

The Active Life of The Church  
Sunday, June 6, 2021

- \* I read where one writer said that The Church is much like the animals in the movie "Madagascar!"
  - \* The movie begins with a bunch of "wild animals" in a zoo! Most of them love the set up! They are well cared for, and trainers wait on them hand and foot, bringing them everything they need!
  - \* A Zebra finds himself dreaming of the "wild" and just can't shake the desire to experience what they were meant for!
  - \* Many Christians live this way! They become a part of a "group" (zoo) where they are told about a greater "existence" (the wild) but it is just too comfortable where all their needs are met! (the zoo)
- I. I am convinced that The Church in America is so comfortable we have completely forgotten WHO WE ARE!

Ephesians 1:15-23 (NLV)

15 I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all Christians. 16 Since then, I always give thanks for you and pray for you. 17 I pray that the great God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may give you the wisdom of His Spirit. Then you will be able to understand the secrets about Him as you know Him better. 18 I pray that your hearts will be able to understand. I pray that you will know about the hope given by God's call. I pray that you will see how great the things are that He has promised to those who belong to Him. 19 I pray that you will know how great His power is for those who have put their trust in Him. 20 It is the same power that raised Christ from the dead. This same power put Christ at God's right side in heaven. 21 This place was given to Christ. It is much greater than any king or leader can have. No one else can have this place of honor and power. No one in this world or in the world to come can have such honor and power. 22 God has put all things under Christ's power and has made Him to be the head leader over all things of the church. 23 The church is the body of Christ. It is filled by Him Who fills all things everywhere with Himself.

- A. Do we really believe this? This is literally what Paul prays for The Church in Ephesus.

1. Maybe the problem is that we are too comfortable in the "Zoo!"
  2. That place where all we do is exist! Everything is given to us and we even get to "pretend" we are living as we are designed to live! In "the wild!"
- B. Is it not time for The Church of Jesus Christ to truly express everything He is to the world! Not just "cater to each other's needs!"
1. It's time we begin to be challenged and even challenge each other!

Hebrews 10:24 (TPT)

24 Discover creative ways to encourage others and to motivate them toward acts of compassion, doing beautiful works as expressions of love.

2. It really is time for The Church to "LIVE IN THE WILD!"
3. When we become followers of Christ, a part of the baptized, a Christian, the Holy Spirit becomes a part of our life and we are empowered to live the resurrection life of Christ!

Colossians 3:1-4 (TPT)

1 Christ's resurrection is your resurrection too. This is why we are to yearn for all that is above, for that's where Christ sits enthroned at the place of all power, honor, and authority! 2 Yes, feast on all the treasures of the heavenly realm and fill your thoughts with heavenly realities, and not with the distractions of the natural realm. 3 Your crucifixion with Christ has severed the tie to this life, and now your true life is hidden away in God in Christ. 4 And as Christ himself is seen for who he really is, who you really are will also be revealed, for you are now one with him in his glory!

4. The Holy Spirit has also given you special gifts to minister to others around you this new life of God!

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (NLT)

4 There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. 5 There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. 6 God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. 7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

C. We really need to repent and ask for forgiveness for our lack of understanding and accepting the GIFTS that God's Spirit provides!

1. We need to GET OUT OF THE ZOO!
2. Notice that Jesus sent His disciples (more than just the 12) as part of the agreement of following Him!
3. When you say "yes" to Christ He "sends" you as well!

Philippians 4:1, 4-9 (NLT)

1 Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stay true to the Lord. I love you and long to see you, dear friends, for you are my joy and the crown I receive for my work.

4 Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! 5 Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. 6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7 Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. 8 And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. 9 Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.

II. People were attracted to the Early Church! Why?

A. If you read the Book of Acts, you see that it was the ORGANIC NATURE OF THE CHURCH!

1. The Church was an organism not just an event!
2. It was built around The Person of Jesus Christ, not a belief system!

Philippians 3:10 (NLV)

10 I want to know Him. I want to have the same power in my life that raised Jesus from the dead. I want to understand and have a share in His sufferings and be like Christ in His death.

3. It is truly time to leave the “zoo” where life is NOT what we were designed for!
4. It is time for The Body of Christ to be that...

His Body!

Romans 8:9-11(NLT)

9 But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) 10 And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. 11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.