

The People of The Church
Sunday, May 16, 2021

- * The People of God who have taken the step to become identified with Christ through being buried with Him in baptism make up The Church of The Living God!! For they have died to their old life and have risen in the newness of His life!
 - * Just WHO are these people? HOW do they live? WHAT sets them apart from everyone else?
 - * Unfortunately, we live in a time when people go to a building on Sunday mornings, take part in an hour-long service, and call themselves members of The Church of Jesus Christ!
 - * As we have stated before, what about the present-day practices of our faith are found in scripture? This should concern us!
- I. God has designed The Church, His expression on earth, to live as A FAMILY!

John 13:34-35 (NLT)

34 So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. 35 Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

- A. The scripture makes it very clear the The Church is to known by its LOVE!
 1. There are certain congregations known by their outreach!
 2. There are others known by their super cool facilities!
 3. Others are known for their really great worship band!
 4. Still others are known by their “rock star” pastor!
- B. Over and over in scripture, through Acts and into the

epistles, we see The Church of Jesus Christ being known for the love of Christ being lived through them!

Galatians 2:20 (TPT)

20 My old identity has been co-crucified with Christ and no longer lives. And now the essence of this new life is no longer mine, for the Anointed One lives his life through me—we live in union as one! My new life is empowered by the faith of the Son of God who loves me so much that he gave himself for me, dispensing his life into mine!

1. The point of this new life in Christ is that it is lived from a place beyond yourself.
2. This is literally an example of the “indwelling Spirit!”

II. We as The Church of Jesus Christ MUST learn to live beyond ourselves/outside ourselves if we are to fulfill God’s call to us!

1 John 4:7-12 (NLT)

7 Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. 8 But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. 10 This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. 12 No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.

- A. Listen, there is NO WAY we can be The Church God has designed us to be without completely dying to ourselves and living by His life in us! No way!
 1. Quit trying! It can’t be done! Your determination will NEVER be enough!
 2. What we have to remember is that this was the prayer of Jesus Christ!

John 17:20-23 (NLT)

20 “I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. 21 I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me. 22 “I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. 23 I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.

3. Let me say with “love, compassion and respect” ...shame on those who cause division by pride and selfishness in any of our congregations!

B. The Lord had some pretty firm words and instructions to those who didn't submit to The Lord and His ways of loving one another!

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (TPT)

1 Brothers and sisters, when I was with you I found it impossible to speak to you as those who are spiritually mature people, for you are still dominated by the mind-set of the flesh. And because you are immature infants in Christ, 2 I had to nurse you and feed you with “milk,” not with the solid food of more advanced teachings, because you weren't ready for it. In fact, you are still not ready to be fed solid food, 3 for you are living your lives dominated by the mind-set of the flesh. Ask yourselves: Is there jealousy among you? Do you compare yourselves with others? Do you quarrel like children and end up taking sides? If so, this proves that you are living your lives centered on yourselves, dominated by the mind-set of the flesh, and behaving like unbelievers.

C. On the other hand, this is what The Lord expects of His children, The Church!

Philippians 1:27 (NLV)

27 Live your lives as the Good News of Christ says you should. If I come to you or not, I want to hear that you are standing true as one. I want to hear that you are working together as one, preaching the Good News.

III. Here is the deal...we come up with countless strategies, plans and efforts to reach people! While our desire is commendable, when are we going to learn that God has made it abundantly clear what strategy will work...OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER!

A. He said if we will love each other the world would see that He is Who He said He was!

1. This is when our "message" and "our lives" have to line up with each other.
2. This is when we live outside ourselves and allow God to live through us!

B. This is what the process looks like!

John 15:1-4, 9-12 (NLT)

1 "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. 3 You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

9 "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. 10 When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. 11 I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! 12 This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.