

“We Go Together With Jesus”

1 Corinthians 12:18

September 17, 2017

INTRO: VIDEO – “John 15:5”

A. Context

- a. Picking up where we left of last week...
- b. “We Go With Jesus” vs. Jesus goes with us...
- c. Today: “We Go TOGETHER With Jesus”

B. Contrast – today many will learn that the church of our culture... is NOT the Church of our Christ!

- a. Visible vs. Invisible Church
- b. Cultural church vs. Biblical Church...

BIG IDEA: **Jesus sends us out as a community of disciples in order to make disciples.**

PREVIEW:

- A. Contrast**
- B. Creator**
- C. Christians**
- D. Church**
- E. Choice**

TEXT: **1 Corinthians 12:4-27 (ESV)**

⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. ¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸ ***But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.***

²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

T/S: ***But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.***

I. CONTRAST:

a. **"But"**

- i. Grammatical & Theological contrasts...
- ii. Contrasting **Pride** vs. **Humility**
- iii. Contrasting "body parts" vs body whole...
- iv. **Independence** vs. **Inter-dependence**
 - See **100** N.T. **"one another"** passages!

b. **"as it is"** or **"now"** or **"in fact"**

- i. This is a DECLARATION of Divine Truth!
- ii. See 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- iii. Note the tone & inference of "DISCOVERY"
 - God's Word is about to tell us something
 - God's Word's about to teach us something
- iv. Contrast **Past-Perception** vs. **Present Reality**
- v. Contrast **Cultural church** vs. **Christ's Church**

- See **3 forks in the theological road**...

- 1 way is straight & narrow... 1 "off mark"

a. **People** vs. **Place**

b. **Prayerfully** vs. **Playfully** pick...

c. **Purposed with Passion** vs.

Pragmatically in Proximity

- **Redwoods** vs. X-mas trees
- **Gardening** vs. **Farming**
(*Flowers vs. Fruit!*)

II. CREATOR

a. *“God”*

i. Power

- Don't miss where this is coming from!
- Don't miss the Authority behind this...
- This is God's Word saying, God is saying!

ii. Promised – “I will build My Church...”

iii. Perfection – Genesis 1:1 & John 1:1 apply!

b. *“has arranged”*

i. Past-tense

ii. Planned

- God has a plan!
- See Jeremiah 1:5!

iii. Placed

- Redwoods in principle...
- Revolutionaries in particular!

iv. Purposed

- See connection between power & purpose
- God is extremely deliberate:
 - a. God DECIDED
 - b. God DETERMINED
 - c. God DESIGNED
 - d. God DESIGNATED
 - e. God DISPLAYED
- **The Great C's**
 - a. Great COMMANDMENTS
 - b. Great COMMISSION

i. **NOTE the GLOBAL call!!!**

ii. **VIDEO:** “Platt on Discipleship”

iii. **Quote:** “Radical Together”

If you and I want our lives to count for God’s purpose in the world, we need to begin with a commitment to God’s people in the church. God has called us to lock arms with one another in single-minded, death-defying obedience to one objective; the declaration of his gospel for the demonstration of his glory to all nations. This is God’s design for His people, and it is worth giving our lives to.

...It doesn’t take a big budget to have a large impact!

THE GOSPEL THAT SAVES US FROM WORK SAVES US TO WORK. - David Platt

v. People – a.k.a. “Christians/Members”

III. CHRISTIANS *(aka “God’s people”)*

a. **“the members”**

- i. See the power of words... DEFINE “members”
- ii. Definite article “the” means “specificity”

iii. By definition:

- *“Members” designate “A,B,C.’s of the Body”*
 - a. *Authentic Adoption (abide & obey)*
 - b. *Belonging & Bearing (fruit vs. flowers)*
 - c. *Christ-like Community (“ekk in koin”)*
 - i. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
 - ii. John 17:21-24
 - iii. Acts 2:41-47
 - iv. Matthew 28:18-20
 - v. Acts 1:8
- Theological Truth: “members” means...
 - a. Those OUT of the body (exclusivity)
 - i. Lost
 - ii. Hell
 - b. Those IN the body (inclusivity)
 - i. Found
 - ii. Heaven

b. ***“each one of them”***

- i. Personal
- ii. Particular
- iii. Providential

c. Last week we saw them as ***“Divine Disciples”***

- i. DELIVERED by God’s Grace
- ii. DEVOTED to God’s Glory
- iii. Saved & Sanctified...
- iv. **Set-apart for HOLINESS!**

VIDEO: *“DeYoung – Hole In Our Holiness”*

➤ **While this biblical “exclusivity” is politically incorrect, it is theologically accurate.**

- Our place is not to try and make it more palatable...
- Our place is to embrace the grace of this revelation and respond to God’s truth in love.

IV. CHURCH

a. ***“the body”***

- i. **The body of Christ is who/how God chose!**
- ii. The beauty of the Church is that we display Christ & HIS beauty:
 - Contrast “flowers” vs. “fruit”
 - Contrast “gardening” vs. “farming”

His living body proves His resurrection! - JDP

“We know the church is healthy when disciples of Jesus work together in a corporate effort to obey Him and make more disciples...”

“We must always remember that the body of Christ wasn’t designed solely to bless the members of that body. Rather, the church exists to accomplish the will of its Head, which is Christ. And, it is Christ’s will for the

Church to make disciples of ALL nations.” (Matthew 28:18-20)...

“If you’ve been transformed as a disciple of Jesus Christ, then you are part of His body, the Church. Even more, you have a specific role and function as a member of that body – you’ve been uniquely designed & specifically placed to advance the work of the broader Church within the community of your local group & congregation.” - DisciplesPath

***** Don’t forget the Parable of the Talents!**

iii. Biblical definition: ***“ekklessia in koinonia”***

- Church is **NOT**:

- a. Carwash
- b. Classroom
- c. Convenience store
- d. Country Club
- e. Carnival or Circus...

- See Acts 2:41-47

- a. “devoted”
- b. “fellowship” = koinonia
- c. “together” = homothoomadon...

- **Homothoomadon**

- a. Koinonia with a directed passion!
- b. “Riotous passion with a purpose”
 - i. 11 times in the N.T.
 - ii. 9 good... 2 bad...

VIDEO: *Chan – part 2... BEing Church*

Maryland

- 12 years of equipping...
- 3 Elders & 2 Pastors...
- The BRIDGE hub & home-base

Vermont

- 1st Church Plant...
- 52 GoodNewsInNEK.com
- NEK Pregnancy Ctr. Prayer

Uganda

- Official 3rd family location
- Supernaturally formed family
- Already extending to Gomba



India

- 2 weeks from today...
- 5 A.I.T. sessions @ seminary
- 2 hours a week with C.P.'s...

China

- 3 trips (2 as THE BRIDGE)
- Used to launch home churches
- 40+% of our web traffic...

Worldwide

- Jon in Stockholm, **Sweden**
- **MuchMore520Radio.com**

ILLUSTRATION:

- Knowing the global call of Acts 1:8 & the Great Commission...
- Knowing that it is GOD who arranges the Church's family connections
- Seeing ALL that the Lord is doing...
- I want to ask you to look at this BRIDGE Quilt again... look at it anew...
 - Is it not more beautiful than ever?
 - Is it not more miraculous than ever?
 - Ask yourself:
 - How far can it reach?
 - Who dare put manmade borders on it?

- b. **Romans 12:5** = *“so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”*

V. CHOICE

- a. *“as He **CHOSE.**”*
 - i. See God’s Precision
 - ii. See God’s Passion!

- b. *“He chose” His Church*

- c. What is your choice?

- i. Do you have an ambition in life?

VIDEO: *“Piper – Do you have an ambition”*

- ii. What do YOU want?

- iii. Remember what we’ve learned:

- Christ came to seek & save the lost...
- Christ came not to be served but to serve.
- Christ came to suffer (and call us to)
- Christ came to sacrifice (and call us to)
- Christ came to die (and call us to twice)

******* See the Book of John**

- ~ Biblical CHRIST (1:1-18)
- ~ Biblical CHRISTIANITY (15:1-15)

******* See the Book of Acts**

- ~ Biblical BIRTH of the Church
- ~ Biblical BUILDING of the Church

******* See the Book of Ephesians**

- ~ Biblical BELIEFS of the Church
- ~ Biblical BEHAVIORS of the Church

******* See 1st John**

- ~ Biblical DEFINING of the Church
- ~ Biblical DEFENDING of the Church

******* See The Book of Revelation (ch.2-3)**

- ~ Biblical PERCEPTIONS
- ~ Biblical REALITIES

BRIDGE Manifesto



One FAITH. One FAMILY. One FOCUS.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will BE My witnesses (locally, regionally, and globally).” – Acts 1:8

One Question: WHAT DO YOU WANT?
One Offer: COME AND SEE.
One Promise: TRUTH IN LOVE!

Our Truth-in-Love Distinctives: We are...

- 1.** Responding to grace & repenting of sin...
- 2.** Trusting the Bible & obeying God's Word...
- 3.** Growing in-Christ & living Spirit-led...
- 4.** Praying for guidance & following by faith...
- 5.** Dying to self & carrying our cross...
- 6.** BE-ing the Church & loving one another... (*truly loving one another*)
- 7.** Equipping the saints & exemplifying supernatural unity...
- 8.** Ministering as ambassadors & discerning matters shrewdly...
- 9.** Worshipping God vertically & experiencing Him horizontally...
- 10.** Proclaiming the Gospel (*no matter what*) & fishing for men...
- 11.** Making disciples-warriors & winning spiritual-warfare...
- 12.** Loving our King & serving His kingdom!

d. Whose church & mission do YOU want?

Jesus said the Biblical Church is the "few" - the "Ekklesia-in-Koinonia" that can be found living & loving on the narrow path... Tragically, the biblical Church is flanked by the fake & false, broad-road churches that are, in reality, Carnivals on one side and Cemeteries on the other. - JDP

"as for me and my house, WE will serve the Lord!"

- Joshua 24:15

T/S: Before you answer... think long & hard...

Eternity may weigh in the balance...

Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of which a man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price, to buy which, the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.

Costly grace is the gospel... the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock.

*Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: "you were bought at a price," and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us.." – **Dietrich Bonhoeffer***

And... don't ever underestimate the power of your witness
(see Miss Peggy!)

1 Thessalonians 2:8 *"...we shared our very lives with you..."*

CLOSE:

I want to leave you with a living illustration of the sermon... 3 closing worship videos that each say it all... in their own God-honoring way.

Let's Pray!

- Vermont Discipleship Trip 2017
- Sweet Jesus & Jeff Needles
- Uganda Family – Spring 2017

Key Supportive Texts & Thoughts:

Matthew 28:18-20

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. **13** For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

14 For the body does not consist of one member but of many. **15** If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. **16** And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. **17** If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell?

18 ***But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.*** **19** If all

were a single member, where would the body be? **20** **As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.**

21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” **22** On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, **23** and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, **24** which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, **25** that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. **26** If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

27 **Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.**

DisciplesPath Curriculum Flow:

A. Key Truth – Jesus sends us out as a community of disciples in order to make disciples.

B. Review – last week we took a deeper look at our mission to make disciples as individual followers of Jesus. We saw that making disciples is a command, not a suggestion. Moreover, we learned that disciple making involves going out to the world,

baptizing, and teaching/equipping how to practice the foundational truths of God's Word.

C. Pray – thank God for making you part of a community within the body of Christ.

D. Introduction:

- a. Parallel a doctor's visit with a spiritual checkup...
- b. Quote: "The human body is intricately designed and amazingly complex, yet answering a few relatively simple questions can reveal a great deal of information about a person's overall health."
- c. Quote: "We know the church is healthy when disciples of Jesus work together in a corporate effort to obey Him and make more disciples."**

E. Know The Story:

- a. **Quote: "The concept of the church existing as the body of Christ can be found throughout the New Testament.** However, the writings of the apostle Paul offer the deepest & most direct references to that idea – including both how we should understand the body and why it's important for us to do so."
- b. Scripture Text: 1 Corinthians 12:12-20, 27**
 - i. Focus on the many "one" statements**
 - ii. Key verses:
 - 1. v.18
 - 2. v.20
 - 3. v.27
 - iii. **Quote: "As usual, Paul didn't mince words** when he wrote about the Church in the above passage..."

- iv. Quote: “Why is it important for the people in this room (and listening elsewhere) to understand and apply these verses?”

F. Unpack The Story:

a. **We Are the Body of Christ:**

- i. 1 Corinthians 12 says “independent disciples” are an oxy-moron
- ii. Quote: “To be a disciple of Jesus is to be intricately & intimately involved in the Church... we are grafted into the body of Christ.”
- iii. 1 Cor. 12:18 = *“But as it is, God has arranged each one of the parts in the body just as he wanted.”*
- iv. Quote: “Jesus has promised us a place in His body. Therefore, our service in the church becomes a matter of faith more than comfort.”

b. **We Work Together to Make Disciples:**

- i. Quote: “We must always remember that the body of Christ wasn’t designed solely to bless the members of that body. Rather, the church exists to accomplish the will of its Head, which is Christ. And, it is Christ’s will for the Church to make disciples of ALL nations.”
(Matthew 28:18-20)
- ii. See Acts 2:41-47!!!

G. Weekly Activities:

- a. Memorize Colossians 1:17-18
- b. “He is before all things, and by Him all things hold together. He is also the Head of the body, the Church; He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He might come to have first place in everything.”

H. Contentment In The Body

- a. **Being in the body is a divine grace & privilege**
- b. **Still... obstacles will need to be overcome... friction will come to the Church on occasion**
- c. **Discontentment is a challenge** for/in church due:
 - i. **1 Corinthians 12:21-26 is proof**
 - ii. **Pride & Bitterness feed & fuel discontent.** -
JDP

I. Personal Study:

- a. Find Your Place In the Body
 - i. **Quote:** “If you’ve been transformed as a disciple of Jesus Christ, then you are part of His body, the Church. Even more, you have a specific role and function as a member of that body – you’ve been uniquely designed & specifically placed to advance the work of the broader Church within the community of your local group & congregation.”
 - ii. Know your role & function within the church...
 - iii. Learn your spiritual giftedness & calling
 - iv. **How can/will you contribute to the ministry of your church family?**
 - v. See Ephesians 4:11-16!

vi. **Quote:** “Notice Paul’s emphasis in Ephesians 4:16 that the body is built up and remains healthy through ‘the proper working of each individual part.’ That’s YOU! Every disciple of Jesus has a share in maintaining the health & productivity of the Church. More, we have a responsibility to do our part in helping the body of Christ fulfill its mission – a responsibility that includes consequences when we neglect our duty.”

1. See how Jesus drives that point home...

2. See Christ’s “Parable of the Talents”

vii. **Quote:** “Many people feel hesitant about pouring themselves into the church’s mission to make disciples... Some simply don’t want to give up greater control of their lives. Others aren’t willing to let go of cherished possessions or long held habits... In the end, all excuses boil down to the same thing: disobedience. Our Master has commanded us to work together as His body in order to make disciples for His kingdom. That is our mission. What you do next is your choice.”

b. Join the Body In Making Disciples

i. Jesus came on a mission to initiate & empower the Great Commission... He accomplished His part on the cross & through His resurrection.

ii. Quote: “Jesus gave His disciples a mission as well – one that should drive us each day to expand His kingdom and bring glory to God.”

iii. See Matthew 28:18-20

1. Quote: “How has your understanding of these verses changed or deepened in recent weeks?”

2. Make disciples – it is the mission of every Christian and every church

iv. Chart your personal status & growth:

1. How confident are you in your ability to make disciples?
2. List 3 lost people you will pray for daily...
3. List 3 believers you will pray for to grow...
4. What spiritual disciplines will help you to grow in your walk with Jesus?
5. To what degree are you currently being supported, encouraged, and instructed by other disciples of Jesus?
6. How will you actively seek encouragement and support from other disciples of Jesus as you work to obey the Great Commission?

VIDEO: “We Can Do Nothing” (John 15:5)

VIDEO: “Being A Reformed Christian/Church”

VIDEO: “David Platt: The Church & Discipleship”

VIDEO: “Kevin DeYoung: The Most Neglected...”

VIDEO: “Francis Chan: Church On Mission”

VIDEO: “Piper on Ambition & Drift”

“Cheap grace... is represented as the Church's inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits.

Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Costly grace is the treasure hidden in

the field; for the sake of which a man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price, to buy which, the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.

Costly grace is the gospel... the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock.

Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: "you were bought at a price," and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above

all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.”

– Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*

“It is only because he became like us that we can become like him.”

– Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*

Share 12 Divine Distinctives of Church:

[CRITICAL: Church is a PEOPLE vs. a Place]

A foundational question of the faith:

Do you pray for the privilege and hope to
"BE a people" OR.... "go to a place?"

*** ILLUSTRATION of Deception:

Per Hebrews 10:14.... (cf. 1 John 3:18)

Throw banana peels out on church floor...

Spiritual liars love bananas...

See Jude... & Paul: "Fight the good fight!"

*** See classic biblical texts that describe both the heart & soul of the true, N.T. Church.

A. Acts 1:8

B. Acts 41-47

C. **1 Thessalonians 2:8** ("...we shared our very lives with you...")

D. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

E. Matthew 28:18-20

Elect

A. Pre-Birth

B. Born-Again

C. Paradigm:

See all people through God's eyes:

*** Metaphor:**

~ Wolves

~ Goats

~ Sheep

~ Sheep Dogs

~ Shepherds

*** Missional:**

~ Lost

~ Lover

~ Learner

~ Leader

~ Lifer

Perspective is important

- * Personal theology (worldview)**
- * Priorities / missional goals**

6 of WHO we ARE <<<

******* See the Book of John**

~ **Biblical CHRIST (1:1-18)**

~ **Biblical CHRISTIANITY (15:1-15)**

******* See the Book of Acts**

~ **Biblical BIRTH of the Church**

~ **Biblical BUILDING of the Church**

******* See the Book of Ephesians**

~ **Biblical BELIEFS of the Church**

~ **Biblical BEHAVIORS of the Church**

******* See 1st John**

~ **Biblical DEFINING of the Church**

~ **Biblical DEFENDING of the Church**

******* See The Book of Revelation (ch.2-3)**

~ **Biblical PERCEPTIONS**

~ **Biblical REALITIES**

1. People of God's GRACE
2. People of God's PRESENCE
 - Spirit-indwelt
 - Spirit-led
 - Spirit-empowered
3. People of God's WORD (Authoritative Truth)
4. People of God's LOVE

5. People of God's MERCY
6. People of God's CROSS
 - In Christ
 - Blood-bought
7. People of God's RESURRECTION
8. People of God's PERSEVERANCE
 - Victorious through Surrender
9. Faith, Hope, Love, Repentance, Abide, Obey
Unity, Mission, Warfare, Remembering (the Lord's Supper), Inclusion (In-Christ), Being conformed into the image of Christ, Global, Gifted, Appointed, Anointed, Army/Warriors,

10. People of God's PASSIONS (Hate & Holy)
11. People of God's HOLINESS
12. People of God's PURPOSES (PSWORD)
 - People of PRAYER
 - People of SERVITUDE
 - People of WORSHIP
 - People of OUTREACH

"the WORKERS are few"

"the FISHERS of men"

"the global WITNESSES"

"the AMBASSADORS of Christ"

"the FRUIT-PRODUCERS"

"the living BEATITUDES"

"the living

- People of RELATIONSHIPS
- People of DISCIPLINES (DISCIPLESHIP)

CHURCH... by DEFINITION:

1. God's FAMILY
 - Leaders
 - Followers
 - ALL Servants

*** See OT origin of God's set apart people
2. God's BODY
3. See "Secret Church" on "The Church"

What makes a family a family?

*** Whose opinion

*** Where do you get your answers from?

*** What if your opinions/answers disagree?

A. NOT

- Proximity
- Name
- Knowledge
- Look-alikes

B. YES

- Biblical/DIVINE Disciples
- 12 Divine Discipleship Distinctives
- PWORSD
- Head, Heart, Hands
- Content, Culture, Conflict/Combat
- Truth, Love, Warfare

C. Study Prodigal Family

D. Study Esther & Mordecai

E. Study "Children of Abraham"

F. Study Father, Son & "adopted children" of God

What makes a family healthy or unhealthy?

NOW... go thru the same analysis of a "body."

*** Quote DP on the body's complexity

*** Illustration:

Visual "stretch man" always restores

Velcro-man is opposite of koinonia

Mr. Potato Head is a popular counterfeit

- Go to the doc...
- What could/should be your standards/expects?
- What role does a healthy diet play? (bad diet?)
- What about "exercise" vs. atrophy?

*** Define "TOGETHER"

1. Literal (Webster's Dictionary)

2. Cultural

A. Crowds

B. Casual

C. Clubs

3. Biblical

A. Ekklesia

B. Koinonia

C. Hom-oth-oo-ma-don

*** Extensive reference to Kevin DeYoung's book

*** MUST explain visible vs invisible C/church

See Grudem's "healthy church" continuum

See Matthew 7

See Revelation 2-3

*** Biblically unpack: Our church is not growing..

- Who is the Church?

- How are born again disciples GROWN?

Made

Authenticated

Gathered

Grown

Deployed

- What constitutes "growing?"

*** Biblical Mandate(s) = our BRIDGE Manifesto

*** Biblical Marketing:

A. DO

- Proclaim God's Truth

-

B. DON'T

- Misrepresent God's Messiah

- Misrepresent God's Message

- Misrepresent God's Methods

*** ILLUSTRATION:

Think of the church building as an auto mechanics garage...
What do you see when you look inside auto mechanic's
garages? (Autos & Mechanics)

Two variations of the metaphor:

- ~ Sleeping in garage... you won't wake up an auto
- ~ What if God says missionaries are His
mechanics (vs. the cars)
- ~ If you know me, you know that no amount
of time spent hanging around in, or
even sleeping AND/or working inside
an auto mechanic's garage is EVER
going to "make me" a mechanic!

*** Born-again, baby believers are spiritually akin to new
born gazelles that literally come to life in the middle of the
predator-saturated plains of the sub-Saharan Serengeti. (1
Peter 5:8 & "they come disguised as angels of light")

*** Too many church going folks are like my old Army
roommate's classmates at the university of Georgia back in
the day... He used to watch this now Hall of Fame athlete
come into class on test days... write & circle his team-jersey's
number on the test... and promptly walk out & go back about
his business - never once really changed (for better or for
worse) by the content of the class.

**Jesus said the Biblical Church is the "few" - the
"Ekklesia-in-Koinonia" that can be found
living & loving on the narrow**

path... Tragically, the biblical Church is flanked by the fake & false, broad-road churches that are, in reality, Carnivals on one side and Cemeteries on the other. - JDP <<<<<

*** Close with our BRIDGE Quilt:

- Divine (supernatural) "unity in diversity"
- Scrap parts, Priceless whole!
- The THREAD is the Key!
- Link the 12 "Distinctives" with/to the quilt:
 - A. Divine Disciple (micro - Christian)
 - B. Divine DiscipleS (macro - Church/church)

Jesus on Divine Discipleship

1. **Love** - by your love... they will know...
2. **BE born again** - John 3:3
3. **Obey** - Matthew 28:19
4. **Die** - unless you pick up your cross daily...
5. **Follow** - ...you cannot be My disciple.
6. **Witness** - Acts 1:8
7. **Genuine** - Matthew 7:21-23
8. **Wise** - Matthew 7... builds homes on the Rock!
9. **Unified** - John 17 prayer for koinonia
10. **Fruitful** - "...bear much fruit..."

11. **Shrewd & Innocent/Holy** – Matthew 10:16
12. Different/**Contrasting** – Beatitudes & ALL the Bible!

If you and I want our lives to count for God's purpose in the world, we need to begin with a commitment to God's people in the church.

*God has called us to lock arms with one another in single-minded, death-defying obedience to one objective; **the declaration of his gospel for the demonstration of his glory to all nations.** This is God's design for His people, and it is worth giving our lives to.*

...It doesn't take a big budget to have a large impact!

***THE GOSPEL THAT SAVES US FROM
WORK SAVES US TO WORK.***

David Platt

("Radical Together")

"Radical Together"

Chapter 4 – THE GENIUS OF WRONG

BUILDING THE RIGHT CHURCH DEPENDS ON USING ALL THE WRONG PEOPLE.

What we do at Brook Hills when we gather as the church, our main focus is on the church. We organize our worship environment around believers, not unbelievers.

“Why would we do that?” “If your worship environment on Sunday is not appealing to non-Christians, then how is your church going to intentionally lead unbelievers to Christ?”

“We’re going to equip our people every Sunday to lead unbelievers to Christ all week long.” Your members are going to lead them to Christ?” “That’s our plan.”

He said “once those unbelievers become believers, how are they going to grow in Christ?”

“Our people are going to be equipped to show new believers how to live as followers of Christ.”

“I want people in the church to be able to fulfill the purpose for which they were created without being dependent on gifted preachers, nice buildings, and great programs to do it for them.”

I believe in the work of God’s Spirit through God’s Word in God’s people.

The goal of the church is never for one person to be equipped and empowered to lead as many people as possible to Christ. The goal is always for all of God’s people to be equipped and

empowered to lead as many people as possible to Christ.

The Spirit of God has empowered every follower of Christ to accomplish the purpose of God for the glory of God in the world. This includes the so-called wrong people; those who are the least effective, least brilliant, or least talented in the church.

Building the right church, then, is dependent on using all the wrong people.

It's commonly assumed a growing church today needs a few simple elements.

First, a good performance. Someone who can captivate the crowds. A charismatic communicator. For a bonus, we surround the speaker with quality music and arts.

Next, we need a place to hold the crowds who will come. Usually means investing millions in a facility to house the performance. The more attractive the environment, the better.

Once the crowds get there, we need something to keep them coming back. So we start programs for kids, youth, and families, for every age and stage. In order to have those programs, we need professionals to run them. That way the professionals can handle ministry for them. We don't want people trying this at home.

There it is a performance at a place filled with programs run by professionals. The problem, though, is the one p we have left out of the equation; the people of God.

PEOPLE, NOT PERFORMANCES

Growing the church was never intended to depend on creating a good performance with all the right people. Where did we get the idea that this was necessary? Certainly Scripture instructs us to gather for worship. This is nonnegotiable but not necessary in the way we usually think about it.

Imagine being in a church on the other side of the world where it is illegal for the church even to exist.

Not one of them has come because a great communicator has been scheduled to speak. Not one is present because a cool band is scheduled to play. All are there simply because they desire to gather with the people of God, and they are willing to risk their lives to be together.

But what if the church itself – the people of God gathered in one place – is intended to be the attraction? This is enough for our brothers and sisters around the world.

But is it enough for us?

I have more questions than I have answers on this issue, and I am grateful for leaders in our worship ministry who are willing to ask the questions with me.

We want to focus on ways we can cultivate the best people: a people who love to pray together, fast together, confess sin together, sing together, and study together; a people who depend more on the Word than on the one who speaks it; people gripped in music more by the content of the song than by the singer; people who define worship less by performance and more by commitment. A humble people who gather week after week simply to behold the glory of God

as they surrender their lives to him. When the church is fundamentally a gathering of committed people, the place where the church gathers hardly matters.

Everything is on the table, and the Lord will lead us in what is best. I am convinced that large buildings are the best or only way to use God's resources.

Nothing in the New Testament says we should construct church buildings. **So why is the first thing we think, *We need to spend masses of our resources on a building?* Why would we spend an inordinate amount of our resources on something that is never prescribed or even encouraged in the New Testament? Why would we not instead use those resources on that which is explicitly promoted in the New Testament, such as sharing the gospel with the lost or helping the poor in the church?** Seven hundred million people around the world live in slums. Many of them are our brothers and sisters in Christ. Should we really be prioritizing bigger buildings for ourselves?

This is the beauty of New Testament Christianity. We definitely do not have to construct buildings as houses of worship. In the words of Stephen before he was martyred by the Sanhedrin, ***“The Most High does not live in houses made by men.”***

With Jesus' death on the cross, the way had been opened for people to dwell in the presence of God in any place. No building was necessary. As a result, they no longer needed to focus on a building as a house of worship.

What would the house of worship be, then? You guessed it: people. ***Astounding reality of New Testament religion: we as***

Christians are the house of worship.

So let's gather wherever we can in any facilities we can find. Many of our brothers and sisters around the world simple meet outside. ***Consider not spending such a large portion of our resources on building places when the priority of the New Testament is decidedly on building people.***

The challenge, we need our places to sustain our programs. *This is when we begin to realize that redefining place in ministry leads to rethinking the importance of programs in ministry.*

How would your church make disciples completely separate for a church building?

Why not make our homes the place of ministry instead of the church building? Why not invite people from our neighborhoods, not to go to a church building with us, but to come across the street and into our homes with us? Home is where we could show the gospel to their children while we also shared life with them.

People discover that God has built into our everyday lives opportunities and platforms to spread the gospel. People realize that we are not dependent on well-crafted programs at designated places to accomplish the mission God has created us for as his people.

Imagine what could happen if ***men ad women seeing that the most effective avenues for ministry are found not in programs created for them but amid the people who surround them where they live.*** The last thing leaders should do is pull away

from those avenues in order to participate in our activities.

We woke up and said to ourselves, “Why are we trying to organize how and where and when our people minister? God has already given them opportunities for ministry where they live and work and play.” *So we decided to stop planning, creating, and managing outreach programs and to start unleashing people to maximize the ministry opportunities God had already planned and created for them.*

From that point the impact of our church in the community changed radically. Now our people are busy leading Bible studies in their workplaces and neighborhoods, helping addicts in rehabilitation centers, supply food in homeless shelters, loving orphans in learning centers, caring for widows in retirement homes, providing hospice care for the elderly, training men and women in job skills, tutoring men and women in reading, helping patients in AIDS clinics, teaching English to internationals, and serving in a variety of other ways. Our leadership

team understands that it’s good when people are so involved in ministry where they live that they don’t have time to participate in the programs we create.

If you are a leader in the church, think about the individuals in your care. Consider how God has written a different story in each of their lives. You have been called by God to serve them in the accomplishment of God’s purpose for their lives. You want to equip them, train them, support them, and set them free to use everything God has given them to make his glory known in ways you could never design or imagine.

If you are a member of the church, start dreaming and strategizing Consider where God has placed you, who God has put around you, and how God desires to use you for his glory where you live and work. (Illustrate – If you are single, how can you make the most of your singleness for ministry? If you are married, how can you serve together with your spouse in your community? If you have kids, how can you make your home a ministry to children in your neighborhood? If you work outside the home, how can you share Christ in your workplace? Be careful not to let programs in the church keep you from engaging people in the world with the gospel.) Make the most of the opportunities for ministry that God has built into your life.

Imagine the spread of the gospel for the glory of God if every follower of Christ were involved in ministry. Who can fathom the potential of the church when we stop programming ministry for people and start propelling people into ministry?

We have a tendency to overlook God's plan for people when we organize churches around professionals. We single out people who seem especially gifted, and we craft the community of faith around them. *But the ministry of making disciples was not intended for professionals alone; it was intended for the whole people of God.*

All men and women who have placed their faith in Christ have the Spirit in them so they might be witnesses for Christ. Read Acts 2. Realize the giving of the Spirit was never to be a special anointing on a select few. This is about a supernatural anointing on every single one of God's people.

Let us not be so unwise as to bank the spread of the gospel on a certain person at a certain place when all week long the Spirit of

God is living in every single man and woman of God, empowering each of us to advance the kingdom of God for his glory.

You might be wondering, is there a place for paid leaders – that is professionals – in the church?

Absolutely! When we look in the New Testament, we clearly see a warrant, even a command, to provide financially for certain teachers and leaders in the church.

What, then is the responsibility of such leaders in the church? Paul answers this question in Ephesians 4. God has given leaders to the church to equip God’s people for ministry and “prepare God’s people for works of service.” The church has been entrusted by God with stewards of God’s Word to equip God’s people to be servants with God’s Word. This goes to the essence of being radical together, it changes everything about how we view leaders in the church.

There is clearly no way a pastor can minister to all the needs in church, much less in our city. Some might say “that’s what the rest of the church staff is for.” ***If we want to multiply the gospel from our faith family to all the families of the earth, it will require not just a pastor or church staff but the entire body of Christ built up in love “as each part does its work.”***

What this means, is that church leaders are intended by God not to plan events but to equip people. Leaders do not exist to provide services; they exist to serve people. Realizing this, leaders in our faith family have made a concentrated effort to take resources away from organizing ministry for people and to invest them more in mobilizing people for ministry.

Passion to tell people about Christ translates into a commitment to train people in the church. When he leads someone to Christ, Dominic takes personal responsibility for helping that person grow in Christ. His goal is for that person to become a leader in the church and then eventually to leave and plant another church somewhere else.

Dominic's church has now planted more than sixty other churches in his country, with nearly every one of the pastors trained by Dominic. His life and leadership are a picture of what it means, not to organize ministry for people, but to mobilize people for ministry.

Isn't this the model of Jesus? He spent more time with twelve men than with everyone else put together. In John 17 he recounts his ministry before going to the cross. He doesn't mention the multitudes, they were not his primary focus. Instead, forty times Jesus speaks to and about the men in who he had invested his life. They were his focus.

When he came to his ascension, Jesus had not buildings or programs to point to and no crowds to boast of. Just 120 unschooled, ordinary people were gathered – a small group with a small brand of leaders.

And he had given them one command as their commission: make disciples. Don't sit in a classroom; share your lives. Don't build extravagant places; build extraordinary people. Make disciples who will make disciples who will make disciples and together multiply this gospel to all peoples. This simple command was to drive the church. This is the simple command that is to drive each of our lives.

I don't want this command to be treated as optional in my life or in anyone else's life in the church I pastor. Personally, I have an intentional disciple-making plan that involves sharing life with and multiplying the gospel through my family, a small group of men within our church and church planters we are sending out from our church. If I am not careful, disciple making fades into the background. ***As a result, I want to act intentionally, for if I forsake the priority of people, then I will miss the purpose of God.***

We help all new members in our church to outline their plans for how they will be involved in making disciples of all nations. The key for all of us is an intense desire and intentional effort to make every one of our lives count for the multiplication of the gospel in the world.

You may feel like you are not gifted enough, or qualified enough to engage in effective ministry. This is simply not true. *You have the Word of God before you, the Spirit of God in you, and the command of God to you: make disciples of all nations.*

A house church leader in Asia persecution stripped his church of its resources. “We soon found we were much stronger because our faith in God was purer.” ***“We didn't have any opportunity to love the ‘things’ of God, so we just learned to love God! We had no plans or programs to keep running, so we just sought the face of Jesus!... We don't believe the world needs another single church building. They need Jesus and they need to worship and grow in God's grace with other believers...according to the pattern of the first church in the New Testament.”*** “When we finally reach the end of all our useless

programs and give up in desperation, Jesus will always be there to show us a better way—his way.”

We will never have enough resources, staff, buildings, events, or activities to reach all the people in our community, much less all the peoples in the world.

But we will always have enough people. Even if they seem like the wrong people.

If eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee were enough to launch the gospel to the ends of the earth ten a church with a handful of members can spread the gospel in and beyond a community, regardless of the amount of material resources it has.

What if each of us were actually making disciples who were making disciples? Is it too idealistic to dream? Is that realistic? You bet it is. In fact, it's guaranteed.

“Radical Together”
by David Platt
(Quotes from ch.4)

Exegesis:

18 But as it is (now), God has-arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as He chose/desired.

“But / however”

- Grammatical & theological CONTRAST...
- What is being contrasted:
 - Pride vs. Humility
 - Individuality vs. Interdependence
 - Body parts vs. body whole...
 - Promises & Purposes of God’s People

“as it is / now”

- A DECLARATION of DIVINE reality/TRUTH
- Contrast vs. “woulda-coulda-shoulda”
- Remember 2 Timothy 3:16-17!
- Note the inference of “DISCOVERY”
 - God’s Word is about to “tell us” something
 - God’s Word is intended to “teach us” here

“God”

- Don’t miss where the message is coming from...
- Don’t miss the authority behind the message...
- This is God’s Word saying... God is saying this...

(God) “has arranged”

- See the connection between power & purpose
- **See the degree to which God is DELIBERATE:**
 - **God DECIDED**

- God DETERMINED
- God DESIGNED
- God DESIGNATED
- God DISPLAYED

“the members”

- See the power of words... DEFINE “members”
- Definite article “the” means “specificity”
- By definition:
 - ***“Members” designate “A,B,C.’s of the Body”***
 - ***Authentic Adoption (abide & obey)***
 - ***Belonging & Bearing (fruit vs. flowers)***
 - ***Christ-like Community (“ekk in koin”)***
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
 - John 17:21-24
 - Acts 2:41-47
 - Matthew 28:18-20
 - Acts 1:8
 - **Theological Truth: “members” means...**
 - **Those OUT of the body (exclusivity)**
 - Lost
 - Hell
 - **Those IN the body (inclusivity)**
 - Found
 - Heaven

“in the body”

- See all 3 words:
 - “IN” means inclusive
 - “the” another definite article (specificity)
 - “BODY”
 - Singular (vs. “bodies”) by design
 - See implications of Matthew 28...
 - See implications of Acts 1:8...
 - See applications throughout N.T.
 - Interdependent by design
 - Shared Purpose by design
 - Unity in Diversity by design
 - Christ-like Complexity by design
 - ALL under one Headship by design
 - Visual/Functional metaphor by design
- Connect to “...you must be born again” (John 3:3)
 - Christians must be/are born again...
 - Church is God’s body/family of born agains!
- **At this point, before finishing the verse, the Word is saying an awful lot...**
 - DIVINE DEPENDENCE vs. “Independence”
 - DIVINE DECLARATION reality (Titus 2:15)
 - DIVINE DESIGN – “God has arranged”
 - DIVINE DISCIPLES – “the members”
 - DIVINE DEPLOYMENT – “the body” LIVES!

“each one”

- **See the both/and of God’s plan/purpose/people**

- Christ cares about each Christian & church!
- Christ cares about the:
 - Divine Dependence of each...
 - Divine Declaration of each...
 - Divine Design of each...
 - Divine Disciples as God's child/children
 - Divine Disciples as God's Church
- **The indication is to the singular part of the body**
- **The implication is for the singular body/Church**

“of them”

- This is another emphasis on “membership”
- Remember: repetition means emphasis...
- What is the emphasis from this repetition?
 - God is speaking of His “body parts”
 - God is speaking of His “divine disciples”
 - God is speaking of His chosen children
- **While this biblical “exclusivity” is politically incorrect, it is theologically accurate.**
 - **Our place is not to try and make it more palatable...**
 - **Our place is to embrace the grace of this revelation and respond to God's truth in love.**

“as He chose”

- Note once again... God is repeating & restating His point from above...
 - **The body of Christ is who/how God chose!**
 - **The beauty of the Church is that we display Christ & HIS beauty:**
 - **Contrast “flowers” vs. “fruit”**
 - **Contrast “gardening” vs. “farming”**

“Blessed To BE Together”

Acts 2:46

July 16, 2017

INTRO: Welcome to our 29th week on the Disciple’s Path...

Today’s a day in which:

- Heaven will celebrate.
- Hearers will contemplate.
- Hell will commiserate

Lord I pray that you will grace us with your:

Clarity Discernment Courage Love Peace

TEXT:

Acts 2:46

*And day by day, attending the temple **together** and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts,*

BIG IDEA:

“We are called to live authentically & interdependently with one another in biblical community.” – Disciples Path
(see the 100 N.T. “one another” passages!)

The blessing & beauty of Christ’s unified Body!

(fork in the road...)

Church is NOT:

- Carwash
- Convenience store
- Country Club
- Circus or Carnival

Superficial vertical relationships will seek and settle for superficial horizontal Relationships... a.k.a. cultural, consumeristic-church. Conversely, by contrast, Supernatural vertical relationships will seek, and settle for nothing less than, Supernatural, God-honoring, horizontal relationships... a.k.a. biblical Church.

- JDP



“If you and I want our lives to count for God’s purpose in the world, we need to begin with a commitment to God’s people in the Church. God has called us to lock arms with one another in single-minded, death-defying obedience to one objective; the declaration of His Gospel... for the demonstration of His glory to all nations. This is God’s design for His people, and it is worth giving our lives to.” - David Platt

CONTEXT:

Acts 2:36-47

36Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.” 37Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

40And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked/wicked generation.”

41So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

You've got to decide... Do you trust YOUR intuition or GOD's inspiration? Truth in love says: It's NOT “your wishes” but God's Word that really defines reality. - JDP

42And they...

- Who is “they?”
- “They” are the new, N.T. Church!
 - “ekklesia” (100+ in N.T. with 90% local)
 - **ILLUSTRATION: water bottles vs. vase...**
- WE are “they...”
- Then who are we?

Ephesians 2:8-10

2 Corinthians 5:14-21

The Ministry of Reconciliation

14For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; 15and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

16From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. 17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Sleeping in the garage won't make you car...

Going into the church won't make you a Christian.

VIDEO: *“Together #1”*

42And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

- “They devoted” = We are to BE devoted...
- What does “devoted” mean?
 - Dedicated... “Solemnly set apart”
- The Church is devoted to:
 - Apostle’s (sound) teaching
 - Breaking of bread (community & communion)
 - Prayers... and...

➤ **FELLOWSHIP** = “*koinonia*”

Acts 2:42

*And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the **fellowship**, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

2 Corinthians 6:14

*Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what **fellowship** has light with darkness?*

2 Corinthians 8:4

they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of **sharing in** this service to the Lord's people.

Philippians 1:3-11

3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, **4** always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, **5** because of your **partnership in** the gospel from the first day until now. **6** And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. **7** It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. **8** For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. **9** And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, **10** so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, **11** filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 2:1-4

1 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any **participation in the Spirit**, any affection and sympathy, **2** complete my joy by being of the same mind, having

*the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3**Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. **4**Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

Philippians 3:10

*I want to know Christ--yes, to know the power of his resurrection and **participation in his sufferings**, becoming like him in his death,*

1 John 1:3-7

(v.3-7 has "koinonia" 4X)

The Word of Life

***3**that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have **fellowship** with us; and indeed our **fellowship** is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. **4**And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.*

Walking in the Light

***5**This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. **6**If we say we have **fellowship** with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. **7**But if we walk in the light, as he*

is in the light, we have **fellowship** with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

T/S: *Think about this? Could you have this koinonia with:*

- *Judas?*
- *The Rich Young Ruler?*
- *A Demas... the Weeds... Goats or Wolves?*

Could you share Communion with them?

Watch this!

1 Corinthians 10:16

(2X) = "Communion"

*The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a **participation in** the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a **participation in** the body of Christ?*

VIDEO: *"Together #2"*

***** COMMUNION *****

(Don't just remember what Christ did...

Remember what He did it all for!)

43And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44And all who believed were together (ep-pee) and had all things in common. 45And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.

T/S:

46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

“Together” (Hom - oth - oo - ma - don)

Compound word: “homo/one” + “passion/zeal”

- Together they were glorifying God... AND at the same time God was gathering more glorifiers!
- Let's look at that word: **“together”**

➤ **Used 11X in the N.T... 10 in Acts, 1 in Romans**

Acts 1:14

*All these with **one accord** were devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.*

Acts 2:46

*And day by day, attending the temple **together** and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts,*

Acts 4:24

*And when they heard it, they lifted their voices **together** to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them,*

Acts 5:12

*Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all **together** in Solomon's Portico.*

Acts 7:57

*But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed **together** at him.*

Acts 8:6

*And the crowds with **one accord** paid attention to what was being said by Philip...*

Acts 12:20a

*Now Herod was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon, and they came to him with **one accord**...*

Acts 15:25

*It has seemed good to us, having come to **one accord**, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,*

ILLUSTRATION: Boiled/deviled eggs vs multi-egg omelet

Acts 18:12

*But... the Jews made a **united** attack on Paul...*

Acts 19:29

*...they rushed **together** into the theater, dragging with them...
Paul's travel companions.*

***** So what happens when some-one or group tries to dismiss these biblical standards... OR divide these biblical believers...**

VIDEO: "Together #3"

*Beware the wicked... like the woman who was willing to have
a baby cut in half...*

*If someone is willing to dismember and divide the baby – they
neither love the baby, nor the baby's Father!*

*“Unleashing radical people into the world requires
the gospel as our foundation and our motivation.
You and I must embrace a gospel that both saves us
from work and saves us to work... We live
sacrificially, not because we feel guilty, but because*

we have been loved greatly... and now we find satisfaction in sacrificial love for others.” – D. Platt

T/S: **see our BRIDGE Manifesto**



One FAITH. One FAMILY. One FOCUS.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will BE My witnesses (locally, regionally, and globally)." – Acts 1:8

One Question: *WHAT DO YOU WANT?*
One Offer: *COME AND SEE.*
One Promise: *TRUTH IN LOVE!*

Our Truth-in-Love Distinctives: We are...

- 1.** Responding to grace & repenting of sin...
- 2.** Trusting the Bible & obeying God's Word...
- 3.** Growing in-Christ & living Spirit-led...
- 4.** Praying for guidance & following by faith...
- 5.** Dying to self & carrying our cross...
- 6.** BE-ing the Church & loving one another...(*truly* loving one another)
- 7.** Equipping the saints & exemplifying supernatural unity...
- 8.** Ministering as ambassadors & discerning matters shrewdly...
- 9.** Worshipping God vertically & experiencing Him horizontally...
- 10.** Proclaiming the Gospel (*no matter what*) & fishing for men...
- 11.** Making disciples-warriors & winning spiritual-warfare...
- 12.** Loving our King & serving His kingdom!

“Together” (Hom – oth – oo – ma – don)

Romans 15:5-6

*May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that **together** (**HOM – OTH – OO – MA – DON**) you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

T/S: Ask yourself friends... FAMILY...

Knowing that you live in the context of an eternity defining, spiritual war – every day... AND... being fully aware that the world is filled with 5 types of people:

Shepherds, Sheep-dogs, Sheep, Goats, & Wolves...

Which do you want in your life:
***Superficial* or SUPERNATURAL relationships?**

CLOSE:

Friends and Family,

I wrote this letter about 11 days ago as a final update about baby Elijah but didn't have the stomach to send it until now...

In Acts 26 as the Apostle Paul is standing before King Agrippa as a prisoner and arguing his case for the gospel he declares, "I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains." The hope of reconciliation with God was so real to him that he was able to look at a king while he himself was in chains and say, "I wish you were like me; I wish you had what I have."

Two days ago, we buried our second son, Elijah. He was born on June 21st and he died on June 27th at 4:05pm...

We have grieved much from the first day that we found out about our son's disorder. But, we have not grieved like the world grieves. Our grief has not been a black, hopeless grief. No, as our pastor Cj would say "we have steel in our hearts", we have the steel of the gospel. By the power of the Holy Spirit we have perfect faith in that Second Person of the Trinity who hung hopelessly on the cross. That Good Shepherd. His Father placed all of our sins on his own Son so that we might never taste the bitterness of death eternal, so that we might be reconciled to this great God. And we have known the presence of God more deeply as a result of this bitter season.

When God sees fit to take away one's child, it feels like he has taken out vital organs from your chest and your gut. But then he comes, he himself comes, and he comforts you. It is difficult

to explain the deep and abiding comfort of God's own presence in your life. Sometimes he feels so near that it feels physical, it is so real. I don't know what to call that. Is it mystical? I don't know, but it is joy unspeakable. When God takes your child, he takes part of you. But when God takes part of you, that part of you is in heaven with him. There is nothing like close proximity to Christ. As Samuel Rutherford used to say, God gives crosses to bear but he placed the heaviest part of the cross on his own son. In the same way that a Father acts like he needs his little son's help to carry something heavy, and his son thinks he is doing the heavy lifting by simply putting his hand under it - we feel like Christ has given us a cross to bear but in reality he has already borne it.

*At other times **he comforts through his Body...***

*(Remember: **Our WORSHIP defines our Fellowship!**)*
which is the Church. In our day of individualism many are going without any real community. And when difficulty comes, they have no choice but to depend on the state, or upon professionals, or they just grit their teeth and try to get through it. The problem is, they don't really get through it because a secular society has nothing of hope to offer with regards to eternity and death. Sure, it steals poetic portions from Christianity and tries to sugarcoat them for society. But death is rancid and it can't be sugar coated. The only way to undue it is to reverse it, and Christ makes all things new. This is the message of the Church. For the Christian, in the midst of death, he has the privilege of being caught by the arms of Christ, he has the privilege of being caught by the Church...

Let's PRAY

Worship:

1. Principle: *"Broken Vessels"*
2. Power: *"What A Beautiful Name"*
3. Proof: *Uganda BRIDGE family 2017*