

The Church Of The Bible

Lesson 4

Relationships

Introduction

- **A living organism**
- **Christ is the head**
- **Christians are the “body parts”**
- **Basic relationships**
 - **Individual relationship to the head**
 - **Individual relationships to each other**
- **“Special” relationships**

The Body

- **A living, functioning organism**
- **Comprised of relationships**
 - Christ is the head
- **Not an inanimate institution with an earthly head**
 - The universal church
 - The local congregation
- **Not an organization, An organism – a body**

The Head

- **Christ is the only head of the body**
 - *And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. (Col. 1:18)*
 - *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (Eph. 1:22-23)*
- **The only law giver, the only judge and the one to be exalted – no earthly head**
 - **The supreme sovereign**

The Body Parts

- **Individually accountable to the head**
 - *So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. (Romans 14:12)*
- **Individually responsible for**
 - **Interpreting and obeying God's word**
 - **Determining right from wrong**

Parts Of The Whole

- Each member is a part of the whole
 - *Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. (Rom. 12:4-5)*
 - *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. (members one of another-KJV) (Eph. 4:25)*

Individual Gifts

- Each member has an important gift to be used for the benefit of the whole
 - *We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.*
 - *If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (Rom. 12:6-8)*
- Think of yourself with sober judgment

The Relationship

- Encourage each other (**1Thes. 5:11**)
- Facilitate the growth of each other's faith (**2 Cor. 10:15**)
- Enlighten each other (**Col. 3:16**)
- Empower each other (**Matt. 20:25**)
 - A thousand points of light

When you see something wrong and you try to correct it, you become a point of light.

Encourage

- *Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. (1 Peter 2:17)*
- *Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. (1 Thes. 5:11)*
- *And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. (1 Thes. 5:14)*
- *But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. (Heb. 3:13)*
- *Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another (Heb. 10:25)*

Encouraging Words

PR 16:24 Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

PR 16:21 The wise in heart are called discerning, and pleasant words promote instruction.

PR 15:23 A man finds joy in giving an apt reply-- and how good is a timely word!

PR 12:25 An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.

Discouraging Practices

- *The “now I gotcha” game.*
- *Those “ain’t it awful” discussions.*
- *Label, isolate, criticize & condemn.*

It’s bad to have the “ain’t it awfull’s and the “can’t help it’s” at the same time.

Enlighten!

*I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. **Eph. 1:18-19***

That You May Know Hope

- **Enlighten my heart about the God of hope**
 - *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)*
- **The anchor for the soul**
 - *We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. (Hebrews 6:19)*
- *If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. (1 Corinthians 15:19)*
 - **If you are my brother, help me “know” this hope**

His Glorious Inheritance

- Enlighten my heart about the inheritance “kept in heaven for me”
 - ---an heritage that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, *(1 Peter 1:4-5)*
- *For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. (Hebrews 9:15)*
- *Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. (Colossians 1:12)*

Incomparably Great Power

- Enlighten me about the great power available to me
 - *That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, (Ephesians 1:19-20)*
- *What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31)*

Individual Accountability

- *Empowered Christians must feel free to study, think and challenge without being labeled and isolated. (Critical restoration tenet).*
- *So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. **Rom. 14:12***

Individual Responsibility

- **Self examination**

- *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. (Rom. 12:3)*

- **Work out your own salvation**

- *- - -continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. (Php. 2:12-13)*

Empowerment

**Unleashing the God given
potential for good
in individual Christians.**

One Body – Many Parts

- **The body parts are intimately related**
 - *The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. (1Cor. 12:12)*
- **Brotherly love makes it work**
 - *From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Eph. 4:16)*

Interrelationships

- Each part needs the others
 - *The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. (1 Cor. 12:21-23)*
 - *Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord (Rom. 12:10-11)*

Special Responsibilities

- *It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:11-13)*

A Purpose Statement

- Prepare God's people for works of service
- In a way that:
 - Promotes unity of the faith
 - Builds a common knowledge of God
 - Reaches for spiritual maturity - *attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*
- So that:
 - *The body of Christ may be built up*

Conclusion

- **The church organization is a matter of relationships**
 - Basic relationships
 - “Special” relationships
- **Basic relationships**
 - Relationship with Christ
 - Relationship with the body
 - Relationship with each other

An Individual Focus

- **People become Christians as individuals**
 - Redeemed, purified, sanctified, and reconciled as individuals
- **Christians worship as individuals**
 - An attitude of reverence – a feeling of praise
- **“Church” work is done by individuals**

Individual Responsibility

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Individuals

- **Different kinds of service & workings**
 - *There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.*
(1 Cor. 12:5-6)
- **Different talents and interests**
 - *We have different gifts, according to the grace given us..* (Rom. 12:6-8)
 - *Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.* (1 Cor. 12:7)

•And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.



The church exists for the individual, not the individual for the church. – J. Ridley

Stroop



