

Christ Community Covenant Church
Advancing the Kingdom Together – ‘Family Centered’ and ‘Celebrating’
Pastor Dave Scherrer - January 31, 2016

Mission, Mark, Measures (Pass around the stone) – Next week series starts on \$\$\$!

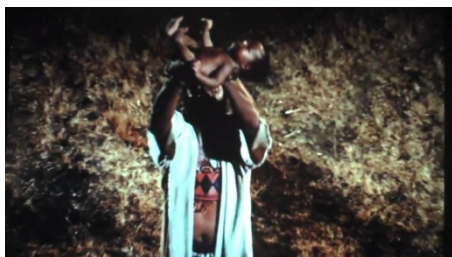
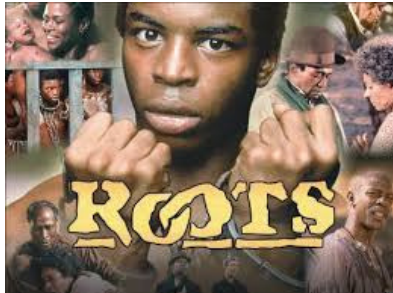
We have two last stones to discuss – we have already touched on the values of Teaching, Community Minded and being a Multiplying Church. Now we have only two left to explore, being a Family Centered Church and being a Celebrating Church. Let’s just take off on these and start with the Family Centered Church ideal:

The Family Centered Church:
Loving ‘the family’ like God loves ‘the family’

You have heard us use the phrase - ***Following Christ and His priorities in the world.*** It is a great way to look at life. The ECC used it for a number of years kind of like a mission statement. I firmly believe that one of God’s priorities is family. We here at 4Cs value family so this belief and priority has found its way into the fabric of our church and into one of our five stones – our core values.

Family and sociology – why the world should love the family.

Perhaps even more compelling is the anecdotal truths we know about family. ‘Family’ as gangs, ‘family’ in sports, ‘brothers’ in war as being closer than real brothers. “I love them like a brother” or “I love him like a father.” There is something compelling and defining about brotherly and parental love. It is not unusual for an adopted child to yearn to meet or know their biological parents and I think that goes back to how our parents and family by way of nurture and nature defines us – we want to know our roots (Haley and TV series Roots)



There is a great deal of debate on our preferences regarding family and I want to warn us here to not be narrow and judgmental in our thinking. Clearly there are many ways of enjoying familial intimacy.

Fraternities and sororities sometimes sell themselves as families, and we have already talked about how striving together in war or on the street can make family-like bonds. These are real. We do not diminish the power and intimacy of these relationships. I enjoy many friends from my past that are as close as or closer than family. Still . . .

What we are celebrating this morning is the very specific family unit as designed by God.

The 'Family' is God's design

Genesis 2:24

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Family is one of only two social institutions created by God: the Church and the Family are it. Education, government structures, banking, Facebook – none of them designed by God. You can be a socialist or a communist or a capitalist or a republican or a democrat or green party or home schooler or private schooler or public schooler – but none of these have been ordained by God. My word of caution to us as added value this morning is don't get too sold on any one of these categories and try to make them into more than what they are, humanly designed ways of creating social systems to help us live better together. But God does did not design them so we better not act like it.

The family is the foundational institution of society ordained by God. It is constituted by marriage and is composed of persons related to one another by marriage and birth, either blood or adoption. In God's design, marriage is between one man and one woman - hetero and monogamous. Marriage is characterized by leaving the authority structure of one's parents and joining together to form a new authority structure. Hetero, monogamous, and separated. God has commissioned and blessed family with the charge to be fruitful and multiply and so the privilege and responsibility of married people is to have and rear children. I firmly believe that parents have the primary responsibility and God-given authority to teach their children and to be primary agents of the moral and spiritual development of their child. Finally the two are to become one, to be able to be naked and unashamed. ***Hetero and monogamous, separate and permanent, fruitful and intimate. This is God's design for family.***

Now let me speak for a minute here into our hearts. This is not always the way it is. Some of us here in this room have been single all our lives and God in His word speaks comfort and love and esteem into these lives. Some in this room are single again and these are not second class citizens in the eyes of God or the Church – not if we follow and love Christ. Some married couples have not had children and this does not diminish their value to God and or their role in the Kingdom.

Psalm 22:27

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.

God's safe place of love and truth

Church as 'family': The One Hundred Fold Blessing

Matthew 19:29

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.

Transition: Let's turn our attention now to the stone of being a **Celebrating Church**

The Celebrating Church

Psalm 146:1-2, 149:1

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

I will praise the LORD as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being

Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the godly!

The good church celebrates. The church that has their values straight will place a high value on worship. The first thing I did here at 4Cs when I was given the privilege of being Senior Pastor was to hire a full time Pastor of Worship Arts - that was Pastor Gloria. It was more than mere function for me - it was a statement about what is important in church leadership.

[Introduces and welcomes up Gloria]

I want to have Gloria come up now to help me think through this idea of being a Celebrating Church: (Gloria comes up to sit up front; conversationally we hit the topics of **celebrating well alone** and **celebrating well together**)

Celebrating well alone

- Having an attitude of celebration that comes from a heart overflowing with gratitude
- Practically we can celebrate on our Sabbath by intentionally turning 'off' the world and centering our day on celebrating Christ
- Sing songs that are scripture,
- Go on a prayer walk with your dog or husband whoever will go with you ;-)
- Check out RightNow Media for some help!

Dave talks about the idea of Christians as Tigger vs Eeyore – how they are both part of the Christian walk but both are not part of the Christian ***lifestyle/worldview***.



Isaiah 61:2-3

To proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³ to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,

Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing!
³ Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!
⁵ For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Celebrating well together

- We long to be a church that honors various styles and streams and heritage of worship traditions – we are a wildly diverse congregation with many expressions and we like that about us

Psalm 150

Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens ² Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his excellent greatness!

³ Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp!
⁴ Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!
⁵ Praise him with sounding cymbals; Praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD

- We are intergenerational on purpose and you see it reflected in our worship teams and worship experiences
- We are a church that celebrates the gifts of our congregation, and we are grateful that so many of us have such wonderful expressions of worship that can be expressed in worship – dance, art, drama, voice, instruments, etc. . .

Exodus 31

The LORD said to Moses, ²“See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, ³ and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship, ⁴ to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, ⁵ in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, to work in every craft.

- We will be excellent, that too is a high value so that we don't distract from worship, but our attention is on helping to usher the Body into the presence of God. Because we celebrate our gifts and diversity, we will have many forms and we will not be 'hiring' professional musicians to lead us in worship (though some of musicians and vocalists are in fact professionals), therefore we won't as a matter of regular practice be embracing the concert formula, though we believe that there is a place for concerts and celebrating Jesus with wonderful God honoring music.
- My admonishment to all of us is to be free in Christ in your worship, and in that then, free of judgement of how others may worship/celebrate (some stand, some sing loud, some raise hands others not so much, etc.)

Hebrews 10:23-25

²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

We worship together because we are better together

A Values-Driven Church