

Personal/ Small Group Sermon Study

The Church is the Family of God

Week of October 18, 2020 A.D.

Read today's title. Keep that reality in mind as you study this weeks' lesson.

Read John 14:15-27

1. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Jesus suffered, bled, and died on a cross for the expressed purpose of enabling you, me, and the entire world to escape the eternal torment of hell and to be able to live in a family relationship with him both in this life and throughout eternity. If we are not willing to make the effort to obey His commands, we should wonder if we truly are the born-again children of God."
2. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "There is a prevailing attitude in the American church that says that obedience to Christ is secondary to pursuing our own personal goals, plans, wants, and desires."
3. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "It is the will of Jesus and of God the Father that our lives are to be conformed to the likeness of the life of Christ. And, the Holy Spirit has been given to us to enable us to do so."
4. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "The primary purpose for our existence is to serve Christ and to make Christ known to the world in which we live. We can accomplish this purpose only by loving God and loving each other."
5. Can we love God without (a) spending time with Him? (b) obeying Him? (c) spending time with each other? (d) knowing each other more than superficially? and (e) loving each other in both words and in deeds? Please explain your answers. For each "no" answer, please explain how to accomplish that particular action.

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5

6. Does this passage describe the current culture in which we live? Please explain your answer by discussing the extent to which each of the behaviors mentioned in these verses is prevalent in our culture.
7. Please describe the efforts and/or actions which are being practiced by your church family to become the opposite of the "people" described in this passage.

Read Matthew 16:5-12

8. Are there people in the church today who behave like the “Pharisees and Sadducees” from the time of Christ? Please explain the reasoning for your answer.
9. Can the behavior and/or attitudes of church members permeate the church family like yeast? Please describe and identify the behaviors and attitudes of church members which are (a) good yeast and (b) bad yeast.

Read John 17:20-23

10. Is church unity important to Jesus? If not, why not? If so, why? If so, has Jesus made a special exception to allow the churches in America to ignore and disregard His prayer for unity among their members? Please explain.

Read Ephesians 4:1-3; 11-13

11. Based on these verses, what is the primary role of the “pastors and teachers” in the body of Christ? In what ways can the pastors (a) promote unity? and/or (b) cause division? Please explain.
12. Based on these verses, what goals have been set by Jesus for the members of each church to accomplish collectively as a family? In what ways can the members of your church family (a) work together to achieve those goals? and/or (b) reject those goals and/or be counter-productive toward achieving those goals? Please explain.

Read Acts 2:37- 47

13. In your opinion, do these verses describe a church family which is unified? If so, please identify each activity which depicts unity and, for each activity, please state how that activity can be duplicated in your church family.
14. In the context of first century Jerusalem, please discuss the time and resource challenges of daily life such as earning a living and providing meals, water, clothing, and shelter. Next, please discuss whether the time and resource pressures which we must overcome in order to experience church unity are more challenging now than they were in first century Jerusalem.

Consider: Jesus wants his blood-bought church to “be brought to complete unity to let the world know that God the Father sent Jesus and the Father has loved us even as He has loved Jesus.” When it comes to church unity, are you part of the solution? Or are you part of the problem? “Talk it over with Jesus.”
Amen

****Note:** *This lesson was adapted from Chapter 18 of The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren. We encourage you to read that book. You may receive a copy for free at our information center in the lobby. Please get one today.*