

Household

Jesus loves His Church it was His idea!

Ephesians 5:25 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

I've heard so often "I love Jesus but don't like the Church", think for a moment – we are speaking about Jesus' bride, the one He loves.

Colossians 3:12-16 12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

If we grow in our love of the Jesus Bride, His Church, Why wouldn't we want to take every opportunity to meet together, to be united, to encourage, teach and strengthen each other, to jointly bring worship and praise to our awesome and loving God?

1 Corinthians 14:26 26 What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? [IF? NO] When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.

By coming together, we each bring a gift, something from God to bless Him and each other. It's not just about what we can gain, it's about what others can gain through us playing our part. The Church is weaker when we aren't there! The Church is built up by us all getting stuck in! AMEN

Just think if a family comes along for the first time, never having come to church before, something has happened and they are drawn to Jesus, they are questioning and know you find people who believe in Jesus in a Church. They automatically check online for a church, they find Waypoint Church, it looks good, it has something for the kids. They come along...

What do they find?

What welcome do they receive? Is someone at the door to greet them? Do people come across to get to know them?

Are people serving them great refreshments are they smiling, serving together?

Is there a buzz, an excitement about the place? Do they look around and think, wow so many people coming together believing in this stuff? Different ages, the young and old, different backgrounds.

Then the worship team start. Not one person on an organ, but a whole team, skilled and not so skilled, modern understandable songs, intimate. Are people engaged and passionately worshipping and showing their love for Jesus?

Their kids go out to WayKids, where they later find out they had a fantastic and fun time learning about Jesus with loads of other kids and enthusiastic leaders.

They then have chance to relax without the kids whilst a charming and engaging guy speaks about how amazing Jesus is.

Then there's more singing but also an opportunity to listen to God, and amazingly different members of the church come forward and share words and say about God wanting to heal different people. Then people respond. Different people receive prayer and things start to happen and it really looks like God is doing stuff!

After the service this family finds out that the Church is about to run an Alpha Course. Where a team will invest more time and energy in helping them and others explore the Christian faith.

They are invited out for coffee for meals, they feel part of a community, loved, accepted cared for.

Do you think Waypoint Church can be this kind of place for people to come to without Christians choosing to commit to come together and serve together?

Do you think we could have run Alpha Courses and provided Boxes of Hope without us coming together as a Church and working together?

Can we be a caring community which loves each other, is generous to each other, looks out for each other, is hospitable to each other, if we just live individualistic lives?

We all have a part to play, each one of us is so needed. There are empty seats here today and there are people on multiple rotas, because people are missing and are missed!

Acts 2:42-47 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

COMMENT

- Devoted - strong word - not just dipped in or out - to what?
- 1. Apostles teaching - to learning
- 2. Fellowship - participation/generosity/ freely sharing/contributing
- 3. Breaking bread - sharing life together
- 4. Prayer -
- **All** the believers (not just some of them) together, shared, sacrificially provided for others
- Every day:
 1. met together in a gathering in a public setting
 2. Shared life together in homes
 3. Praised God
- Results:

1. Everyone filled with awe at signs and wonders
2. enjoyed favour of all people
3. Lord added to their number daily those being saved!

Church is family, it's community, it's a body, it's a school, it's a field hospital, it's a peace corps an army that seeks to educate, build, heal and bring relief and peace. Our weapons are the power of God to heal and cast out demons. The good news that He can rescue the lost, and create the hearts of compassion that feed the poor and care for the outcasts.

In doing this we claim back the territory unlawfully occupied by the enemy. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we aim be an army that declares "the year of God's favour". An army that tells people, "there is more to life than this".

Yes church can be messy, not everyone always gets on, by being thrown together by God we discover other people can annoy us, can at times hurt us, but we also learn to be patient and to forgive and to love sacrificially. This makes us stronger and more mature in our faith.

"The church is like Noah's ark. It stinks, but if you get out of it, you'll drown."
Shane Claiborne

It is due to these challenges being overcome that Jesus could say:

John 13:35 NIV ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

It is much easier and at times tempting to back out, and only surround yourself with like minded friends rather than to be a real disciple and to love your brother and sister even when it hurts and be a church showing Jesus love.

Ending

Can we commit today to each other, to be God's household, loving caring, supporting and serving each other?

Can we commit today to each other that when niggles, hurts and offences happen that rather than following the worlds cancel culture and drop people or drop out, we choose to follow Jesus way and chat things through, love and forgive.

I'm excited today that as we move forward in being the church Jesus loves and learning to grow in our love for each other that God is going to do amazing things!

That we will be filled with awe at the signs and wonders that God starts to do through us

That we will more and more enjoy the favour of local people who are touched by the overflow of our love

And we will see God adding to our number daily those who are being saved!