



Date 05/2/2021

Healthy Church Series Core Qualities

A Healthy Church...

in Spirit and in Truth

“God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”. – John 4:24)

Challenge of the Church is to *Keep the main thing the main thing.*

Knows , and Knows how to Share Christ

Every person should know that they are sinners separated from God and deserving of death (eternal separation from God). No matter what we do, we cannot un-sin. But God loves us so much that Jesus Christ willingly sacrificed his life in a great exchange – He took our death, and gave us His life. Through faith in Jesus Christ God gives you eternal life, making you His child. Now tell someone else.

- Acts 8:4 - Church persecuted and scattered → shared the message.
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6-8, Acts - *welcomed the message → message rang out.*

A Sense of

A People of God – children of God

- **1 Peter 2:9-10** – Peter uses the word “People” 4 times
- **Galatians 6:10** – Family of Believers

Different Parts

(Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4)

Value Different Qualities

Given by the Holy Spirit

S.H.A.P.E. – Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experiences.

Main goal and purpose of Spiritual Gifts

1 Cor 12:7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

1 Cor 14:4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church

1 Cor 12:12 Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church.

Leaders are _____, People Empowered

²“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.

⁴They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. – Jesus, Matthew 23:2-4

Compare to:

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ’s sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ²Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; ³not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. – 1 Peter 5:1-3

_____ Systems

4 Ds

Danger → Detection → Distress signal → Defenders arrive → Health Restored

Peter Steinke – Using metaphor of physical body

- Cells know what is of us and what isn’t.

Peter Steinke - host cells are co-contributors to viral multiplication.

- **Response mechanism**

- In the church, we notice that Paul says he received ...

- Informed (1 Cor 1:11), reported (1 Cor 5:1), I hear (1 Cor 11:18), from Chloe’s household;

So, **who is responsible** for this? **Everyone** is responsible for these.

Healthy Church Series

Core Qualities

Brief stories of church failures

Opening

Parable of Nose and Hand, Mark Dever, *What is a Healthy Church?*

Today's sermon is entitled How to Have a Healthy Church

Transition

* Handout

* Next Week, May 9, is **Mother's Day**. Bless you who are mothers.

* Series on Healthy Church

We've completed a series on Healthy Relationships

What are the "nutshell" characteristics of a Healthy Church?

I really don't believe that there is any church that's totally healthy all the time.

May 16 – Churches in Revelation.

Body

The NT describes a variety of churches. Some are commended and have not criticisms. Others seem to be more dysfunctional than your family!

A Healthy Church...

Worships in Spirit and in Truth

A Healthy church Worships the right God.

Jesus said, “*God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.*”. – John 4:24)

Worship – bow down – make God Lord in all areas of life, no matter what.

Even if it results in suffering.

What do people find when they attend a Healthy Church? They find Jesus Christ

I think it was **Larry Crabb** who said that when you put the top things at the top, it raises the level of everything else. If you put 2nd or 3rd place things at the top it ***lowers*** everything else.

Pastor Rob Wells shared about a time he read about a “*huge church in Dallas, Texas that argued and debated over something and finally the church split in half. What was the issue? The division was over the color of the carpet in the entryway of the church.*”

These people worshiped the color of the carpet more than they worshiped God!

Our Programs do not lead us to do God. Our God leads us to do Programs.

If you put any of these good programs at the top instead of God, EVERYTHING loses value!

Healthy churches value God above

- preachers or their methods.
- Quality of music, audio, and sound system
- Beautiful environment
- Bible Groups, Outreaches, Socials, Friendliness.
- Popularity, money

Challenge of the Church is to *Keep the main thing the main thing*.

Knows Christ, and Knows how to Share Christ

In a Healthy Church, people are taught the Word of God, understand the basic gospel, and comprehend all theological truths. Ok, just kidding on that last one.

Everyone needs first to know the basic Gospel message for themselves.

Every person should know that they are sinners separated from God and deserving of death (eternal separation from God). No matter what we do we cannot un-sin. But God loves us so much His Son, Jesus Christ willingly sacrificed his life in a great exchange – he took our death, and He gave us His life.

And that you've **placed your faith in Jesus Christ**, not your righteous works.

Everyone who knows how and why they are saved should be able to tell someone else.

Average believers shared knew and shared the gospel:

Church persecuted and scattered, they shared the gospel where they went.

1 Thessalonians 1:6-8, Acts - *welcomed the message → message rang out.*

1. They heard and believed the gospel; 2. they told others.

A Sense of Family

Francis Chan, *Letters to the Church*, - What is church, anyway?

Story:

Scene A – conversation between Paul and Peter

Scene B - “Rob” Gang Member, Francis Chan, *Letters to the Church*

You get mad at your family members, right? What do you do? You still interact with them, right? Why? Because they're family!

The church is people. It's not a place. It's not a scheduled event on your calendar. It's people.

A People of God – children of God

1 Peter 2:9-10 – Peter uses the word “People” 4 times

Galatians 6:10 – Family of Believers

I worked with a friend whose family was on the eastern US. A couple of times a year he went home to visit.

Connected, by our, same Father in heaven.

A family provides a rock-solid sense of belonging, security.

Emotional sense that people are for you and have your back. Love is so strong that even if correction needs to take place, there is certainly that love is behind it.

Practical Contribution. – Ability to serve and feel useful. Self-worth goes up!

Get your hands dirty and participate in the work of the church.

When a church has a sense of family it automatically ...

Loves One Another, bears with, forgives, encourages –
more than a command, but a natural response!

Different Parts Collaborating

Four parts of the Bible speak clearly about gifts and capabilities that God gives us.

(Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4)

Value Different Qualities

Given by the Holy Spirit

S.H.A.P.E. – Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experiences.

→ Joy and fulfillment!

Main goal and purpose of Spiritual Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:7 – Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

1 Corinthians 14:4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church

1 Corinthians 12:12 Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church.

In other words, ***Church-centered (primarily)***

Sense of Contribution. Work for the bigger whole gives you a sense of worth and belonging.

Leaders are Engaged, People Empowered

A Healthy Church's Leaders are not aloof, but actively guiding the flock

Leaders are ***not bureaucrats***. **Matt 23:2-4**

²"The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. ³So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. ⁴They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

Compare to:

1 Peter 5:1-3

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ²Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; ³not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

- Not Isolated and aloof, but accessible and approachable.
- Not Arrogant, top-dog-itis, but have other gifted people around them.
- Values diverse people with diverse ideas.
- Empowers the people to follow the Holy Spirit.

There are many other good qualities of good churches, but they are not fundamental to the Church.

Word, Prayer, Worship, Spiritual Gifts, Compassionate outreach, Vision (big these days)

Protective Systems

Our bodies have protective systems that protect us.

Immune system, nervous system sends pain signals.

Healthy churches have effective systems to guide and prevent spiritual diseases from taking root.

- Teachings, Doctrines, preaching - (Acts 20:29-30, Galatians 1:6-9, 2 Timothy 4:3-4, 2 Peter 2:1-3)
- **Financial** protocols - 2 Corinthians 8, administer gifts.
- Minutes of Elders meetings to assure a certain degree of transparency.
- **Safe Church** Policy
- **Grievance** Guidelines – Matthew 18:15-17

Who is responsible for this protection? Everyone is responsible for these.

- Leaders
- Everyone

If you didn't know that you are responsible, I hereby anoint you as responsible.

Covid-19 has given us a crash course of how our immune system works:

4 Ds

Danger → Detection → Distress signal → Defenders arrive → Health Restored

Paul warned the Ephesian Elders that savage wolves (metaphor) would rise up from their own number to destroy the flock. (Acts 20)

Peter Steinke – Using metaphor of physical body

- **Cells know what is of us and what isn't.**
 - Covid-19 **disguises** it's protein cover to mimic your body.
 - For a while Covid-19 looks okay to your cells!
 - delays a cell being able to identify the Cov19 virus as an outsider for 2-3 days.
 - The longer the response time, the more damage is done.
 - Know what God's Word on the profile of health.
 - Greed, selfish motives, Pride,
 - Alien to Jesus Christ and His Body.
 - To your brothers and sisters
 - To the Lord's body, the Church.
 - To outsiders who are repelled by poor testimonies of the church.
 - Peter Steinke says that host cells are co-contributors to viral multiplication.
- **Response mechanism**
 - In the church, we notice that Paul says he received ...
 - Informed (1 Cor 1:11), reported (1 Cor 5:1), I hear (1 Cor 11:18), from Chloe's household;

When your **body** is fighting a bug, you might get a fever and feel chills, discomfort, pain. You can't do what you normally do.

- That's a good thing!!! It means your body is responding.
- I can't emphasize this enough!
- When the **local church** fights a bug, it feels symptoms too.
- That's a good thing!

People come to church to find refuge from abusive arrogant bosses who seem to not be accountable to anyone and get away with murder, corruption, immorality because they hold the power of the paycheck.

So, **who is responsible** for this? **Everyone** is responsible for these.

Church Leaders must respond, but every cell must take initiative.

- Can you tell if I or someone else preaches a false teaching?
 - 1 Corinthians 14:29, 2 Timothy 4:3-4

- Can you tell if someone is abusive, arrogant and puffed up with pride?
- Can you tell if someone uses anger as a weapon of control?

God's Word says that these kinds of things are not of His body.

And each cell needs to be responsible for the Body's health.