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Clarity: Mission Organization Changes Focus... Discipleship is Key - posted by mattenleys (), on: 2010/5/5 18:33

Dear friends,

A friend asked us recently, "Where is Mercy League going?" Our response was, among other things... "Mercy League is two things in its essence. First it is the church being the church, and second, it teaches people how to be the church."

What do I mean by that? Ok... I don't know how "religious" or sensitive to the concept of Christianity you are, but I need to inform you that much of the North American church persona is a misnomer. (That's a tongue twister). I could step up onto my soap-box and begin superfluous rant into all the problems of the church today... but rather, let me point you to how the Church began:

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.

A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

~ Acts 2

It has always been the world against the church; it is the system of the world to be about me, my needs, and my contentment. Some people say that the primary goal of North Americans is to "live a painless life if ease." I tend to agree. Many people ask why we do what we do. The answer: because we never again want to fall asleep, enticed by the charms of Canada and the United States. It is a really comfortable place to live... all of us individualists building our personal kingdoms. The church is all about Christ, who teaches about selflessness and self sacrifice because of the hope we have in eternity. Instead I see a North American church that is empty on Super Bowl Sunday, and full in Easter Sunday. Even that is a misnomer, because as if being somewhere on a Sunday morning is what Christianity is all about. It is a lifestyle of love that permeates every part of your life. It is about giving and receiving nothing back. It is about losing in this world and winning in the next. It is not about getting what you deserve... it's about not getting what you deserve.

...living a life of gratitude toward God

Mission in Haiti

I have been sharing with people about Matthew chapter 28. The end of the chapter has one of the most famous missionary texts of all time regarding world missions. It is the standard text that missionaries use when they are sharing about their desire to go to country X and "spread the gospel." Post-modern missions have changed the way they characterize their role on the foreign field. We hear more and more about building clinics, schools, feeding programs and the like. Is that the role of missions? Are we a welfare program for the world? This has given me much thought as of late. One helpful perspective on the topic of secular humanism as related to the Word is here: [Listen Here](#)

Which is better, to put food, shelter, clothing in the hands of people who need it, or to train up people to be the church... which in turns trains their people how to live in communion with each other so that no person has need. This was the design of the earliest church. What changed it? We firmly believe that the best way to help a developing country is to make disciples who do the work of the church for their own people. The Church takes care of the widows and orphans, but all within the context of the Church.

What if a man gambles away all of his salary and leaves his children to suffer. Is it the role of the church to give him money to feed his family, or to encourage him to care for his family? Does it mean that we do nothing for the children? Of course not, but too many times in missions, nothing is ever done to apply pressure on the families to change the pattern of their lives to one that will create blessings and opportunities for families. Men who have 11 children with 5 different women create more than economic problems. Children need the love of a father and mother, but how. This is the role of the church... to take in the fatherless and the widow, and to change the hearts of the fathers.

Mercy League International

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