

The MorningStar Church Vision

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Intro: The Vision of MorningStar Christian Fellowship Church is ‘To declare and demonstrate the Kingdom of God in the Greater Rochester area.’

I. Text **Matt. 16:13-18** “I will build My church...”

- A. v. **13-16** Who do men say that I am? “You are the Christ the son of the...”
- B. v. **17** “blessed are you... flesh and blood did not reveal this to you. but My Father...”
- C. v. **18** “You are Peter and on this rock (of revelation- of hearing supernaturally the voice of God in the mist of everyday life) I will BUILD MY church (and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.”

I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH AROUND ‘HEARERS’ & ‘RESPONDERS’

- D. He’s at work right now building- looking for living stones- willing people- to be joined together, to be built together as part of a family, a team.
- E. **1 Pt. 2:5** You also, as living are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. “

II. ILL. The Clear Plastic cup

- A. What is the value of a Plastic cup?
- B. what is it designed to do? (Hold liquids-) but it can be used for other things...
- C. Let’s get back to its value- its value really is in what it holds, what’s inside the cup
 1. How about clear, cold spring water after a long race..... Its’ value then?
 3. But what about value if I pour dirty water into the cup?
 4. The value and worth of the Plastic cup has everything to do with what’s in it, not the cup itself.
- D. Our life is like the Clear Plastic cup.... God sees every aspect and part of our lives.
We were designed for a purpose, [God has a plan for your life!]
 1. But that purpose can be ignored, overlooked or dismissed.
 2. We were designed as receivers.....to pick up to receive HS revelation & conviction.
 3. We were designed to have ‘life’ poured into us – and to give refreshment and hope to those who are thirsty around us.
 4. The Red Plastic cup, we sometimes think of our lives like that, no one can see what’s in our cup (life) but we really are much more like the clear plastic cup.

III. Ep. 2:19-22

- A. v. 19 members of the household of God
- B. v. 20 built on foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus chief cornerstone
- C. v. 21 whole bld (church) being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord
- D. v. 22 in whom you are also being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

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E. ***“God is building a home. He’s using us – irrespective of how we got here- in what He is building. He used the apostles and prophets for the foundation. Now He’s using you, fitting you in brick, stone by stone, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone that holds all the parts together. WE see it taking shape day by day- a holy temple built by God, all of us built into in, a temple in which God is quite at home.”*** - Message Ep. 2:19-22

IV. **Luke 4:18 (Is. 61:1, 2)** ‘The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor: He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind. To set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.’

V. Vision of MorningStar Church: (Personalize Lu. 4:18)

A. **Matt. 28:20** Gives us this freedom, “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”

B. Personalize Luke 4:18 (printed on front of bulletin)

VISION: TO DECLARE AND DEMONSTRATE THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE GREATER ROCHESTER AREA.

VI. How do we do this?

1. Make sure you have a personal and vibrant relationship with Jesus Christ based solely on His Righteousness and taking our penalty of sin upon Himself for us on the Cross.
2. By being part of a local church-
 - a. The Local church is the ‘Bride of Christ’ The Local church is His idea.
 - b. the local church is many things.... But fundamentally it is a family. It is to operate in a godly, functional manner - with love, respect and honor for each member.

VII. Closing

1. Do you have that personal, vibrant life with Jesus Christ?
2. Are you a part of a local Church?
3. If you agree with the direction and vision of MorningStar, this might just be the place for you!

Understanding the Church Series #2

What the Pattern?

- I. Review of Church vision
 - a. Vision: Declare and Demonstrate
 - b. **Matt. 16:13-18** "... I will build My church..."
 - c. **1 Pt. 2:5** "you also as living stones are being built up a spiritual house..."
 - d. ILL. The Clear Plastic Cup
 - e. ***"God is building a home. He's using us – irrespective of how we got here- in what He is building. He used the apostles and prophets for the foundation. Now He's using you, fitting you in brick, stone by stone, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone that holds all the parts together. WE see it taking shape day by day- a holy temple built by God, all of us built into in, a temple in which God is quite at home."*** - Message Ep. 2:19-22

- II. The Church has been on the heart of God from the beginning of time. The church is not 'plan B' The Jews were the guardians of OT Scripture and stewards of OT revelation. The Church is now the steward of NT revelation.
 - a. Types and patterns from the Old reveal and enrich our understanding and appreciation of the New. Let's look at a few.....

- III. **Exodus 25:1-9** The building of the Tabernacle (a type of the church)
 - a. V. 2 the Jews were to bring an offering(In NT we are the offering)
 - b. Note: it had to be an offering freely given
 - c. 25:8 make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them
 1. **Ep. 2:20-22** built on the foundation of the apostles & prophets; grow into a holy temple in the Lord; built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.
 - d. 25:9 according to all that I show you- the pattern
 - e. ILL. If I gave you each a piece of paper and told you to cut out a star for display, you would be frustrated, probably no two stars alike; unless I gave you a pattern to cut the star from- then they would all be very similar.

Ex. 18:19, 20 Pattern of Responsibility of Leadership (Ministry) Jethro outlined four areas of Moses' ministry and responsibility:

"Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God. And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do."

- f. Intercession- stand before God for the people
- g. Systematic Teaching- teach statues and laws v. 20
- h. Role Modeling, Fellowship- show them the way they must walk (v. 20)
- i. Vision, Strategy- work they must do

- j. **Acts 2:42** Note the NT record of areas of responsibility for leadership. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."

1. Doctrine (teaching)
2. Fellowship (personal interaction, role modeling)
3. Breaking of bread (covenant relationships, revelation of Christ)
4. Prayers (intercession)

- k. THE PATTERN AND RESPONSIBILITY OF LEADERSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT- IS TO DEVELOP A LOCAL CHURCH BASED ON LOVE , FAITH AND MUTUAL RESPECT. MEN AND WOMEN THAT CAN HEAR FROM GOD AND COMMIT THEMSELVES TO BUILDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD TOGETHER, IN UNITY.

IV. The Pattern of Relating to the Presence of God

- a. **I Sam. 4** -the ark was taken to battle as a 'lucky piece' and was captured.
- b. Reminder: the Ark was intended to be the dwelling place of God on earth with His people. (the church is the intended place of Christ to dwell with His people here on earth)
- c. **I Sam. 5** – Dagon fell on his face before the ark, then head and hands broke off; emrod (boils) on people's secret parts.
- d. **I Sam . 6**- Ark sent back to Israel
 1. Used 2 oxen, never been yoked
 2. Tress pass offering given- 5 golden emerods & mice
 3. Ark placed on new cart to Beth Shemesh
 4. Men of Beth Shemesh: (ark sent back- restoration of the Presence of God)
 1. V. 14- burnt offerings to the Lord
 2. V. 15 Levites took it down
 3. V. 19 God killed 50,070 men
 4. V.20 "who is able to stand?" Note: when problems come into our lives (or the church) do we seek to understand or become offended?
- e. WHAT'S THE PATTERN? They gave up trying to find out, called men of Kirjath Jearim to store the ark (v. 21)

V. **1 Chron. 13:1-14** The Ark Revived and Restored

- a. David gets consensus of people
- b. Carried ark in a new cart (followed pagan custom)
- c. Great singing and joy in Israel
- d. Uzza touched the ark- and died
- e. V. 12 David afraid- What's the Pattern?
- f. Would he give up like the men of Beth Shemesh or press in?
- g. 1 Chron. 14 – David busy building his house, taking more wives and fighting Philistines (seeking revelation does not mean we need to be inactive)

- h. **1 Chron. 15-** God pattern discovered!
 - 1. V. 2,3 Levites only can carry the ark
 - 2. V. 13 David: we did not consult Him about the proper order.”
 - 3. V. 25-28 ark brought to Jerusalem
 - 4. V.26 God helped the Levites... (when they functioned as instructed)

i. **1 Chron. 16:1,2** David blessed the people

j.

“So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD.”

- k. Note: when proper manner of relating to the presence of God (ark) is found, it brings much release and blessing

VI. ARE THERE ISSUES IN YOUR LIFE THAT ARE UNCLEAR, UNRESOLVED, THAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR GOD’S PATTERN IN?

- a. Don’t be like the men of Beth Shemesh
- b. Be like David and press in for the answer. God will release His divine will and pattern.
- c. Note: and when His will is sought and implemented, there will be great rejoicing and peace.

Understanding the Church Series #3

The Universal Church

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I. Review What's the Pattern?

- **Exodus 25:1-9** The building of the Tabernacle (a type of the church)
- **Ex. 18:19, 20** Pattern of Responsibility of Leadership (Ministry)
- **1 Chron. 13:1-14** The Ark Revived and Restored
- ARE THERE ISSUES IN YOUR LIFE THAT ARE UNCLEAR, UNRESOLVED, THAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR GOD'S PATTERN IN?

II. The Universal Church vs. the Local Church

- a. **1 Cor. 12:13** "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit."
- b. Local church is geographically based (place of accountability and growth) NEXT WEEK

II. REVIEW- **Matt. 16:13-18** "... I will build My church..." The gathered church vs. the built church

- a. Airplane models we used to glue together as a kid
- b. Delivered materials for building of a house (vs. a built house)
- c. Two Enemies of Church Building:
 1. Principalities and powers (Ep. 6:12)
 2. Erroneous concepts (wrong teaching, concepts or agenda)

III. Ephesians 4

ILL. If a third world nation wanted to bless a backward tribe that lived in that nation: (and they could only do one of the following) would it be wiser to build them hospitals, schools and churches or send them doctors, teachers and pastors?

- a. V.7 grace given to each according to gift given
- b. V. 8 He gave gifts to men { Ascension Ministry Gifts)
- c. V. 11 APEPT "and He Himself gave some to be..."
 - a. Apostles- governmental and spiritual foundation layers, initiator, organizer, spiritual father
 - b. Prophets- foundational layer, foreteller (future) & forth teller (speaks into church life and vision)
 - c. Evangelists- dynamic speaker, ingatherer, salvation theme in messages
 - d. Pastors- lover and encourager of the people, leader of a local congregation
 - e. Teachers- analytical thinker, systematic presenter of Biblical truth.
- d. V. 12, 13 {JOB DESCRIPTION}} for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come to the unity of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. "

IV. **Jn. 14: 2,3,18** A 'Mansion' or a 'Mission'? "I go to prepare a place for you..."

- a. Jesus planned this from eternity
- b. In ascension, preparations enacted
- c. Spiritual place Jesus prepared is the Church!

- d. Note: in the church there are many mansions- abodes- dwelling places- for members and gifting to function in

V. Christ's 'new' earthly body

- a. While on earth, Jesus was dwelling pace of God
- b. Through His presence- His life- he revealed and manifested God to man
- c. when His physical body was taken to heaven- humanity was not left without contact & relationship with Jesus. The Holy Spirit was sent to build the Church of Jesus Christ on earth- to reveal the mind and heart of God – through His Son's bride- the Church.

VI. God's Purpose from the beginning of Time

- a. "The human race was created in the image and likeness of God for one purpose: to provide an eternal companion for the Son. After the fall and promise of redemption through the coming Messiah, the Messianic race (Israel) was born and nurtured in order to bring the Messiah. And the Messiah came for one intent and only one: to give birth to His Church, thus to obtain His bride. The Church then turns out to be the central object, the goal, not only of mundane history but of all that God has been doing in all realms, from all eternity" - Billheimer
- b. Purpose: Man fully equipped, walking in harmony with God, would willfully choose to follow God.
Instrument: Adam and Eve
Result: Failure
- c. Purpose: To find a man to cut covenant with that God could totally trust and establish a new race on earth with.
Instrument: Abraham
Result: Success
- d. Purpose: A multi-membered corporate expression of holiness and obedience to the Lord and His law.
Instrument: Israel
Result: Failure
- e. Purpose: To reveal Himself to mankind in a personal tangible way so man could fully see the character and love of God
Instrument: Jesus
Result: Success
- f. Purpose: To so empower and inhabit His many membered Body that principalities and powers will bow to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Kingdoms of this world would become the kingdoms of our God and of his Son.
Instrument: the Church
Result: Yet to be determined!

VII. Closing

- a. **1 Pt. 2:9** " But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light"
- b. **Ep. 1:22,23** " And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" [You are the church- His body- you are the fullness of Him who fills all in all.]

Understanding the Church Series #4

The Local Church

I. Review

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1. **Ep. 4:11** Ascension Ministry Leadership Gifts: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers
2. *Job Description* v. 12: for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come to the unity of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. “
3. **Jn. 14: 2,3,18** “In My Father’s house there are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you.”
 - a. Is that talking about ‘Mansion’ {in heaven} or a ‘Mission’ {on earth?}
 - b. We looked at 4 Six Statements: God’s Purpose from the Beginning of Time (lastly to give birth to a Bride...).

II. I want to talk to you today about the LOCAL (geographical) Church

1. You don’t join the Universal church- you are born into it. But the local church is designed as a place for commitment, accountability and dwelling.
2. There are FOUR elements of the Local Church:
3. PEOPLE.....PURPOSE.....PLACE....PERSONEL (leadership)
4. **Local Church Definition:** People led together by the Holy Spirit, to be conformed into the image of the Son; in a specific location, under anointed leadership.
 - a. **Matt. 18, 20** “where 2 or 3 gathered together I My name... {Gather- “sunago” to lead together; i.e... To collect or convene.” -Strong’s
 - b. **1 Cor. 14:26** “How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation, let all things be done for edification.”
5. Why join the New Testament local church? To be a vibrant part of the corporate expression of the life of Christ and to influence the community in which I live with the Gospel- the ‘good news’ lived out through my life.

III. **Mal. 3:10** the Local Church also called the ‘Storehouse’

1. Bring all the tithe into the storehouse- and prove me says the Lord
2. **Heb. 7:8** “Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that He lives.” (one of the ways we testify of the life of Christ is by bringing our financial resources to the Local Church (the storehouse)

IV. The Authority of the Local Church

1. **Mat. 18: 15-17** - ‘Moreover if your brother sins (injustice) against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refused to hear them, tell it to the church (leadership) and if he refused to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. ‘
 - a. Resolving offenses (why is that so important?)
 - b. Love, Unity and Accountability are essential in a healthy growing local church.
2. **Heb. 13:17** “Obey them that have the rule (lead) over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. “

V. Closing- hand out the tri fold on commitment in the Local Church

A Quality Decision (page 5 of tri fold on Church Commitment)

A. Just as each person must choose to repent and commit their lives to Christ to be saved, so too each Christian must make a quality decision to commit themselves to a local church. The choice is a willing submission to the covering, protection and authority delegated to the local church and its leadership (Heb. 13:17)

B. Church Membership is the outward expression of the inward conviction that the Local Church is the place that the Lord has designed each of His people to dwell in and prosper.

C. First step in church membership @ MorningStar is an orientation meeting.

Responsibilities of those called Together by the Lord in a local Church

1. To pray and ask God to be led to a place where you could be ‘built ‘together with others as ‘living stones’ in the house hold of God (I Pt. 2:5)
2. To embrace the Vision of the church and use your gifts and influence toward its success. (Pro. 29:18)
3. To submit yourselves to the delegated resident Five Fold Ministry.
4. To be open and teachable in receiving instruction, correction and encouragement through the Five Fold Ministry, Eldership and congregation of the church.
5. To support in prayer and with finances the goals, outreaches and ministries of the local church.

THE LOCAL CHURCH IS TO OPERATE LIKE A FAMILY, WE ALL NEED TO BE LOVED AND ACCOUTABLE TO EACH OTHER. OUR SINGULAR GOAL IS CHRIST (to be like Him individually and built together to reflect Him)

That’s the New Testament local church!

Understanding the Church Series #5

The Local Church- Community, Cause and Corporation

Page | 10 I. Review

1. There are FOUR elements of the Local Church:
PEOPLE.....PURPOSE.....PLACE....PERSONEL (leadership)
2. **Local Church Definition:** People led together by the Holy Spirit, to be conformed into the image of the Son; in a specific location, under anointed leadership.
3. **Why join the New Testament local church?** To be a vibrant part of the corporate expression of the life of Christ and to influence the community in which I live with the Gospel- the 'good news' lived out through my life.
4. THE LOCAL CHURCH IS TO OPERATE LIKE A FAMILY, WE ALL NEED TO BE LOVED AND ACCOUNTABLE TO EACH OTHER. OUR SINGULAR GOAL IS CHRIST (to be like Him individually and built together to reflect Him)

II. Share on the Local Church and its Three distinct Areas of Function (can be at odds....)

Ep. 4:1-6 "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ² with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³ endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you^[a] all."

1. Question: Which system in the human body is the most important? Digestive, circulatory or respiratory? (They are all essential!)

III. The three Areas or Functions of Church life are:

1. **Community-** family of believers
2. **Cause-** the Vision, the reason we exist- the motivation that drives us
3. **Corporation-** the order, structure, procedures

IV. The Church as 'Community'

1. **Acts 2:42-47** continued steadfastly in one accord
Note: in accord because related with God and one another v. 47
2. Community is like a home where the weakest person (baby, handicapped) receives disproportionate amount of time and encouragement.
3. Parallel: community is like a family- loving relationship where key ingredient is acceptance, love and affirmation. (a safe place)
4. The community aspect of a church is to produce security, acceptance, encouragement and unconditional love (much like a home)
5. BUT YOU ALSO NEED TO SEE.....

V. Church as 'CAUSE' (Vision)

1. **Mk. 16:15** "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."
2. **Acts 1:8** "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."
3. Cause is like the ignition system in a car, it gets everything going and remains operative during the voyage
4. Parnell- as an army during war- victory is the issue; but there is a need for strategy, goals and co operation to achieve the victory.
5. Rather than the weakest receiving the most attention, often the most committed gets the attention.
6. Many enter the 'Cause' because of heartfelt conviction (pro- life, deliverance, spiritual warfare, missions...) but if not balanced, they can end up 'burned out'.

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VI. Lastly the Church as 'CORPORATE'

1. **1 Cor. 14:40** "Let all things be done decently and in order."
2. Rather than person who is weakest or most committed, the person that is most productive gets the most prominence
- . Parallel: as a business- emphasis on efficiency, stewardship, resource allocation

VIII. PROBLEM: Leader (people) leans/gravitates toward only one of these areas:

1. **Community**- becomes ingrown, exclusive, self absorbed...
2. **Cause**- obsessed, hardened to those not as committed as you...
3. **Corporation**- too structured, rigid, goal orientated

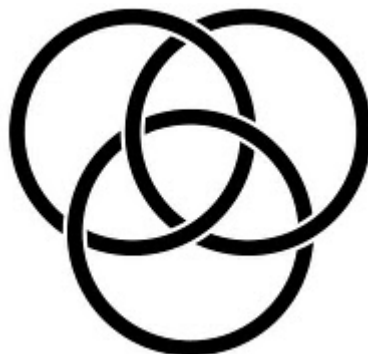
IX. DENOMINATIONAL ANSWER- SEPARATE THE AREAS

- a. Pastor- community
- b. Activist- Cause
- c. Chairman of Trustees- corporation

Note: what happens when eventually there is competition or disagreement among the three areas?



X. NEW TESTAMENT ANSWER- Integrated ministry (with Jesus intercepting all three circles.



XI. Challenge

- a. Unity & Balance are the issue
- b. Like all of our systems within our body need to work and cooperate together to be healthy- all three elements of church life do too.
- c. COMMUNITY- CAUSE- CORPORATION
- d. Do you gravitate toward one of these areas to the exclusion of the other two?