



PROTOTYPE
Part 3: "The Essentials"
Sermon Small Group Notes
Speaker: Pastor Dave Patterson

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

- This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together. After considering the needs of your group, you may choose one of the following options:
 1. one section of questions
 2. one or two questions from each section
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- Personal application is key to everyone's growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, "I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer." It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.

INTRODUCTION

What should the church be about? The church has historically been consistent in getting off mission! Majoring on minors, going down side-roads of revelation, wasting time and resources and becoming progressively less viable in their communities. This drift away from the original blueprint of what the Church is all about is subtle but has huge ramifications when we lose sight of the essentials. In this lesson we will refresh our understanding of the main elements that launched the New Testament Church with power and influence. Let's consider the essentials.

Essentials = Absolutely necessary, indispensable, the essence or the heart & soul of the matter

MESSAGE

[Ephesians 2:21-22]

In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

“The church is not a place you attend, it’s a body you are connected to”

God told Moses to build a temple for His presence to dwell. God was very particular about the details. There were essentials.

[Exodus 29:42-46]

“These burnt offerings are to be made each day from generation to generation. Offer them in the LORD’s presence at the Tabernacle entrance; there I will meet with you and speak with you. I will meet the people of Israel there, in the place made holy by my glorious presence. Yes, I will consecrate the Tabernacle and the altar, and I will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. Then I will live among the people of Israel and be their God, and they will know that I am the LORD their God. I am the one who brought them out of the land of Egypt so that I could live among them. I am the LORD their God.

God doesn't just throw some words out just to hear Himself talk, he is concerned about the particulars and will bless a church who understands that what He says has ramifications and blessings.

[Revelation 21:2-6]

*And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.
I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”
And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!” And then he said to me, “Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true.”
And he also said, “It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life.*

We see that at the beginning and at the end there is a set of ingredients, or essentials, that make up the church, the Bride of Christ.

[Revelation 2:4, 5]

“But I have this complaint against you. You don’t love me or each other as you did at first! Look how far you have fallen! Turn back to me and do the works you did at first. If you don’t repent, I will come and remove your lamp-stand from its place among the churches.

As a church we are a lamp-stand and without the "essentials" we will be snuffed out.

We are a light in our community. We are a lamp-stand penetrating the works of darkness. You may never see what was accomplished because the effectiveness of a church applying the essentials routs the effects of sin and darkness before it ever gets a foothold in a region.

[Acts 2:41-47]

⁴¹ Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.

⁴² **All the believers devoted themselves** to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper) and to prayer.

⁴³ A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. ⁴⁴ And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. ⁴⁵ They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need.

⁴⁶ They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily, those who were being saved.

What are you devoted to?

Devotion = unwavering commitment, living with determination to accomplish, perseverance & consistent diligence.

Here are the 4 essentials we see in this passage

1. Devoted to The Apostles Doctrine

Apostles Doctrine = The entirety of scripture as seen and applied through the cross (Jesus is the centerpiece of the Bible)

We need to hear and respond accurately to **sound doctrine.**

[2 Timothy 4 :1-4]

I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will someday judge the living and the dead when he appears to set up his Kingdom: ² Preach the word of God.

Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching. (sound doctrine)

³ For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. ⁴ They will reject the truth and chase after myths.

What are some of those doctrinal “myths” that our culture embraces?

[James 1:21]

So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly receive the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.

2. Devoted to Fellowship

Fellowship = Koinania , a spiritual partnership ; Holy Spirit connections centered around what God is building

John Wesley

“There is nothing more unchristian than a solitary Christian”

Devotion & Humility is vital for restoration!

[Galatians 6:1-3]

¹ Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. ² Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. ³ If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.

3. Devoted to the Lord's Supper (communion)

“The Table of the Lord keeps Jesus at the center of our worship, reveals our sins and consistently brings us back to the CROSS!”

[1 Corinthians 11: 27-28]

Anyone who eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Master irreverently is like part of the crowd that jeered and spit on him at his death. Is that the kind of "remembrance" you want to be part of? Examine your motives, test your heart and come to this meal in holy awe.

4. Devoted to Prayer

Prayer / *proseuche* = Vocal, unified , corporate & Public Worship & prayer,

These essentials are not behaviors that we initiate to earn God's favor... these are responses to his favor that has already been extended to us!

The results of devotion to the 4 essentials was:

1. An atmosphere of awe and wonder
2. Miracles, healings & Supernatural activity
3. Unity
4. Radical generosity
5. Concern for the poor
6. Consistent worship
7. Great joy
8. The favor of the community
9. Unlimited growth and influence

[Acts 2:47]

*...Constantly praising God and being in favor and goodwill with all the people; and the Lord kept adding to their number (the church) daily **those who were being saved from spiritual death.***

William Temple

"The church is the only cooperative society in the world that exists for the benefit of its non-members."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **What did Jesus mean when he said, upon this Rock I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it?**
2. **What are some doctrinal “myths” that our culture embraces?**
3. **How do you stay in healthy fellowship with the Body of Christ?**
4. **Have you ever taken communion around your dinner table? Why or why not? If not, will you? (plan on taking communion at your small group meeting)**
5. **How can you improve the prayer covering for your home?**
6. **What would our church look like if we truly lived out the essentials God has put in place for His church?**