

# Walk in Relationships pt 1

## The Purpose of the Church, Individuals and Relationships

February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 | Pastor Cameron Brice

### I. The Church.

#### A. What is the church?

1. The church is a community of individuals.
2. In order to describe this truth Paul uses the imagery of one body made up of many parts:

**a) “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.” - 1 Corinthians 12:12 (ESV)**

#### B. What is the purpose of the church?

1. In order to fully understand the purpose of the church we need to look at its foundation.

**a) “When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” - Matthew 16:13 (NLT)**

b) Jesus begins His conversation surrounding the church with the question, “Who do men say that I am?”

c) The disciples give a number of answers then Jesus continues:

**d) “...But who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build my church...” - Matthew 16:15-18a (NLT)**

e) If the foundation of the church is the revelation of who Jesus is, then we can gather that the purpose of the church was is to make Him known.

(1) Paul makes this clear for us:

**(2) “His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.” - Ephesians 3:10-11 (NIV)**

(3) Simply put, the eternal purpose of the church is to make God known.

(4) This also falls right in line with our purpose as individual believers.

## II. The Individual.

A. Again, in order to find our purpose as individual believers and humans, we need to look into the foundation of our eternal purpose:

**1. “Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us.” - Genesis 1:27a (NLT)**

2. God created us for the purpose of carrying His image and making Him known in the earth.

3. This is why Paul makes this command:

**a) “Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ...” Ephesians 5:1-2 (NLT)**

b) Our collective purpose as individuals who make up the church is to make God known.

c) We make God known by getting to know Christ together:

**(1) “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.” - Ephesians 4:11-13 (NLT)**

(a) We come together as the church on Sunday mornings and throughout the week to get to know God.

- i) This isn't so we can simply regurgitate facts about God to people.
- (b) The more we get to know God collectively and as individuals, the more we can become like Him.
  - i) This means that as we come together, we come to unity in our knowledge of God's kindness, and then make God known through being examples of God's kindness.
  - ii) We come to unity in our knowledge of God's goodness, and then make God known through being examples of His goodness.
  - iii) We come to unity in our knowledge of God's love, and then make God known through being examples of God's love.
  - iv) We come to unity of faith in God's healing power, and then make God known through praying for the sick.
- (c) The more we become like Him, the more we can make Him known.
- d) The primary medium we have for making God known as we become like Him is our relationships.
  - (1) Making God known isn't as "professional" as we have made it to be. Making God known is for the monotonous, day-to-day moments. It isn't relegated to an hour and a half on Sunday mornings. God wants to invade people's everyday lives through your seemingly common life and make Himself known.
- e) The primary medium we have for making God known as the church and individuals is through our relationships.
  - (1) One of the greatest explanations of this is found in Ephesians 4-6.

### III. Relationships.

- A. In chapters 4 and 5 Paul describes the practical life expression of what we explained in the beginning of this teaching by tackling the purpose and function of the church and individuals within the church. Then midway through chapter 5 he dives into how that purpose is revealed in specific relationships such as family or workplace relationships.

1. In every specific relationship that Paul talks through he constantly calls back to God's example:
  - a) Marriage Relationships:
    - (1) **“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” - Ephesians 4:21 (NLT)**
    - (2) **“For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord.” - Ephesians 4:22 (NLT)**
    - (3) **“For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church.” - Ephesians 4:25 (NLT)**
  - b) Parental Relationships:
    - (1) **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord (as His representatives) ...” - Ephesians 6:1a (AMPC)**
    - (2) **“Parents ... rear them [children] (tenderly) in the training and discipline and the counsel and admonition of the Lord.” - Ephesians 6:4 (AMPC)**
  - c) Workplace Relationships:
    - (1) **“Servants (employees), respectfully obey your earthly masters (employers) but always with an eye to obeying the real master, Christ.” - Ephesians 6:5 (MSG)**
    - (2) **“Masters (employers), treat your slaves (employees) in the same way ... you both have the same Master in heaven.” - Ephesians 6:9 (NLT)**
2. All of these relationships present us with the opportunity to be more like God and to make Him known, through our being like Him.
  - a) When we learn about God's goodness, kindness, power, love, patience, faithfulness, integrity, meekness, gentleness, healing, or provision we immediately practice our knowledge of God within these relationships.
  - b) What inevitably begins to happen is that our “being like God” overflows from these relationships.
    - (1) As we walk in our marriages, families and work relationships, they become the place where God reveals Himself.

- (2) As we practice the love of God in our marriage, we are making the love of God known to our friends and family.
- (3) As we practice the kindness of God with our children, we are making the kindness of God known to those around us.
- (4) As we practice the faithfulness of God in our work relationships, we are making God known to our coworkers.
- (5) As we pray for people to be healed, we are making the healing power of God known to others.

B. So, what we want to do is take the next few weeks to dive into the mechanics of these relationships to explore how to better make God known through them!

1. Let's start with marriage ... next week ;)