

# Kingdom Relationships

## “The Church Community”

### **There are Five Predominant Philosophies of Church in America.**

#### 1. An Extended Family?

Some people see church as a bigger family. Here they emphasize and develop life-long relationships. These churches are usually run by a few families who are related to one another in some way. This is small church America...

Dangers: They become exclusive and unfriendly to newcomers and new converts. Certain people take positions of ownership which suppresses the development of new leaders. Evangelism and outreach are virtually non-existent.

#### 2. The Hospital Philosophy?

Some people see church as a spiritual hospital where spiritually sick people infected with spiritual diseases can come to be healed. The pastor is the chief surgeon and everyone on the leadership team serves as the hospital staff.

Dangers: People rely too heavily on the church to meet all their needs. They usually won't develop a commitment to the church body because they are always looking for the best care possible. They often check out other spiritual hospitals to see what kind of care they offer.

#### 3. A Clean Entertainment Center?

This is where people go to take in the show. The pastor is usually incredibly gifted in the arts and entertainment field. You might have three worship songs and one Top 40 from the current billboard selection. Church is fun, short, and you never know what you are going to get.

Dangers: In their desire to reach the un-churched, they usually produce a weak and borderline worldly congregation. Most of the people are spectators and not participators. The congregants like church but they don't understand the Kingdom.

#### 4. A Spiritual Militia?

These are the churches that focus heavily on the militant aspects of the Kingdom. “They are not a hospital they are an army...”. They march against everybody, they preach against everybody, and they are critical of not only our Atheistic Society, but they are also critical of other churches that are not like them.

Dangers: A spiritual elitism and a “holier than thou” attitude is very unpleasant. Soldiers in this army take an unreasonable and legalistic approach to the Bible. These attitudes can be very offensive to the “not yet saved”.

## 5. A Preaching & Praise Center?

These are the churches that love solid biblical teaching and the power of authentic praise, and worship. Their philosophy is first: The Word is alive and powerful to change lives. Secondly, experiencing the presence of God.

Dangers: People often want to sit and soak with no strategy to activate what they have learned. Some people catch the fire for themselves and grow in their Christian walk through self-motivation and personal devotion to Christ. But, the majority can't do it alone. They need a structure, a map, or coach to help them process the Christian life.

There are elements of truth in each of these 5 philosophies

- \* The church IS a FAMILY we you can find people who love you and accept you unconditionally.
- \* The church IS a HOSPITAL where the cancers of sin can be removed and wounded warriors find healing.
- \* The church IS a CLEAN ENTERTAINMENT CENTER with a message that is relevant to this generation.
- \* The church IS a MILITANT ARMY OF GOD where foxhole friends take their stand against darkness.
- \* The church IS a PREACHING PRAISE CENTER, where people encounter God through His word and presence.

The church is all these things and more! Because, all these ideas are the collective aspects of the Kingdom and they should all be operating with a healthy tension that is balanced by the working of the Spirit of God.

How do we define Church at CLC?

At Christian Life, we see church as a unified and universal collection of Kingdom-minded sons and daughters of God who understand and are committed to the mission of Jesus... the Glorious Kingdom of God.

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## The Church is a Piece of Heaven on Earth

In just about every recognized country in the world there is an American embassy, which is a little piece of America a long way from home.

Embassies are sovereign territories, meaning that they do not belong to the countries they are in. They belong to the countries from which they came.

If you get into trouble in a foreign land, make your way to the American embassy because once you enter its gates, you are in America again. You are where the laws of our nation rule. America will defend, protect and come to the full aid of its diplomatic centers and embassys across the world.

The church is supposed to be a little bit of heaven a long way from home. The Church is the place where heaven's highest ranking diplomats reside! You and I are Ambassadors of heaven! We don't represent the President of the United States, we represent someone with much more authority than President Trump! We are the direct Ambassadors of the King! The King of all Kings!

And as a result, the church is a heavenly outpost in a foreign world where the values, authority, and the security of God's Kingdom is able to manifest! 1 Peter 2:11 NLT "Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires that war against you..."

## **The Church Is a Kingdom Community**

A "Kingdom Community" is a group of interlinked people who are unified around what they share in common. (A King; a King's Purpose) COMMON / UNITY = COMMUNITY

A "Kingdom Community" is vibrant! It is overflowing with life! It is group of people to enjoy living life together with a common unity of purpose.

## **A Kingdom Community**

### **1 The Church is Vibrant Community Where Kingdom Business is Legislated.**

- a) The church is more than a building, it is a kingdom outpost where the diplomats of heaven gather together to do Kingdom Business!
- b) A Kingdom Focused church has a legislative capacity.
- i) We learn this from the definition of the term for "church" that Paul used in Ephesians 1:22 "And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church..."

The Greek word for church is ecclesia, literally means "assembly." The word was used in New Testament days for a group of people who had been called out from the general population to serve in a parliament, congress, or counsel of the community. Their job was to establish the governance, guidelines, rules, and regulations for the broader population.

- ii) To be a part of the church of Jesus Christ, is to be a part of a spiritual legislative body called enact and ratify heaven's viewpoint upon hell's society.

(1) It is a combat we are talking about... there is an ongoing Clash of the Kingdoms!

The Battle will not be won through our loud posturing... the Kingdom will come through the manifesting of Kingdom compassion authority, and power!

(2) Example: When Paul brought the Kingdom to Corinth

2Corinthians 2:1-5 NLT When I first came to you, dear brothers and sisters, I didn't use lofty words and impressive wisdom to tell you God's secret plan. **2** For I decided that while I was with you I would forget everything except Jesus Christ, the one who was crucified. **3** I came to you in weakness—timid and trembling. **4** And my message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit. **5** I did this so you would trust not in human wisdom but in the power of God.

Even the Apostle Paul trembled a little at the task of bringing the Kingdom to folks who would be hostile to it! But he had what we have... the Power of God!

- iii) In the midst of a place of war and conflict, God has deposited an ecclesia! A group of people who have been called out to bring the governance of God through the power and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

So when the C Group Gathers don't just focus on the topics... lets together get a Kingdom Strategy for the week.

- (1) How will you deal with the overbearing classmate?
- (2) How will you represent Jesus when your faith is ridiculed on campus or at work?
- (3) How will you stay righteous when someone female or male offers you sexual opportunity?

Don't let the world legislate your conduct, you set the rules for your life and conduct!

## **2 The Church is a Vibrant Community United Together Through Kingdom Relationships.**

- a) You were not made for isolation you were created for relationships.
- b) Relationships which are fulfilling, are relationships that are built on righteousness not unrighteousness.
  - i) This is what a Kingdom Relationship is. It is a relationship where friends are both committed to being in a right position under the rule and governance of their common King.

ii) When conflict or chaos arise, God's people understand that there is something at stake here that supersedes our moment of strife. Our Kingdom Partnership and our Kingdom Purpose.

c) Jesus is building his Kingdom Church through relationships!

i) He will do it Brick by brick!

Matthew 16:13-19 Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" **14** And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." **15** He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" **16** Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17** And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. **18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

(1) The foundation is the revelation of Christ Jesus as the Messiah King!

(2) Notice something under the surface of the English text in 17 & 18. "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah... For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you... **18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it

The word Jesus used for Peter was the GRK word **petros** which indicates a single stone. But then Jesus used the Greek word **petra** for "rock," indicative of a mass, or cliff, or huge collection of rocks making something larger than any individual rock.

This mass of rocks interlinks individual rocks together to create a stronger whole. Although there are a multitude of individual stones in a petra, they do not function as individual rocks, but are intimately joined together.

Peter fully understood later what Jesus was saying about himself and the church. We have his interpretation in his own epistle. Look at 1 Peter 2:5 "You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house."

Jesus says, you did not choose me I chose you and appointed you... (John 15:16)

**You are anointed and appointed!**

(a) You live now because this age is your appointed time!

(b) You live around the people you are here because these are your appointed peeps.

ii) So when the C groups meet next week! Take a good look at the blocks you are blessed with. And, no matter what the topic... say to yourself, I'm just building up His spiritual house!

### 3 The Church is a Vibrant Community Model of Kingdom Life for Those Who Are Dead in Their Sins.

- a) Like an American embassy in a foreign land, the church is piece of Heaven on the Earth.
- b) We are hear to be seen! Matthew 5:14-16 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. **15** Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
  - i) The purpose of the church is “the context of heaven!” to demonstrate heaven in our relationships. To be loving, honoring, committed, preferring, long suffering, joyful...
  - ii) To reveal the Father.... In our relationships
  - iii) To reveal the work of the son... in our relationships
- c) 2 Cor 3:3 NIV “you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God...”

A C - Group is a small collection of Kingdom people learning to living life together as a testimony to the world!

Even if you are not in a group... Your life is like a template for the world to see what God can do!

Romans 14:17 KJV For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.