

Shield of Faith Christian Center of Pomona

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Bible Study – Tuesday, August 1, 2000

"Characteristics of a Great Church"

(The Core Issues of Church Life)

1. **FAITHFULNESS** –

A great church has members that are FAITHFUL

- *I Tim. 4:8 "be thou an example of the believer.."*
- *Rev. 2:10 "be thou faithful unto death..."*
- *II Tim. 2:6-7 "husbandman must be first partaker...consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding..."*

OBSERVATIONS -

- a. We must LEARN and be TRAINED to be faithful - not to live out of our feelings
- b. We must learn to execute DUTIES - not a popular word today
- c. Faithfulness builds CHARACTER and DISCIPLINE
- d. Short-lived righteousness is of no value - one must CONTINUE in sacrificial obedience and service to God.
- e. It is critical that LEADERS are an EXAMPLE, especially to the babies
- f. At our church we expect SUNDAY and TUESDAY

2. **EQUIPPING THE SAINTS FOR MINISTRY**

Members of a great church are a MOBILIZED, PARTICIPATING ARMY, not an audience of spectators

- *Col. 4:17 "take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord..."*
- *Mark 13:34 "to every man his work..."*
- *Psalms 100:2 "serve the Lord with gladness..."*
- *II Timothy 4:5 "make full proof of thy ministry..."*

OBSERVATIONS -

- a. Everyone has both specific GIFTS and fore-ordained ASSIGNMENTS
- b. Serve with a joyful attitude
- c. Meaning in life comes from being used by God
- d. Volunteerism, activism, enthusiasm, ambition for Jesus!
- e. JOY and ANOINTING comes from service to God
- f. There is a limitless range of opportunity for service
- g. As a diligent pastor and staff - we MAY NOT ALLOW you to sit still!

3. **PRAYER** –

A great church is built on PRAYER

- *Mark 11:17 "my house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer..."*
- *I Thessalonians 5:17 "Pray without ceasing"*
- *Luke 18:1 "Men ought always to pray and not to faint..."*
- *Acts 12:5 "But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God..."*
- *I Timothy 2:1-3 "I would above all things that prayer, intercessions, etc..."*

OBSERVATIONS

- a. Prayer is the first and primary business of the church
- b. Prayer is method by which a saint may be most quickly and effectively DISCIPLINED! It is *by far* the most efficient and powerful method of true discipleship and spiritual growth!
- c. The church should promote personal prayer as more important than any other religious or ecclesiastical activity.

4. WORLD IMPACT

A great church has a goal to have WORLD IMPACT

- *Matthew 9:37 "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few..."*
- *Luke 14:23 "go ye into the highways and hedges and compel them..."*
- *Psalms 126:5-6 "he that goeth forth weeping bearing precious seed..."*
- *Acts 17:6 "these that have turned the word upside down..."*

OBSERVATIONS

- a. A dynamic church or saint is pre-occupied with soul winning!
- b. We must aspire to true EVANGELISTIC GREATNESS
- c. Every aspect of church life must point to the winning of souls

5. ASSIMILATION OF NEW CONVERTS -

A great church will TRANSMIT WISDOM from mature members to spiritual newborns

- *Titus 2:3-5 "That they may teach the young women to be sober..."*
- *Titus 2:6-9 "Young men likewise exhort..."*
- *Titus 3:1 "Put them in mind..."*
- *I Peter 5:1-2 "Feed the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost..."*
- *Psalms 78:1-7 "That they might set their hope in God, and not forget..."*

OBSERVATIONS

- a. New converts must SURVIVE - the infant mortality rate must be very *low*!
- b. The environment must not only sustain them, but also MOBILIZE THEM
- c. New members, in a healthy situation will be your greatest soul-winners
- d. They must see the saved life as a PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION to SANCTIFICATION OF LIFE and SPIRITUAL TRAINING

6. SUPERNATURAL PRESENCE OF GOD -

A great church ordinarily embraces and walks in the SUPERNATURAL

- *Acts 2:16-18 "you young men shall see visions, etc..."*
- *Acts 4:29-31 "by stretching forth your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders..."*
- *I Cor. 12:31 "...but covet earnestly the best gifts..."*

OBSERVATIONS

- a. Churches must remember that it's "...not by might, nor power," etc.
- b. A prayerful church will witness the supernatural endorsement of God periodically
- c. Tongues, interpretation and prophecy are themselves supernatural - but we want more healings, miracles and other undeniable things.

7. **FINANCIAL POWER**

A great church is a place of faithful FINANCIAL SACRIFICE

- *Prov.3:9 "Honor the Lord with thy substance with the firstfruits all thine increase,*
- *Malachi 3:9-12 "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse..."*
- *Luke 6:38 "Give and it shall be given unto you..."*
- *Acts 10:4 "thine alms are come up as a memorial before the Lord..."*

OBSERVATIONS

- a. Money is a very powerful spiritual weapon: Look at all the evil the devil accomplishes with money, all the wicked activity that he causes people to do in the pursuit of money - drug deals, prostitutes, robbers, white-collar criminals, thieves, kidnappers, etc.
- b. When we give our money to the Lord, or honor Him with the MANDATORY tithe, it is a powerful act of **spiritual empowerment** for the Kingdom. It becomes a powerful spiritual resource that the enemy hates and has trouble with.
- c. Look at what the Lord has done with our church in this city because you were willing to give your finances to put it here. (MARTY AND I GAVE A SIGNIFICANT GIFT, which continues to under, gird this ministry.)

8. **REVERENCE FOR LEADERSHIP**

A great church has REVERENCE FOR ITS GOD-ORDAINED LEADERSHIP

- *Psalm 105:15 "Saying, touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm..."*
- *Acts 5:11-14 "...but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women..."*
- *Hebrews 13:17 "obey them that have the rule over you..."*
- *Jeremiah 3:15 "and I will give you pastors according to mine heart that shall feed you..."*

OBSERVATIONS

- a. A leader is not a privileged TYRANT, but a protection for you - ESPECIALLY when you do not understand his advice! (You don't NEED a prophetic voice to explain to you the things that you *already understand!* It's those undetected TRAPS and PTIFALLS that look so appealing which you need to be protected from.
- b. Do not be stubborn against leadership - in so doing you enter into unconscious rebellion and remove the hedge of protection that God has created for you.
- c. Self-will is a deadly sin of the flesh, and is directly reflective of the attitude of satan in Isaiah 14:7 and Ezekiel 28

9. **A LOVING ENVIRONMENT**

A great church creates and maintains a LOVING ATTITUDE

- *John 13:34 "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples..."*
- *I John 3:10-19 "This is the message that we have from the beginning..."*
- *I Corinth 13:1 "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels..."*

OBSERVATIONS

- a. LOVE IS THE ULTIMATE EVANGELISM STRATEGY for attracting people to Jesus!
- b. Mistreatment and disappointment over relationships is the main reason that people LEAVE churches - always has been, and always will be. AND IT'S USUSALLY NOT THE PASTOR WHO HAS DONE ANYTHING TO THEM - IT IS ONE OF THE MEMBERS WHO HAS BEEN UNKIND, AND THEREBY HAS UNDERMINED ALL THE HARD WORK THAT THE PASTOR INVESTED IN THAT SOUL!
- c. You cannot run people away from a LOVING church!
- d. Love is not **TOUCHY** - never IMAGINES slights and injuries where no really are.

10. **HOLINESS**)

A great church is filled with HOLINESS OF LIFE and SANCTIFICATION of the members

- *I Peter 1:16 "be ye holy, for I am holy..."*
- *II Corinthians 7:1 "let us cleanse ourselves form all filthiness of the flesh..."*
- *Psalms 93:5 "Holiness becometh thy house oh Lord forever..."*
- *Isaiah 35:8 "and it shall be called the way of holiness..."*
- *I Thess. 5:23 "sanctify you wholly...spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless.." ,*
- *Zech. 14:20-21 "holiness unto the Lord..."*

OBSERVATIONS

a. Holiness is the only things that stands between the saint and heaven!