

Life Group Lesson

Essentials • Week of September 4

Introduction

This week we are looking at our sixth core value, represented by the letter “T” in the acronym of C-H-R-I-S-T. Christ Church values –

“Training our worshipers to be outward focused by planting a new church every three years and giving away 25% of our resources.”

You can tell when someone is lost. Perhaps you have been there yourself. Sometimes when we are lost, we *look* lost and are an inconvenience to others – our head is buried in a map as we hear horns blow. We receive unusual gestures as we slow down to read street signs or pull up the GPS on our phone. As crazy as it sounds, when our instincts or devices fail us, we would rather take a chance on our ‘sense-of-direction’ than ask for directions. And we do that in life. We often pretend to know the answers to life’s questions, when clearly, we don’t. We are lost. When it comes to eternal matters, rather than going with an instinct or sense-of-direction, it is vital that we seek God’s way and find the answers by looking into His Word.

In the early days of the church, followers of Christ were known as people of ‘The Way’ (Acts 9:2, 22:4). The church understood that they were on-mission – all called to be ambassadors for the Gospel of Jesus Christ, not just the apostles. The early church valued all people and shared the Good News (and resources) with any who had need (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32). At Antioch, where believers were first called Christians (Acts 11:26), they sent out missionaries; godly men at Antioch were the ones who commissioned Paul and Barnabas to carry the message of Christ into Asia minor, the Greek islands, and other countries and provinces across the Mediterranean world (Acts 13:1-3). These men trained and equipped new believers to be outward-focused.

Background

In his first letter to the church in Corinth, Paul reprimands them for allowing contaminants of the culture into the church, even celebrating the sin of

a certain individual who was living with his stepmother (1 Corinthians 5:1-2). Satan wants to bring the church down. The church must ‘come down’ – not in defeat, but in humility, turning from our pride and arrogance. Instead of appeasing the culture, our work is to reach people with the life-changing message of Christ. Instead of imitating worldly behavior, we must train ourselves to be set apart and live out the truth of God’s Word. In a recent article, Franklin Graham says: “What really troubles me is the number of pulpits that fall prey to the whims of culture and fail miserably to declare the truth of God’s Word. Far too many preachers are afraid of what their peers may say or what their congregations may think if they boldly proclaim the Scripture.” (from article, ‘Our Unchanging God’ - [Decision](#), Sept. 2022 issue)

When Paul wrote his second letter to the church in Corinth, his goal was to rekindle their reverence for God and remind them that God is the source of all comfort. He reminded them that all of God’s promises have been fulfilled in Christ. Paul wanted them to examine their faith to make sure it was genuine. His words speak to us today. We must reclaim our purpose: to be on-mission for Christ. Let’s face it, we are prone to drift away from Scriptural holiness, but Paul reminds us: “...we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making His appeal through us” to a fallen, broken world. Instead of allowing culture to infiltrate the church, Paul says we have a “fearful responsibility to the Lord” – work hard to persuade others.

Reading the Text

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?
2. What are you going to do about it?
3. How can we help you?

In Closing

We have too much sideways energy when we drift away from Scripture and are not focused on our marching orders outlined in God's Word –

“Jesus came and told His disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age’”
(Matthew 28:18-20).

The church is not about having a spectacular ministry. The church is about loving the Lord Jesus and loving people enough to help them know God personally. Christ came to this earth so that we could have accurate directions to heaven. He not only knows the way, He *is* the Way, the Truth, the Life! (John 14:6). Salvation (the way to heaven) is in the Person of Jesus. The local church will stay young and healthy and vital, as long as we are planting new churches, new campuses, birthing new congregations – locally and globally – every three years. This is what we are called to do.

Close in a Time of Prayer asking:

How can I pray for my fellow Life Group participants this week?

One Year Bible Readings

September 4: Ecclesiastes 7:1-9:18, 2 Corinthians 7:8-16, Psalm 48:1-14, Prov. 22:17-19

September 5: Ecclesiastes 10:1-12:14, 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, Ps. 49:1-20, Prov. 22:20-21

September 6: Song of Solomon 1:1-4:16, 2 Cor. 8:16-24, Ps. 50:1-23, Prov. 22:22-23

September 7: Song of Solomon 5:1-8:14, 2 Cor. 9:1-15, Ps. 51:1-19, Prov. 22:24-25

September 8: Isaiah 1:1-2:22, 2 Corinthians 10:1-18, Psalm 52:1-9, Proverbs 22:26-27

September 9: Isaiah 3:1-5:30, 2 Corinthians 11:1-15, Psalm 53:1-6, Proverbs 22:28-29

September 10: Isaiah 6:1-7:25, 2 Corinthians 11:16-33, Psalm 54:1-7, Proverbs 23:1-3

Essentials

Text: 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Plain Truth:

Training our worshippers to be outward focused
by planting a new church every three years and
giving away 25% of our resources.

September 4, 2022