

Encounter Church
Sunday July 02, 2023

Building a Great Church

INTRODUCTION: Jesus is walking with His disciples. On their journey some of the disciples start a discussion that's going to lead to a dispute! What's the topic? They're talking about who's GOING TO BE THE GREATEST! Imagine that conversation!

JESUS NEVER CORRECTS THEM FOR WANTING TO BE GREAT! IN FACT HE TOLD THEM WHAT GREATNESS REALLY LOOKS LIKE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD! HE TOLD THEM HOW THEY CAN BE GREAT IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

God never corrects us for ambition just wrong ambition!

THE TRACTORS:

This story comes from the far away land of Africa. A very poverty stricken part of Africa where thousands die yearly. It was an area that had fertile soil but they didn't have the equipment to farm the land and raise a crop that would feed the thousands of hungry people. There was a very wealthy man who loved the land of Africa and loved these people. He found four men who he could trust and who were willing to learn how to be farmers. He gave each man the money he needed to learn how to be a farmer and buy all the necessary equipment. Then they started to farm the land.

Well it wasn't long before a harvest of food was produced and thousands of people were being fed. Lives were being changed both young and old.

Then as time went on the farmers noticed something. Each farmer noticed that the other farmers had a different brand of tractor. This one had a John Deere while the others had a Ford or maybe a Kubota tractor.

Then one day they all started arguing about who had the best tractor. This one said my tractors the best while the others said my tractor is the best.

Pretty soon they were so obsessed with the brand of tractor and there's being the best that they began to do damage to the other tractor's, just trying to prove they had the best tractor and everybody should have their brand of tractor.

While all this was happening thousands of people started dying again of hunger because the focus was no longer on feeding the people but on who has the best tractor.

This one said I believe mine is the best and the others believed theirs was the best. Soon, defending and proving what they believed became more important than the thousands of starving people.

Sometimes we really need to be reminded of what really matters the most.

If you haven't figured it out yet I believe this is a picture of the church in America.

I want to work with God to BUILD A GREAT CHURCH right here in Wichita Falls. A church that is fulfilling the purpose of God. After all He designed the church!

What does a GREAT CHURCH look like?

1. A Great Commitment to the Great Commandment

Matthew 22:36-39- "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Christianity is a relationship with God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ.

If we are going to be a GREAT CHURCH our lives must be centered God's love for us and our love for God. I do what I do because I love God with all my heart soul mind and strength.

I believe we need a revival of love in our hearts.

Then we can love our neighbor as ourselves.

1 John 4:11-12- "Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us."

1 John 3:16- "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers."

A great commitment to the great commandment will empower us to refocus on what really matters most and build a great church!

2. A Great Commitment to the Great Commission

Mark 16:15- "And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone."

Red and yellow, black and white, they are all precious in His sight!

Matthew 28:18-20- "Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new

disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

This would imply that until the end of the age we need to have a great commitment to the great commission.

The only marching orders Jesus gave the church was to “Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations.”

Let me say this, people who don’t want their church to grow are telling the world, “you can go to hell.”

I pray there will be a revival of the great commission in our hearts today.

If we are going to focus on what really matters most we must make a great commitment to the great commandment and a great commitment to the great commission.

OUR MISSION: We want people in our city and around the world to:

1. Believe in Jesus
2. Belong to Family
3. Become a Follower
4. Build the Kingdom

Last. If we are going to make a lasting impact in the world we must have

3. A Great Commitment to our Great Children

SHARE THE EVENTS OF THE PRAYER WALK ON JUNE 25 WITH JIM AND LYNDY BOBER AND KIM HANSEN)

THE NEXT DAY ON THE NEWS:

“NYC drag marchers chant, “We’re here, we’re queer, we’re coming for your children.” (SHOW PICTURES)

WE NEED TO MAKE A GREAT COMMITMENT TO OUR GREAT CHILDREN.

At the current rate of evangelism, it is estimated that only 4% of today’s teens-the largest generation in the history of America-will be Bible-believing Christians.

If you see your child playing in the street and a car is headed at them at a high rate of speed, are you going to try and stop the car or get your child out of the street?

WE’VE GOT TO GET OUR KIDS OUT OF THE STREET!

Deuteronomy 6:4-8 - "Listen, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders."

The Holy Spirit corrected me this past week. Have you ever said these words, "I'm not called to work with children?"

Every one of us is called to work with children!

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT BEING A GREAT CHURCH

Mark 9:33-37- "After they arrived at Capernaum and settled in a house, Jesus asked his disciples, "What were you discussing out on the road?" But they didn't answer, because they had been arguing about which of them was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve disciples over to him, and said, "Whoever wants to be first must take last place and be the servant of everyone else."

Then he put a little child among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, "Anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes not only me but also my Father who sent me."

CONCLUSION: Matthew 16:18- "...and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it."

1. A Great Commitment to the Great Commandment.
2. A Great Commitment to the Great Commission
3. A Great commitment to our Great Children

THIS WILL BUILD A GREAT CHURCH!