

What We Believe Pt. 6

Pastor James Foley – Sunday, September 2, 2018

Main Theme – Considering the Sixteen Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God – “Part 6”

WORSHIP & PRAYER COMMUNION

At this time, I would like for the ushers to distribute the emblems of Communion:

- The WAFER symbolizes/commemorates the Body of Christ – BROKEN for you
- The JUICE symbolizes/commemorates the Blood of Christ – SHED for your sin

KEY – I can think of no better way to end this time of WORSHIP than with Holy Communion.

- Recognition of OUR sinfulness and NEED of a Savior
- Recognition of God’s PROVISION of such a Savior
- Recognition of the COST of His atoning work
- OPPORTUNITY for repentance and faith

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NIV)

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Upcoming Events (REGULAR)**
 - Men's Breakfast – Resumes Saturday, Sept. 8, @ 9–10am
 - Women's Ministry – Resumes Tuesday, Sept. 11, @ 6:30pm
 - Christian Youth Club – Resuming Friday, Sept. 14, @ 5:30pm
- **Upcoming Events (SPECIAL)**
 - FAMILY FUN DAY – See Kristie Barry for Details & Announcements

MORNING OFFERING

At this time, I want to call forth our ushers.

-Thank you for your faithfulness in giving to the Lord/His work

-Your giving fuels the work of Christ in and through this church

May the Lord bless you as you give! May you experience His faithfulness in kind!

HOUSEKEEPING

- **Pastoral Housekeeping (SPECIAL)**
 - Post-Prayer Service – Continuing Today Following the Service
 - Prayer Room – Need a Place for Quiet Conversation/Prayer? P. Room
 - Speaking of Conversation – Children Running around Community Room...

Parents – Help us ensure that all parties (including kids) enjoy post-service time

Parents – Feel free to let the children play as they desire in the Toddler Room(s)

 - Precious Volunteers – Please Remain Aware of Scheduling & Proper Notifications

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- **CHILDREN DISMISSED FOR CHILDREN'S CHURCH**
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INTRODUCTIONS

As always, it is wonderful to see you. I look forward to these weekly moments of worship and instruction. I pray that you are ready to receive what God has for you today! Have a Bible at the ready and please be prepared to take some notes.

SETTING THE STAGE

For those who have not been here—and as a reminder/reaffirmation for those who have been present—we are in the midst of an EXTENDED SERIES on the fundamentals of our faith. i.e., We are identifying and discussing the 16 Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God.

NOTE – Thus far, we have covered a 6 of the 16 Fundamental Truths. We have touched upon an ARRAY OF TOPICS, including the Authority of Scripture, the Trinitarian Nature of God, the Humanity and the Deity of Christ, the Fall of Man, God’s Plan of Salvation, and Sanctification (i.e., the Act and the Life-Long Process). For those concerned with such information, we have covered Fundamental Truth 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9 thus far (FYI – NOT going in chronological order).

KEY – Of course, we have MUCH MORE TO COVER in the weeks ahead. Thus said, let’s delve in to today’s material. FYI – We will be touching upon an oft-noted set of themes. Allow this teaching to reaffirm and reinforce things that we may know – we must GO DEEPER in our understanding and our commitment.

A KEY QUESTION

NOTE – This morning I would like to open with a question that is both SIMPLE and PROFOUND—a question NOT enough churches really take the time to wrestle with/consider:

Q. Why are WE here? As a CHURCH (one local chapter of a global entity) what is our PURPOSE?

KEY – This is NOT simply a philosophical question that has no practical application or relevance. Clearly defined goals/overarching vision is vital for a variety of reasons. Allow me to elaborate...

1) For the Sake of Church Health and Effectiveness:

- Clearly defined goals help us to determine our current status and sp. condition
- Clearly defined goals help us to A the Q, “Where should we be going/direction?”
- Clearly defined goals are key in decision making (‘Will this advance our purpose?’)
- Clearly defined goals are vital in judging our ministry “effectiveness/sp. evaluation”

2) For the Sake of the Members/Church Attendees

-Imagine going to work each day and having NO idea why you are there! You have NO clue what your job is, yet you go day after day. What will be the QUALITY of your work? What will be the condition of your personal well-being in terms of PURPOSE and PERSONAL FULFILLMENT?

-Yet this is PRECISELY the condition of many church members. They know enough to go to church week in and week out, but they really have NO idea why they go. They have little insight into the bigger picture that makes ALL of this worthwhile and engaging!

3) For the Sake of Our Community (Individuals & Families)

-We are called to a significant work by the Lord of all creation. Without exaggeration, SOULS are literally in the balance. IF we fail to understand our mission, we are doing the lost an eternal disservice. Of all things, the mission and purpose of the church is NOT something to be treated casually or lightly!

ILL – There’s an old STORY of a church that closed its doors after years of decline. One of the elders of the church put a sign on the door: “Going out of business. We didn’t know what our business was.” Let that NEVER be said of New Life!

DELVING IN

SO AGAIN...

Q. Why are WE here? What is the MISSION/PURPOSE of the church (local & universal)?

The 10th Fundamental Truth—drawing upon the teaching of SCRIPTURE—provides the A. **SLIDE**

10) WE BELIEVE that the Church of Jesus Christ exists:

- To WORSHIP God
- To Reach the LOST
- To Make DISCIPLES

NOTE 1 – Thus, there is a MULTIDIRECTIONAL MISSION of the Church

- There is an UPWARD call – as we are called to WORSHIP God
- There is an OUTWARD call – as we're called to REACH the lost
- There is an INWARD call – as we are called to MAKE DISCIPLES

NOTE 2 – Thus, the church that seeks true spiritual health/vitality must engage in ALL three tasks!

KEY – Of course, before we can engage in these great works of the Church of Christ, we must first understand what they are (i.e., what they mean). Let's take some time to explore each facet of our three-fold work...

WORSHIP PT. 1

Even the most casual study of Scripture reveals that worship is a KEY FACTOR in serving the Lord.

- MAN was made to worship God
- The PATRIARCHS were figures of worship
- ISRAEL was called and taught how to worship
- Jesus AFFIRMED the Lord's desire for true worship
- The EARLY CHURCH prioritized & practiced worship

NOTE – A thorough study of each of these truths would go well BEYOND our time today (lit. Genesis to Revelation). Yet, since we are talking about the MISSION of the Church, let's consider the EXAMPLE of the EARLY CHURCH...

1) Worship Was a Daily Practice of the Early Church

Acts 2:42–46 (NLT, Emphasis Mine)

46 They *worshipped* together at the Temple *each day*, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—47 all the while *praising* God...

2) They Worshipped Despite Persecution

Acts 5:41 (NIV, Emphasis Mine) [Post-Flogging]

41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, *rejoicing* because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.

3) The Environment of Worship was Key in Ongoing Ministry

Acts 13:1–3 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

1 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were *worshipping* the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

4) The Early Church Praised God/Worshipped for His Ongoing Work

Acts 21:17–20a (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

17 When we arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers and sisters received us warmly. 18 The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present. 19 Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

20 When they heard this, they *praised* God.

5) The Early Church Knew the Power of Worship Despite Challenging Circumstances

Acts 16:22–25 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

22 The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and *singing hymns to God*, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

KEY – And WE are called to walk in the footsteps! We are called to WORSHIP the Lord...

WORSHIP PT. 2

Q. But WHAT is worship? WHAT is this thing that we are called to do (ind. & corp.)?

NOTE – The most common NT Greek word for worship is the term ‘proskuneo’ (pronounced prawe-skew-neow). This word LITERALLY means to ‘prostrate oneself; to kneel before as an act of reverence. The probable ROOT word for this term comes from the act of a dog kissing/licking the hand of its master – indicating ‘love, adoration and submission.’

DEF. – Thus, WORSHIP is the ‘humbling of ourselves before God; it is the expression of our devotion, reverence and love to a God who is most worthy.’ Keep this in mind as we delve deeper.

WORSHIP PT. 3

BIBLICAL worship connects to at least THREE elements (non-exhaustive):

1) God’s Nature

The reality of God’s nature and character should move us to worship. Let’s play a little game...

God is _____ [potential A’s – loving, generous, kind, merciful, just, holy, good, compassionate, righteous, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, eternal, sovereign etc.). AS WE CONSIDER these realities, we should be MOVED to a place of HUMILITY and the EXPRESSION of our love, adoration and submission.

2) God’s Great Work

This refers to two items: What the Lord has done (PAST) and what He is doing (PRESENT)

God is a God who has intervened in human history time and again. God is a God who is at work in our present affairs/circumstances (e.g., your life, family, friends, church, nation, biblical history and beyond. AS WE CONSIDER these realities, we should be MOVED to a place of HUMILITY and the EXPRESSION of our love, adoration and submission.

3) God’s Promised Work

This refers to what the Lord purposes to do (FUTURE). Scripture records hundreds of promises that speak to God’s future work and the hope for those who belong to Him. AS WE CONSIDER these realities, we should be MOVED to a place of HUMILITY and the EXPRESSION of our love, adoration and submission.

NOTE – The Church of Jesus Christ is called to WORSHIP/To BE a PEOPLE of WORSHIP (UPWARD).

REACHING THE LOST PT. 1

Moving along, the work of the Church is NOT limited to ministry unto the Lord (UPWARD). The Church also has a vital role to play as it relates to our community, nation and world! Thus, we have an UPWARD call and an OUTWARD call!

-We are called to WORSHIP

-We are called to REACH THE LOST

Mark 16:15–18 (NIV)

15 He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

NOTE – Now we PENTECOSTALS read this and we get all EXCITED about the latter portion of this text—that portion which declares God’s power operating in and through His people. We love the PROMISE of this text but often FAIL to consider the associated COMMAND. (MAYBE that’s why we see so little of the promise in reality) ...

Q. What does Jesus COMMAND? GO (v. Stay & Build)

Q. Go WHERE? GO IN ALL THE WORLD (Whole of Creation)

Q. Go into the world and DO WHAT? PREACH THE “GOSPEL”

Q. Go into the world and PREACH TO WHOM? ALL/EVERYONE

2 Corinthians 5:17–21

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

REACHING THE LOST PT. 2

KEY – IF WE ARE to truly reach those who are lost, we must become **CONVINCED** of the following:

1) Mankind is truly LOST (separated from God by sin) (FT. 4)

Romans 3:23

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

2) That sin is real and it carries disastrous CONSEQUENCES (FT.4)

Romans 6:23a

23 For the wages of sin is death...

3) That man is INCAPABLE of saving themselves by any means (FT. 4)

Ephesians 2:8–9

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

4) That God has made PROVISION for our salvation in Christ alone (FT. 5)

John 3:16–17

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

5) That sharing the message of the Lord is NOT optional...ALL HAVE A ROLE/ACCOUNTABLE...

1 Corinthians 9:16b

Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

Ezekiel 3:17–19

17 “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. 18 When I say to a wicked person, ‘You will surely die,’ and you do not warn them or speak out to dissuade them from their evil ways in order to save their life, that wicked person will die for their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. 19 But if you do warn the wicked person and they do not turn from their wickedness or from their evil ways, they will die for their sin; but you will have saved yourself.

NOTE – The Church of Jesus Christ is called to REACH THE LOST/be His WITNESSES

MAKING DISCIPLES PT. 1

The Church exists to WORSHIP God (i.e., an UPWARD call)

The Church exists to REACH the Lost (i.e., an OUTWARD call)

Q. But what about those who are reached? What is the church's obligation to them?

A. The Church exists to MAKE DISCIPLES (fully-formed followers of Jesus Christ) (INWARD)

Matthew 28:18–20

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

KEY – The mission of the Church is NOT just to worship and get people to pray the sinner's prayer! The church has an OBLIGATION to make disciples of ANY & ALL who come to FAITH in Christ Jesus.

- We are to GO
- We are to MAKE
- We are to BAPTIZE
- We are to TEACH

MAKING DISCIPLES PT. 2

KEY – IF WE ARE to truly make genuine disciples, we must become CONVINCED of the following:

1) Believers are expected to grow in Christ (FT. 9)

i.e., Salvation is NOT the finish line – but a starting point (see previous message)

Romans 8:29a

29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...

2) That we all have a role to play in making disciples

i.e., We must ALL be actively engaged in CULTIVATING one another! We must be willing to play our part (not matter how small we deem it to be) in promoting the health and well-being of God's people! To what degree are you engaged in the process of NOT JUST GROWING but HELPING TO GROW OTHERS?

KEY – The work of the ministry is NOT reserved for the Pastor. In fact, my job ISN'T to do the work of the ministry. It IS to train and cultivate YOU to do the work of the ministry (cf. Ephesians 4).

3) That discipleship is a costly—yet beneficial—work...

Colossians 1:28–29

28 He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. 29 To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

CONCLUSIONS

Q. Why are WE here? What is the MISSION/PURPOSE of the church (local & universal)?

10) WE BELIEVE that the Church of Jesus Christ exists:

- To WORSHIP God
- To Reach the LOST
- To Make DISCIPLES

James 1:22

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.