

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday January 13, 2019. "I Love My Church: Gathering Gains Power".

A. Intro.

So here we go...into our interim, we all feel the presence of Lamar's absence too, and know that change and different is hard. Just our emotional reactions to his leaving is a sign that what we're doing here is important...REALLY important.

And we hope and pray you are as committed to what God has, and is going to do, at NCC as our staff, elders, and other leaders are. We are absolutely convinced the greatest thing we can do to honor him, is to not miss a step as we are handed the baton and move forward. So here we go.

B. Sunday.

We began a series we did last year at this time called, "*I Love My Church*". It is a fairly in depth look at why we do this thing called 'church', and to look at our vision of the three things that make up a scriptural understanding of why church.

We Gather, we Grow, and then we Go. Not only is this part of what it means to genuinely be invested in the life of a church, a community of people who believe that we were created for a purpose. But these three values also speak into our personal life, and our desire for what Paul described in his letters as a "*well-formed maturity*". A belief there is this person we want to become, so we do the things we need to do to grow that person.

So let's start with a little conversation about who we are and who we want to become.

What are one or two things in the past year you feel like you've had some personal growth in?

What are one or two things that you would like to have some personal growth in?

And the hard question.

What is in your life right now, helping you work on those areas you want to see growth in?

Sunday we started with the first value of **Gathering**. This is the coming together with others who have similar personal goals in mind. We may not have a firm grasp on a lot of spiritual or theological issues, but we know we want to be a 'better me'. And it's in the Gathering together, a richly diverse community of people all moving in a similar direction, that we can move towards the 'better me'.

Kal presented scripture, **Hebrews 10:22-25**, and **Matthew 10:1-4**, that helped us see the importance of coming together, why we do it. And then this power we gain when we do come together.

And Kal tied together the idea and importance of Gathering with the receiving and acquisition of power. So let's wrestle with the idea of power first and then we'll go to the main teaching passage.

When you hear the word power what comes to mind? Why?

What is the nature of it?

Where and how did you form that picture or understanding of power?

Hold in your mind what you think about when you hear the word power.

C. Scripture.

What we wrestled with; **Is there a scriptural understanding of power, that may not be the world's definition of power, that happens when we come together...Gather?**

Kal's primary passage was **Acts 1:6-8**. So read this passage, and then we'll talk about the two different types of power in scripture.

1. Dunamis. This is cosmic power..like light. It's not force, coercion, might, strength. It's this essence, this presence, that cannot be resisted. It reveals, illuminates, shows the way. Dunamis surfaces the desire to follow already within the other.

2. Kratos. This is worldly power. It's forced, coercion, compliance. It's the power used to describe Greek and Roman gods, because they were flawed, selfish, gods who wanted to punish and reward. And were attracted to forceful power rather than a more influencing type of power...dunamis. Kratos makes people who weren't as strong as you, do what you wanted them to do.

Where have you seen Dunamis power practiced?

Where have you seen Kratos power practiced?

Dunamis is the power that Jesus was talking about in Acts 1. It is a power that is received not seized. And it is a *"Power given for the flourishing of others"*. -Ed Stetzer.

So...what and how are you willing to be a part of Gathering with others and to allow any Kratos power within you be converted into Dunamis power?

D. Application.

So...what does this mean, how do we apply it in our everyday life?

1. Pre-choose to 'want to want to' become the person you are called to be.

Gathering doesn't require any bigger step than to decide to Gather.

2. Embrace radical diversity and inclusiveness.

We're all at different places, with different beliefs, all trying to figure it out.

We're all Gathering together, having conversations, figuring it out.

3. Take the next step.

What is that one next thing you can do to Gather on a deeper level?

The power and impact of Gathering comes down to answering these questions.

Is there a me out there I'm actively working towards becoming?

And am I willing to do the things to move my life in that direction?