

Stirring Fellowship

Prayer

Good morning.

How many people here today know the name of our Church?

Is it Crossroads Christian Church?

No? How about:

Crossroads Christian Fellowship

What is the last word in our church name?

This morning let's ask ourselves... do we live our name?

What is our mission statement?

- We Worship God
- We Love All People
- We Embrace Community

1 John 4:20 CEV

But if we say we love God and don't love each other, we are liars. We cannot see God. So how can we love God, if we don't love the people we can see?

How are we doing on the "Loving ALL People" thing?
Is this all people or just the people who are here?

How are we embracing our community?
The word embracing speaks of reaching out to take a hold of. How are we doing this?

We say we are a fellowship and we say that we are a fellowship and we say that we love God and we say we embrace community. We have Certainly said a lot when it comes to fellowship. What are we doing to: Be a fellowship? What are we doing to SHOW the Love to all people and ...What are we doing to REACH out to our community?

Hebrews 10:13-25 NKJV

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:13-25 CEV

We must hold tightly to the hope that we say is ours. After all, we can trust the one who made the agreement with us. We should keep on encouraging each other to be thoughtful and to do helpful things. Some people have gotten out of the habit of meeting for worship, but we must not do that. We should keep on encouraging each other, especially since you know that the day of the Lord's coming is getting closer

Let's take a typical day like yesterday for example....

When you woke up, what steps did you take to prepare for your day? Did you take of your PJ's, perform morning ablutions; start planning or thinking about breakfast?

If you are like most people Christian and non-Christian this may be how your day starts...

Have you ever gotten up and thought about living for Christ? How about what your hopes for the day might be?

How many people know that professional athletes visualize in their training? They visualize winning and the steps they need to get there:

You know Jack Nicklaus? He used to play professional Golf. He used to say: "Before every shot, I go to the movies:

Are there any Boxing fans here this morning? Mohamed Ali said: "It's the repetition of affirmations that leads to belief. And once the belief becomes a deep conviction, things begin to happen."

Bruce Lee, probably the most famous martial artist of all times said: "I have a system of ridding my mind of negative thoughts, "I visualize myself writing them down on a piece of paper. Then I imagine myself crumpling up the paper, lighting it on fire, and burning it to a crisp".

Bring this home... how many remember these lyrics from an old Church song?

LIFT YOUR VISION HIGH WE'RE IN A WAY WE'VE NEVER BEEN BEFORE LIFT YOUR VISION HIGHER AND YOU SHALL SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD FOR WITHOUT A PROGRESSIVE VISION WE WILL DWELL CARELESSLY WITHOUT A PROGRESSIVE VISION WE WILL DWELL CARELESSLY LIFT YOUR VISION HIGHER AND YOU WILL SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD.

In the context of disciplining ourselves we find that King Solomon tells us in proverbs about vision.

Proverbs 29:18 KJV

Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he

Proverbs 29:18 YLT

Without a Vision is a people made naked, And whoso is keeping the law, O his happiness

Now some people may plan their day out, but let me ask this... Have you ever looked at your day and asked yourself: "What do I want to happen today? What difference do I want my life to make? Or How can I make a difference in this community?"

I would go even further:

"How can I worship God today? How can I show everyone I meet that I love them? How can I reach out and embrace my community today?"

I like what John Piper once said about this... He said "If you say, I don't even think like that, I just get up and do what I've got to do, then you are cutting yourself off from a basic means of grace and a source of guidance and strength and fruitfulness and joy."

Anybody here need more grace, guidance, strength, fruitfulness and joy? I know I do.

Jesus said in John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Now if you are the branches, then you would have leaves that gather energy from the sun, you would be tapped into the vine for your life and you will bud fruit. Now what happens when that branch is disconnected from the vine?

The leaves wither and die, when the wind blows they are tossed about this way and that way, they have no goal, they have no vision, they are blown about.

This is what happens to a Christian who is not attached to the vine, to Jesus. Their vision, their very purpose is Gone!

Ephesians 4:14-15 CEV

We must stop acting like children. We must not let deceitful people trick us by their false teachings, which are like winds that toss us around from place to place. Love

should always make us tell the truth. Then we will grow in every way and be more like Christ, the head

Do we truly believe in Jesus this morning?

James 1:6-8 CEV

But when you ask for something, you must have faith and not doubt. Anyone who doubts is like an ocean wave tossed around in a storm. If you are that kind of person, you can't make up your mind, and you surely can't be trusted. So don't expect the Lord to give you anything at all

Are we committed to Fellowship? Are we committed to mission? Are we committed to Jesus and his commission?

Matthew 28:19-20CEV

Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to do everything I have told you. I will be with you always, even until the end of the world

So when you get up tomorrow, will you ask yourself what you want the day to produce?

My friends we were created for a purpose. When I wake up and all the business sets in, I discipline myself to put God first and talk with him. This is a practice I heartily encourage everyone to adopt. Step aside for even 5 minutes and talk to God about your day.

Why?

When we have vision we are no longer dwelling aimlessly. As Christians we discipline ourselves. After all a disciple is one who practices the discipline of the master... This brings up the bigger picture is simply that we need to ask ourselves:

What the aim and focus of our lives as Christians?

We are not meant to blow in the wind... Think of a fertile fruit tree ripe with fruit. It is lush, It is productive, It is valued and needed. It is loved. Now visualize a tumbleweed...

God created us to be fruitful and produce! We read today that we are called to have a vision and a purpose. Let's read John 4:34-38 CEV

Jesus said: My food is to do what God wants! He is the one who sent me, and I must finish the work that he gave me to do. You may say that there are still four months

until harvest time. But I tell you to look, and you will see that the fields are ripe and ready to harvest. Even now the harvest workers are receiving their reward by gathering a harvest that brings eternal life. Then everyone who planted the seed and everyone who harvests the crop will celebrate together. So the saying proves true, "Some plant the seed, and others harvest the crop." I am sending you to harvest crops in fields where others have done all the hard work.

It is my attempt to bring crystal clarity to the purpose of the church this morning...

Let's look at our primary scripture reference again...

Hebrews 10:13-25 NKJV

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Let's start with: "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful."

Where do you hope? Do you go into your bathroom and do it in private? Do you go to the kitchen to hope? Do you go to work to hope? No! of course not. You hope right where you are. You don't hide your hope in private or go someplace to hope. I hope right here and right now that you all have hope in God right here and right now! God is good! All the Time! You have some amazing promises from him and he is not a God that he should lie.

Consider: He has promised to:

- Write the law on your heart – Heb. 10:16
- Remember your sins no more – Heb. 10:17
- To bring good from ALL our pain – Heb. 12:10
- Work in you what is pleasing in his sight – Heb. 13:21
- He will never leave us or forsake us – Heb. 13:59

Put your hope in the Lord. Put your focus in the Lord. You were not created to hide your light under a bushel. Let your hope in God be seen. How can an invisible Christian bring any glory to God? Do those around you see God's power demonstrated in your lives? Do they see his wisdom and goodness in you?

Ask yourself this morning and every morning: "How can I be a visible Christian today to bring Glory to God?"

Now obviously this is not just alone. We just read we are to assemble together and stir up each other unto good works... Consider yourself stirred this morning.

I like to call it “spurring” unto good works. I like the analogy of the horse being the vehicle for the message of the master. I also recognize that the horse doesn’t necessary like the message of the spur.

What can we do to encourage each other to love, to show God, to do the work of the lord? How can we encourage each other to get together for worship? How can we encourage each other to come together in fellowship? How can we encourage each other to SHOW the love of Christ to all people? How can we encourage each other to Reach out and embrace our community?

We need to think on these things and to start doing what we were created to do. We need to put action to our words.

When you get up tomorrow deliberately think about other people. Ask yourself: How can I stir myself to show love and to take action? How can I stir up my brothers and sisters to show love and take action?

Here are two primers for you...

- Get together in fellowship with people
- Encourage those you get with to love God, love people and show it

First we get ourselves on board with God’s program

Second we get others on board with God’s program

Third together we do God’s will

Do you know how to encourage each other?

Our culture has made every possible compliment or encouragement seem like someone is blowing smoke!

A church needs a culture of honor to survive and be effective. Satan knows this, so how to you make a church crippled? You inhibit the culture of honor.

People it is okay to recognize each other’s gifts. It is okay to laud each other with love and praise. Did you ever consider that you are recognizing what God has created and what he is doing in another person?

When I look at some of you and what God is doing in your lives, it is difficult for me to restrain myself and not get all effusive. I actually need to tone it down so you will not doubt my sincerity, still that may not be enough. My friends the Word of God needs to be exalted and trumpeted from the highest peaks. His great work, his great

love, his bride is YOU!. Being the forever companion of the Lord of the Universe. Being given the status of joint heirs with Christ IS something to get excited about.

So how do we share this great love and create integrity in our sincerity?

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful” We love each other and we love all people by rooting our hope in the faithfulness of God and his promises to us.

What is the bottom line?

We must:

- Create a vision within ourselves that is focused on others
- Really get to know the people around us and figure out what motivates them
- Encourage them in their faith and sharing the Good news of Jesus
- Make time and get together regularly with other believers, in and out of church and encourage each other in the good things of God
- Embrace our own trust, hope and faith in Christ

Prayer