

Let's Keep it Simple Church!

Bible Study: Session II

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Review

- Prior to the Great Commission the women who went to the tomb found that everything had changed!
- They were excited! Jesus is ALIVE! No longer a death situation! They RAN to tell the SIMPLE message—HE'S NOT THERE; HE HAS RISEN! WE SHOULD BE EXCITED!
- The Great Commission: (Teach) **MAKE**, (Baptize) **MARK** and (Teaching them) **MATURE** disciples
- We must understand the times; we must change methods without changing the message
- Streamlining our schedules and structures
- Target Youth, Young Adults and prepare them to LEAD
- The church must model discipleship
- The church must become INTENTIONAL about SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
- Assimilation must be our main focus according to God's discipleship process
- Possible simple statement for CBC: "Led by God, Loving all People & Lifting Up One Another"
- Discipleship Development: What stage are you?

The Simple Church is a congregation *designed* around a *straight forward and strategic process* that *moves people* through the *stages of spiritual growth*.

CLARITY

MOVEMENT

ALIGNMENT

FOCUS

Building on the Foundation of Christ

1 Corinthians 3 (Good News Bible)

"As a matter of fact, my friends, I could not talk to you as I talk to people who have the Spirit. I had to talk to you as though you belonged to this world, as children in the Christian faith. I had to feed you milk, not solid food, because you were not ready for it. And even now you are not ready for it, because you still live as the people of this world live. When there is jealousy among you and you quarrel with one another, doesn't this prove that you belong to this world, living by its standards? When one of you says, "I follow Apollos"—aren't you acting like worldly people? After all, who is Apollos? And who is Paul? *We are **SIMPLY** God's servants by whom you were led to believe. Each one of us does the work which the Lord gave him to do:* I planted the seed, Apollos watered the plant, *but it was God who made the plant grow.* The one who plants and the one waters really do not matter. *It is God who matters, because he makes the plant grow. There is not difference between the one who plants and the one who waters; God will reward each one according to the work each has done. **For we are partners working together for God, and you are God's field. you are also God's building.** Using the gift that God gave me. I did the work of an expert builder and laid the foundation, and someone else is building on it. **BUT EACH OF YOU MUST BE CAREFUL HOW YOU BUILD. FOR GOD HAS ALREADY PLACED JESUS CHRIST AS THE ONE AND ONLY FOUNDATION, AND NO OTHER FOUNDATION CAN BE LAID.** Some will use gold or*

silver or precious stones in building on the foundation; others will use wood, grass or straw. And the QUALITY of each person's work will be seen when the Day of Christ exposes it. For on that day fire will reveal everyone's work; the fire will test it and show its real quality. *If what was built on the foundation survives the fire, the builder will receive a reward. but if your work is burned up, then, you will lose it; but you yourself will be saved, as if you had escaped through the fire.*

Surely, **YOU KNOW**, that *you are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you*. God will destroy anyone who destroys God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you! God will destroy anyone who destroys God's temple. For God's temple is holy, and you yourselves are His temple. You should not fool yourself. If any of you think you are wise by this world's standards, you should become a fool, in order to be really wise. For what this world considers to be wisdom is nonsense in God's sight. As the Scripture says, "God traps the wise in their cleverness"; and another Scripture says, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are worthless." No one, then, should boast about what human beings can do. Actually, everything belongs to you: Paul, Apollos, Peter; this world, life and death, the present and the future—all these are yours, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God."

The Calling & The Message

- In chapters 1 & 2 Paul says he came to the Corinthians with the sole purpose of centering his attention on the **SIMPLE** truth concerning Jesus Christ; the **SIMPLE** proclamation of the cross; the foundation we build the church upon (The SIMPLE process).
- Reminder: God has **called** the church to be **HOLY**; to be **IN FELLOWSHIP**, and to **GLORIFY GOD**. I Corinthians 1:1-25
- "Christ has been divided into groups!" (**NO ALIGNMENT**) I Corinthians 1:13 GNB
- The church was divided into 4 factions (cliques), each having its own leader (4 areas of leadership) and acting in antagonism to the other three. (**COMPLEXITY – NO MOVEMENT**)
 - Following Paul – because of his emphasis of the ministry to the Gentiles
 - Following Apollos – the "learned" and eloquent preacher of Alexandria
 - Following Peter – emphasis on the Jews
 - Following The "Christ" party – claimed *special* relationship to Christ; they claimed Paul, Apollos and Peter did not have or neglected.
- Factions and party divisions harm the unity of the church. **NO MOVEMENT**
- There was some misconception about those who are **co-laborers** with God. (**LACK OF CLARITY**)
- Paul quickly destroys the validity of these distinctions and begins to **SIMPLIFY THINGS**.
- The **ONLY** service worth mentioning is that which builds upon the foundation of Jesus Christ—**HIS Person and Work** as well as **HIS Spirit, Character and Purpose**. (**CLARITY/ALIGNMENT**)
- He saw there was a lack of spiritual discernment (maturity) in those who were "saved". (**LACK OF FOCUS**)
- Paul addressed the church by **SIMPLY** declaring God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- He came **SIMPLY** as a frail insufficient human being.
- He encouraged the Christians at Philippi to live their lives in a similar humble attitude, but at the same time with complete reliance on God. (Philippians 2:12-13 (SIMPLE PROCESS))
- Even his presentation was **SIMPLE**; *not overpowering*.
- Paul had "the mind of Christ." (**FOCUS**)

Working Correctly with God | Corinthians 3: 1-22

- The believers in Corinth still have not improved sufficiently to receive the deeper truth from the Apostle Paul. “Milk” vs. “Meat – still unable to digest deeper doctrine (spiritually immature).
- Envy and strife are still going on! “Are you not behaving like mere men?”
- Paul now turns to the subject of Christian ministry.
- Paul gives the example of “shared ministry” between himself and Apollos.
- They are **SIMPLY SERVANTS**. “We (together) are servants”; not to be individually idolized.
- The church was trying to raise them to the rank of Master and taking sides; this is a distorted view of the Lord’s work!
- A servant is very limited in what he can do. Paul could plant. Apollos could water. **BUT ONLY GOD could give the increase!**
- God is the ONE to whom ALL are responsible. Although we are one in work, we are individually subordinate to God who will reward us according to our faithful labor.
- All of His servants are fellow workers, laboring together (requires agape love) in God’s tilled harvest field or working together in the same building.
- Paul reiterates **AGAIN how he laid the SIMPLE foundation**; preaching Christ and HIM crucified. **Souls were saved** and a local church planted.
- **“And, another builds on it, but each one take heed HOW he builds on it.** Others came and built on what had already been established.
- Shift from the worker to the work.
- Only **ONE foundation** is required for a building (V11). Once it is laid, it never needs to be repeated. Jesus Christ—HIS PERSON—HIS WORK. **NOW, HIS WORK IS OUR WORK!**

Question – What material do we need to use? (v12-15) SIMPLE

1. Preaching the cross for salvation. **(WORSHIP)**
2. Building up believers. **(WORD for LIFE/CHRISTIAN EDUCATION)**
3. Living a Christian life commensurate with that preaching. **(ASSIMILATION/MINISTRY INVOLVEMENT)**

This **SIMPLE** kind of building material will stand the test of fire on the day of the Lord’s judgement. God’s judgement will test the quality of the Christian’s work. Those whose work stand the test of fire will be rewarded.

God wants HIS disciples to walk intimately with HIM (love Him), live in community with others (love others), and serve both the church and the world (serve).

Question—What’s NEXT?

1. Define our ministry process. **How** will we move a person from salvation to spiritual maturity to significant ministry? Ensures no ambiguity; no confusion.
2. Formulate a **strategy** (the “what” and the “how”).
3. Design a clear and **SIMPLE process** for the church—end result is transformed lives.
4. **Illustrate** the process to the congregation (visual increases clarity)
5. Decide how each weekly program is part of the process.
6. **Evaluate, assess and align** current ministries.

7. **Focus** on staying focused on the SIMPLE discipleship process
8. **UNITE** around the process
9. **Eliminate** clutter
10. **PRAY WITHOUT CEASING!**

FIVE PRIORITIES PRACTICED BY THE JERUSALEM CHURCH FOR **MATURING** THE BELIEVER

1. **A commitment to Scripture** Acts 2:42
 - a. Intense devotion to Scriptural truth and programs that assist in application.
2. **A commitment to one Another** Acts 2:42, 44, 46
 - a. Believers cannot share life together unless they are together on a regular basis.
 - b. Spiritual ONENESS
3. **A commitment to Prayer** Acts 2:42
 - a. The first church prayed 10 days, preached 10 minutes and saw 3K be saved
4. **A commitment to Praise/Worship** Acts 2:43, 47
 - a. Authentic, heartfelt praise/worship
5. **A commitment to Outreach** Acts 2:45-47
 - a. Daily witness both inside and outside the church

Next Meeting: Saturday, November 23. Time will be confirmed this weekend.