

Reset – Part 4

Partnership: We Serve Better Together

The Five Predominant Church Philosophies

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 always causes problems.

The Danger: They become exclusive and unfriendly to newcomers and new converts. New people always feel like outsiders. Certain people take positions of ownership that often 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 problems can come to be healed. The pastor is the chief surgeon and everyone on the leadership team serves as the hospital staff.

The Danger: 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 who is offering the best services.

3) An 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.

The Danger: 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 the non-church world, but they are also critical of other churches that are not like them.

The Danger: Spiritual elitism and a “holier than thou” attitude is prevalent and 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 to focus on the power of solid biblical teaching and the power of prophetic worship. Their philosophy is first: The Word is alive and powerful to change lives. Secondly, they believe that the experience a person has in the presence of God through sincere worship and prayer is enough to touch a heart and change a life.

The Danger: 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 a coach to help them process the Christian life. People need to be active.

Be doers of the word and not hearers only... - James 1:22

There are elements of truth in each of these five philosophies.

- The church IS a FAMILY where 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 rest and healing.
- The church IS a CLEAN ENTERTAINMENT CENTER with a message that is relevant, fun, and current to this generation.
- The church IS a MILITANT ARMY OF GOD where foxhole friends take their stand against the powers of darkness.
- The church IS a PREACHING PRAISE CENTER, where people should be able to encounter the anointing of God's Word and the glory of His presence.

A balanced church is all these things and even more.

A powerful Kingdom advancing church understands and values partnership.

Partnership: We serve better together

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 - Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. v.10 For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!

Think of church as a relational partnership where people work together for a common purpose.

- 1) Biblical partnerships are a common occurrence in Scripture.
 - a) Old Testament: Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, David and Jonathon, Elijah and Elisha
 - b) New Testament: Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Silas, Paul and Timothy, Barnabas and John Mark, Timothy and Erastus
- 2) Jesus taught His disciples the value of partnerships.
 - a) It is obvious from Scripture that Jesus established different levels of partnerships among His followers.
 - i) The Three (Peter, James, and John)
 - ii) The Twelve
 - iii) The Seventy
 - b) Jesus sent out His disciples on short term ministry trips and twice He sent them out in two's.
 - i) The Twelve: *Mark 6:7 - And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.*
 - ii) The Seventy: *Luke 10:1 - After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go.*
- 3) The Wisdom of Teams
 - a) Authority
 - i) It is clear that Jesus desired the authority of the Kingdom to be represented by the many and not one.
 - ii) Jesus gave authority over the devil to both the twelve and the seventy.

To the seventy He said, "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you" (Luke 10:19).

b) Accountability

- i) Accountability is so important in a ministry.

When people work all by themselves... when they think their own thoughts without anybody's opinions, they often get in trouble.

- ii) Partnerships on ministry teams protect the church.

A church is a gathering of a lot of people which can attract people with wrong hearts and motives.

(1) Paul told the elders at Ephesus to be alert because "... fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29).

(2) He also says there will be those who act spiritual but they "... creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions" (2 Timothy 3:6).

c) Compatibility

- i) The word "compatible" means to exist or occur together without conflict.

- ii) This is the glorious picture of the church as a body.

1 Corinthians 12:14-20 - For the body does not consist of one member but of many. v.15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. v.16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. v.17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? v.18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. v.19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? v.20 As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

- iii) Don't be a hoarder. Share your positions... share opportunities for others to serve.

(1) Competition and hoarding your positions at CLC is not compatible with our vision.

(2) The disciples argued once about who was the greatest. Jesus rebuked them because their attitude was not compatible to what Jesus was creating!

The greatest will be the “servant of all.”

d) Multiplicity

- i) Teams enable us to reach a wide diversity of people.
- ii) Everybody needs somebody to speak their language. A team gives us the best chance to minister to the multiple needs in our world.

Get on a team and embrace the multiplicity that makes the Kingdom great!

e) Productivity

- i) Partnerships produce!
- ii) We can't argue with the fact that Jesus knew two are better than one.

We serve better together!!!