

Ready, Set, Grow

Scripture:

Acts 2:40-46 “And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” ⁴¹Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴²And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. ⁴⁶So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

Introduction

When we were children we all played a game called “hide and seek”. The IT person closed His/her eyes and counted to some specified number while everyone else ran and hid. Then, the pronouncement was made, ready or not, here I come. The whole thing was about being ready for the search to begin. Being ready. How many Christians are ready for the search to begin? Remember the footraces. We lined up. A starter would shout “Get ready, set, go.” Once again, it was about getting ready. Our scripture today tells us that daily there was an adding to the church. I believe it was because they were ready. Are we ready? We have the same mandate as the early church. God’s purposes have not changed. He still comes to seek and to save those who are lost. The hurting, broken, wounded of our society are saying, “Ready or not, here I come”. The real question is, “will they stay?”

So as a people of God, let’s begin to get ready, get set and grow.

I. Getting ready first of all means developing an intimate relationship with the Lord.

- A. Do we really know the Lord and enjoy His presence.
Deuteronomy 6:4-9 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. ⁶“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”
1. You cannot love what or who you do not know.
 2. When we gather in His name, he is present with us and it is a delight to talk about the things of the Kingdom of God.
- B. People will come to us asking to see Jesus if they can find Him through us. Do we have this relationship with Christ?
John. 12:20-21 “Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. ²¹Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”
1. Can we point them to Christ when they come?
 2. If we haven’t been intimate with Jesus, all we can do is give information about Him.
 3. They will not ask about Him if He has not changed our lives to the point that it is evident.

II. Getting ready means we will draw close together as a family and begin to support and encourage one another as never before.

John 13:34-35 *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

- A. The adding to the church did not take place until the fellowship was bound together with great expressions of love.
- B. The practicality of love in the family of God.
Romans 12:9-16 *“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; ¹¹not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; ¹²rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; ¹³distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.”*
 - 1. This describes a close family relationship.
 - 2. Let’s stop being too busy to reach out to one another.
 - 3. Everyone needs a group that they can share life with. That’s why cell groups are so important and have the potential to be so fulfilling.

III. Getting ready means that we develop our gifts talents abilities in order to use them to help each other.

I Corinthians 14:26 *“How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.”*

- A. In a small group you can share an encouraging word, a song, perhaps even a scripture.
- B. In the larger corporate setting, you can be friendly, be helpful, hook people up with one another, and maybe even give a word. Wow.
- C. Areas where your abilities are needed.
 - 1. Greeters. You set the tone for everyone who walks through the doors.
 - 2. Nursery helpers. You relieve parents so that they can fully receive from God what He has for them.
 - 3. Outreach workers. You touch lives with the gospel that might not be touched in any other way.
 - 4. Follow-up ministers. You encourage people to make connections with the church or its ministries.
 - 5. Children’s ministers. You help to shape the lives of children at the most crucial time of their lives.
 - 6. Youth Ministers. 90 % of all Christians became Christians before their 20th birthday.
 - 7. Cell Ministry. Relationships. What could be any more important than this?
- D. We are stewards over the ministries and abilities God has given to us.
I Peter 4:8-10 *“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” ⁹Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”*
 - 1. We are even stewards over the love that God has given us.
 - 2. If we don’t use our abilities for the body, Christ will give them to someone else. (The parables of the talents)
 - 3. As we’re faithful over a little, God will give us greater abilities to be faithful over many.
 - 4. Some one will do it, why not let it be you.