

# The Local Church

## Multiply--Chapter 5

### DAY 1: THE LOCAL CHURCH

*Matthew 28:19-20 "As you are going, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you....."*

1. The great commission is a team sport, not an individual sport. As you reach out to the people God has put in your life, who are your teammates in the church? Is there someone in the church who is getting to know your friends or family?

2. "His plan of redemption involves the church working in unity to reach the people around you." - Francis Chan

Of the four "underlines" above, which one stands out to you the most? Why?

3. Unfortunately, the most "natural" thing to happen to a church is to become ingrown, introverted, the "holy huddle," where we are concerned with one another but newer people have a hard time "breaking in to the fellowship," and feeling a part of things. Has this ever happened to you in your church experience? If so, what was that like for you or for your family?

*Matthew 5:14-16 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

Draw two pictures in the space below. On the left draw a room with a light that is covered over by a basket. On the right draw the same room but without the basket. Lastly, write one sentence that strikes you about the two pictures.

## DAY 2: KNOWN BY OUR LOVE

*John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*

1. Of all things that could mark us as Christians--our beliefs, worship, study, service and missions, why is how we love each other such a potent persuader to lost people of the reality of Christ?

2. It's easy to forget what our life was like before we came to Christ. First, we have experienced genuine love from God.

*Romans 5:5 God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*

3. An outside source of love has been found! And instead of having to go find love, "love" found you! More, God *pours* it into us. What strikes you about this kind of love?

*1 John 4:19 We love because He first loved us.*

4. People always assume they are "loving" people. Without Christ our feelings of "love" are due to what someone else does for us. In others words, what we feel as "love" is simply the *result of someone else's kindness*, not our own!

a. The kind of love that is genuine is *other-centered, and comes from a source outside ourselves!* This is what is so powerful to lost people. They cannot reproduce this on their own. How does this strike you?

b. Do any of your lost friends see this kind of love between you and someone else in the church?

c. What is something you could do to make this happen? Here are some examples. Ask your friends to lunch and invite one other person or family from the church to join you. Do the same thing with: a BBQ at your house; a movie night out; a bowling night out; a picnic at the beach. What is something you could do?

### DAY 3: A COMPELLING COMMUNITY

*John 17:20 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,<sup>21</sup> that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.<sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,<sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.*

1. When Jesus prayed just hours before He was arrested, He prayed for His disciples *and for us!*

2. What parallels do you see in John 17:20 and John 13:34-35 in yesterday's study?

3. How does Jesus describe the standard of unity to which we are to aspire?

4. What strikes you about the relationship between Jesus and God the Father?

5. Why would unity be such a draw to lost people? I hear soooo many people immersed in "drama." Are you involved in any "drama?" What is that like? What do you wish could happen?

6. According to Jesus, how does unity come?

v. 21--

v. 21 (another way)

v. 22--

v. 23--

7. Unity doesn't just happen. What role do you play in experiencing unity with other Christians?

## DAY 4: A COMPELLING COMMUNITY, part 2

*1 Peter 3:13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, <sup>15</sup> but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; <sup>16</sup> yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. <sup>17</sup> For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.*

1. What do we have the power to do, that lost people simply cannot manufacture on human power? So far we've seen three things: other-centered love, God's powerful love, and unity.
  
2. In today's verses, Peter describes another facet that makes us unique--how we handle suffering! What does Peter point to as reasons why can suffer differently than those without Christ?
  
3. What kinds of things do you normally hear from people who are going through hard times?
  
4. What attitudes do you detect from lost people when they are going through hard times?
  
5. When we go through times of suffering, the difference Christ can make in us--our words, our actions, and our attitudes have a chance to stand out in *stark contrast* to lost people! What does Peter say we should be prepared to do?
  
6. As disciple-makers, we are not sales people for God. We do need to use our words to point people to Jesus, but the "plows" that breaks up hard ground are:
  - a. Pictures of God's love demonstrated in our love for each other,
  - b. Pictures of God's love demonstrated in our unity with each other,
  - c. Pictures of God's love demonstrated in how we go through times of suffering.
  
7. What can you do to get one of these ideals in front of your lost friend?

