

THE CHURCH – A FAMILY

Lesson 14

Introduction: After finding myself somewhat disillusioned while a pastor at my first church; certain key people (books) began to influence and radically change my view of the church. I was both ruined and blessed forever. It was out of these Godly influences that God showed me these pictures/values for His church. Today's picture, *The Church as a Family*, is another of those that looks drastically different from what most of the church in America looks like today.

1. PICTURE / VALUE #1: A RESTORED CHURCH ✓
2. PICTURE / VALUE #2: THE CHURCH – A HOSPITAL ✓
3. PICTURE / VALUE #3: THE CHURCH – A SCHOOL ✓
4. PICTURE / VALUE #4: THE CHURCH – A FAMILY
5. PICTURE / VALUE #5: THE CHURCH – WORSHIPERS
6. PICTURE / VALUE #6: THE CHURCH – SERVANTS
7. PICTURE / VALUE #7: THE CHURCH – AN ADVANCING ARMY

***IN THIS CLASS WE WILL DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING POINTS...**

- THE *BIBLICAL MANDATE* FOR RELATIONSHIPS
- THE *FOUNDATION* OF RELATIONSHIPS
- THE *CHARACTERISTICS* OF CHURCH FAMILY
- THE *COST* OF CHURCH FAMILY

***GENESIS 2:18 – “IT IS NOT GOOD THAT MAN SHOULD BE ALONE”**

***PSALMS 68:6 – “GOD MAKES A HOME FOR THE LONELY...”**

***ACTS 2:44 – “ALL THE BELIEVERS WERE TOGETHER...”**

1. THE CHURCH IS RELATIONAL, NOT INSTITUTIONAL

***Mt 22:37-40 – “Jesus replied, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.’”**

- FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ATTRACTING AN AUDIENCE AND BUILDING A BIBLICAL CHURCH
- IT’S MORE THAN MEETINGS AND BUILDINGS

2. IT IS BASED UPON THE FOUNDATION OF COVENANT

***John 13:34 – “A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”**

***1 John 3:16 – “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.”**

- A NEW COMMANDMENT – AS I HAVE LOVED YOU
- COVENANT LOVE – LAY DOWN ONE’S LIFE
- COVENANT LOVE – ABANDONING MY RIGHT TO QUIT ON YOU

3. IT INVOLVES A CONVERSION

- **OURSELVES: FROM “SELF” TO “OTHERS”**
- **THE CHURCH: “30 ONE ANOTHERS” – CAN’T BE DONE ALONE / OR IN A CHURCH SETTING ALONE**

4. IT’S PRACTICAL, NOT THEORETICAL

**1 John 3:17 – “If anyone has material possessions and see his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ... Let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”*

- **MUST BE MOVED OUT OF THE CLASSROOM**
- **EARLY CHURCH – TEMPLE & HOMES (ACTS BEGINS IN A HOME & ENDS IN A HOME)**

5. IT’S BASED UPON COMMITMENT, NOT CONVENIENCE

**Luke 10:33 – “But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was...”*

**John 13:4 – “...so He got up from the meal, ... and wrapped a towel around His waist”*

- **MOST OF MODERN CHRISTIANITY IS BASED UPON CONVENIENCE**
- **MANY DIVINE APPOINTMENTS ARE WRAPPED IN INCONVENIENCE**

6. IT’S A DEMONSTRATION OF KINGDOM LIVING TO THE WORLD

**John 13:35 – “By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

- **“GO & TELL” / “COME & SEE” – PRESENTING A MESSAGE THAT WE AUTHENTICATE WITH OUR WAY OF LIFE – PROVOKING THE WORLD TO JEALOUSY BY OUR LIFESTYLE**
- **“IT’S A WONDER THEY HAVEN’T SUED US FOR FALSE ADVERTISING”**
- **“IN THE EARLY CHURCH A KIND OF RHYTHM OF LIFE WAS EVIDENT THAT DREW LOVE-STARVED PAGANS LIKE A CANDY COUNTER DRAWS CHILDREN”**

7. IT’S NOT OPTIONAL

**Mt 28:19-20 – “...Make disciples ... teaching them to obey everything.”*

- **NOT AN “INITIAL GRACE” TO CATAPULT THE CHURCH, BUT A PATTERN TO FOLLOW**
- **YOU CAN’T LOVE “THE HEAD” AND NOT “HIS BODY”**
- **GOD WON’T CHANGE YOUR PERSONALITY, BUT WILL GIVE YOU GRACE TO OBEY AND WALK THIS OUT**

8. IT BEGINS WITH YOU (ME)

**Gal 6:7 – “...a man reaps what he sows.”*

**Prov 18:24 (K.J.V.) – “A man that has friends must show himself friendly.”*

CONCLUSION: Let’s commit to making Valleyview a family, not just an audience!

