

## WHAT THEY DID THEY DID TOGETHER

WILLIS 5/30/10

Dt8:1-14

We continue our series this morning on “Seeing the Forest from the Trees.” We are using this idiom to describe the necessity of sustaining the big picture while in the midst of the daily detail. **Seeing the forest from the trees is remembering what we are doing while in the midst of doing it.**

- Eternity is an extraordinary adventure lived out in the context of everyday life. The challenge is to never lose the bigger than life call in the midst of living out the daily grind.

Evidenced by the “Pastoral” side of our responsibilities, **we are in a testing season of the truths we have been entrusted with and many have forgotten.** Many have forgotten truths about, we exist for Him, parenting, discipling, what we do we do together, mediating grace, self denial.

- CCK is 25 years old with kids. Being 25 with kids it is easy to forget. Historically speaking, this is the stage in the life cycle where people start to forget and the cycle of decline sets in.
- We read of the cycle in The 4<sup>th</sup> Turning and other places as well. **The birthing, the rising, the flourishing, the aging, the forgetting, the declining, the eventual death.**
- Thus the reminder to remember what we are doing while in the midst of doing it.

Week 1 we dealt with the cornerstone importance of Spiritual Intimacy. Week 2 we began a focus on our foundational identity of Spiritual Community. I have entitled what I want to share today “What They Did They Did Together.”

- Much like our title 2 weeks ago of “What We Do We Do Together,” but today I want us to see **the togetherness we are after at CCK is not a desire unique to us...the togetherness of Spiritual Community is the patterned expectation of God.**

Acts 4:32-37

**The Church was never designed to be limited to a Sunday meeting involvement. Holy Spirit built the Church as a spiritual community where what they did they did together.** Togetherness was the premeditated plan of God to reverse the religious individualism of the O.T.

- He came in search of a people. The people’s response to His coming was for everyone to “do that which was right in their own eyes.” His answer was 2 fold: A Savior who would save them from themselves and the Holy Spirit who would baptize them into one another.

- **“One Another” is a major theme of the Book of Acts and you can’t do one another alone.**
- Tim said it best in the Burn Rhythm, “God is God and even He doesn’t build alone.”

**Community is not a side dish in the purposes of God; community is the nature of God.** 25 years ago when CCK was birthed we received the Spirit of Community. Without coercion or any type of external force we all began to sell our homes and plan our move to Kirkland.

- **What we did we did together. Our desire was to incarnate “one anothering.” Our need was to align according to the fitly framed Body that supplies itself through the joints of relationship.**

The spirit of our age is moving more and more to what Chuck Colson labeled as “radical individualism.” Fearing the conformity of collectivism we have swung to the opposite extreme and embraced the lawlessness of radical individualism.

- The breakdown began in the 60’s with the rise of existentialism. “Do your own thing, question authority, all that matters is now,” were the seeds of community breakdown.
- Jean Paul Sartre became popular with quotes like “Hell is Other People, Freedom is Found in Isolation.” God was officially declared dead so the individual became the supreme end.
- The 70’s gave way the rebellion, the 80’s brought the rise of greed, the 90’s birthed the technological age and we were strategically poised for a virtual substitute for the God given need of community.
- Unfortunately the Church bought into the breakdown as much as the world to where we are back to where we were in the day of the Book of Judges where “everybody does that which was right in their own eyes.”

There are 2 foundational verses that describe man apart from Christ and why we are in need of a Savior.

1. **Isaiah 53:6 “All we like sheep have gone astray we have turned each one to their own way.”**
2. **Judges 21:25 “In those days there was no King in Israel and everyone one did that which was right in their own eyes.”**

This curse of individualism is the root source of all sin. **To reverse the curse we need a Savior. To restore what the curse destroyed we need a Community.** As contrary to God’s nature radical individualism is, religious individualism is even worse.

- Once a practice becomes an “ism” it becomes a power and takes on a force. Once a practice becomes an “ism” it becomes a way. Individualism has all but replaced the way and truth of Spiritual Community.

- The focus of individualism is self so it has no future. **The Way of the Lord secures the future for it roots a people in Community.** Individuality is a God given thing; individualism is a thief that steals identity because it circumvents community.

Let me give you a Biblical Definition of Community that helps to define God's intent:

**Community is...**

1. **A Unified People who possess a common way, embrace a common truth and celebrate a common life. Ac2:43** Their life was tied to their commonalities. That life was abundant life because their commonalities were framed by the eternal purposes of God.
  - Community produces life whether it is the business community, the sports community or whatever community you choose (it is the image of God)...but when we touch the Kingdom Community we touch abundant life.
  - The awe of the Kingdom Community is tied the eternal purpose of our Community. As we remain in alignment we celebrate the life.
2. **An Integrated People who order their lives by the context of the whole not the limitation of the part. Ac2:46** (continuing with one mind) The health of the individual is tied to their integration with the body. If the individual parts start doing what's right in their own eyes, they isolate, become diseased and eventually die.
  - A local church will only be as effective as its members are willing to integrate and be mobilized. Victory in war requires mass. If a people won't move as one, they will not succeed.
  - Those who live for themselves never fully live. On earth as it is in heaven starts with God then flows down not with man flowing up. **On earth as it is in heaven means we live by mandate and mobilize to the call of the mandate.**
  - The ineffectiveness of the Body of Christ is tied directly to the individualistic will of the Body of Christ. When everyone becomes their own Pope then we have no common way, no common truth or no common life.
  - At this point the Catholics were right when they said "if you go on with the Reformation everyone will become their own Pope."
3. **A Connected People who reject religious individualism and intentionally defer to that which is bigger than themselves. Ac2:44-45** Community is realized wherever the individual defers to the family, the family defers to the Church and the Church defers to the Kingdom.
  - Acts 2 was all about a people who intentionally deferred to one another. In that deference they came into a spiritual alignment that resulted in a miraculous revolution.

**Spiritual Community is the journey from being related to becoming integrated.** We are all related but we are not all integrated. Oil and water can be in a bottle related but they will never become integrated. French fries are related; mash potatoes are integrated.

- I want to encourage those of you who are new...don't be satisfied with being related to CCK when the mandate calls for us to be integrated. This is so much more than a Sunday meeting only church.
- Home Groups, One on One Discipleship, 24/7 Prayer, Corporate Prayer, CCA, MC, SPA, Business Groups, Emerge Night, Equipping Conferences...expressions of the Community to equip and integrate.
- I want to challenge those who have been part of this community, familiarity is at the door, don't let it rob you of what we do we do together. Isolation cuts you off from the supply of the Head.
- Our strength has been in our Community but the squeeze of "the forest from the trees" is to snare you in your perceived need to protect your radical individuality.

The sound of Community is being voiced once again. Let's put aside all tendencies of religious individualism, isolation or independence and embrace the mandate of the Spiritual Community.