to materialism.

When faith in the Creator is weak or missing, we are left with a universe in which self is the only center. Focus on self bends and distorts our perceptions, magnifies our desires, dictates our actions, and channels us into self-absorption and gratification. Under these conditions, the workplace can become a moral desert in which the only value is success.

Deep satisfaction and fulfillment come from living out purpose that reaches beyond self, beyond work, beyond family and friends—beyond this life.