

The Church Is A Family

Outline By: Mark Knowles 12/29/19 AM

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Jesus loved the church and proved it at the cross! He has always put us first by giving His life for the church. Wouldn't it be great if all of us loved the church as He did?

Jesus wanted the church to radiate – to glow! He called us to love one another. To experience family. I want to take the word family and forming an acrostic, I'd like to show by each letter what it takes to have a radiant, glowing church.

I. "F" Is For Fellowship

So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:41-42)

What is meant by "fellowship"?

Jesus is Lord – my Lord and your Lord. This makes the greatest fellowship on earth. It transcends all earthly ties. In Acts they were together, all was common among them, they were sharing, joyous, grateful, giving, etc. This is the model for church life.

Deep fellowship is found beyond the one-hour worship on Sunday's. It is found in our meals together, in our service together, in our praying together, in our meeting together. The early church loved! Nothing would be allowed that would hinder or break this fellowship.

II. "A" Is For Attitude

What should our attitude be? We are to have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5).

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:3-8)

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. (Philippians 4:8)

III. "M" Is For Message

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Romans 1:16)

There is no power without the right message. The message is the gospel, the *good news*. Why is it good news? Because it when people heard about Jesus dying for their sins on the cross, being buried and raised again they believed and turned to Christ. They were baptized to walk in a new life and added to a new family – the church.

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:26-28)

IV. “I” Is For Inspire & Involve

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:23-25)

A radiant church is one that will inspire and encourage one another to love and good works. We need to do lots of encouraging. That is why the Hebrew writer tells us to spend more time together serving, praying, and encouraging.

The danger is that so many things are wanting to pull us apart from Christ and from each other. We need each other daily (Hebrews 3:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Ephesians 4:1-16).

V. “L” Is For Love

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (John 13:34)

What is new about it? It is not the first time it appears in the Bible. It is new in length, breadth, and depth! Nobody ever loved like Jesus!

This is how we are to love one another in the church.

Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. (1 John 3:18)

Can they say about us, what they said about Jesus at the graveside of Lazarus, “Behold, how he loved him”?

VI. “Y” Is For Yearning

We must want to! We must have a burning desire to fellowship, love, share, inspire, and follow Christ together as a family. Do you love the church?