

WE ARE: Family

Acts 14

21 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. 23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

- The goal of Paul and Barnabas was to **strengthen and structure** the churches. To help the people develop to maturity in the faith. As they came together in the church this was the first indication of FAMILY.

KEY PRINCIPLE

The great commission is not a mandate to simply multiply individual disciples but to multiply churches.

Metaphors typically used to describe the church:

1. Building: "Built on a firm foundation" "We are like those being built into a spiritual house"
2. Bride: "That Christ laid down his life for his Bride" "That Christ's aim is to sanctify by the washing of water with the word."

Two other metaphors that are used are more of a reality of what we should be:

3. Family: (not a metaphor)
 - Family is the CHURCH gathered together.
4. Body

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Family doesn't always have the best connotations for everyone. No matter who you are, your family has mess. SO in light of the Gospel, what does church family look like for you?

1 Timothy 3

14 I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, 15 if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

Titus 1

5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you." 6 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

- The appointment of elders continues to give structure to the new church families.
- There are multiple elders being appointed - never just one. It is clear that there is mutual submission with the church.

KEY PRINCIPLE

1. JICC uses this structure for appointing elders.
2. Mutual submission within the eldership and within the church body.

- We are still a plurality because we are family

1 Corinthians 12

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.

Spiritual gifts - *charismata*

Root word in original Greek = *charis* which means grace

A charismatic community is a community of **grace**.

JICC is a "grace" church, a grace family. We are marked by the grace of God.

REFLECTION QUESTION

What spiritual gift do you think the Lord has given you, if any? Do you think you are utilizing it? Would you like to be disciplined in it?

If you answered no to what spiritual you think the Lord has given you, would you like help in discerning what the Lord has given you?

Acts 2

17 And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; 18 even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

- The Holy Spirit is not just served for prophets and leaders. It is poured out on all flesh. All received gifts.

The church is a family that creates space for people to learn and grow and fail.

1 Corinthians 12

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.

1. No division
2. Same care for each other
3. Rejoice and Suffer - together

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Am I connected to the church body so that I feel the sufferings or rejoicings of others?