

## Vineyard Values Series: Community

### Opening thoughts

#### Vision of Vineyard Boise

To develop authentic, reproducible, Spirit-filled, Christian disciples.

#### Values

- Worship
- The Word
- Multiplication
- Prayer
- Ministry
- Stewardship
- Fellowship

### Community with a Purpose

My heart has always been to build a community with a purpose. [My definition of fellowship]

- A community that is actively doing the ministry of Jesus. [Next weeks subject]
- I picture this community being a community from the cradle to the grave. [We use the word “heritage”]
- Will to break status quo – courageous – adventurous
- Living things grow and growing things change! People are generally afraid of change. It’s much easier to play it safe.
- My experience with the greatest adventure.
- The only thing that has meaning in this life is finding and doing God’s will.

#### **Romans 12**

1Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. 2Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

- Definition of maturity.
- No longer becoming entangled in the thorny and thistle soil
- This is true for us as individuals as well as for us as a fellowship.
- A transformed mind because of a transformed heart and who have become fully committed to the ministry of Jesus.

A fresh realization and application: [It's a time for change]

- Santiago, Chile – Four days of working with churches tell them how to do church – It always make me think about how things could be better.
- A visit with a young girl that I met in a ticketing line in Chili who attends an alive, growing church in Minnesota.
- We have segregated our youth which is a characteristic of the world. We have been growing older in the adult service and the youth have become a bit disenfranchised from the main church.
- We need to become an “extended family” of God.

## A new plan for Sundays

- The youth will become a part of the adult service.
- We need their youthfulness – They need our maturity.
- The extended family – Cross pollination of generations is rich
- They need to know they are valued and wanted
- They will join our work force – worship – ushers and greeters – tour guides – Help with the children – Parking lot congestion – graphics - etc.
- We may need a third service.

## A picture of functional community – why the adventure of the Christian life can't happen without community.

3For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

- Everyone has their limits – we kneed each other to impact this world.
- Knowing yourself and knowing what you're made for.
- A realistic perspective – recognizing strengths and weaknesses.

4Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. (Why we need each other) 6We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. 7If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; 8if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (7 X's – “let him”)

## Romans 12 – Formula for authentic fellowship

Mature community = fellowship, but fellowship requires healthy community.

- Fellowship (or Family of God) = Friendship + Function + Friction

### 1. Friendship – You will never grow without meaningful relationship

9Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

- Requires being other centered. - Alice Hoffman's old friend's statement, "*The door to happiness only swings outward*".
- The Biblical fact is, authentic Christianity can't happen in a vacuum – we grow through symbiotic relationship.

## Hebrews 10 [NLT]

23Without wavering, let us hold tightly to the hope we say we have, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. 24Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds. 25And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near

- A part of a group that was making a difference in the community and world.
- Participation – a chance to be used and not just be a spectator
- Deep and lasting friendships
- Constantly challenged for growth. Even “Provoked”.

## 2. Function – Growth demands participation.

11Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

- No one can do it all – yet it all needs doing – Only in community can all of the ministry of Jesus take place.
  - Poor
  - Prisoner
  - Broken hearted and down trodden
  - Children
  - Sick and captive
  - Discipleship at all levels
  - Evangelism
  - Going to the nations
  - Stewardship of creation
- Diversity of gifts and personality makeup –
  - Introverts need extroverts.
  - Creative pioneers need organizers.

## Ephesians 4 – A picture of functional church -

11It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets,

some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, (*functions*)<sup>12</sup>to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup>until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

<sup>14</sup>Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

<sup>15</sup>Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup>From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (*Everyone needs to play*)

### 3. Friction – You'll never grow if you avoid conflict. It's part of the package.

- Healthy can only grow out of manure and compost.
- Steal does sharpen steal.
- Remember the rocky soil:
  - Matt. - represents those who hear the message and receive it with joy. <sup>21</sup>But like young plants in such soil, their roots don't go very deep. At first they get along fine, but they wilt as soon as they have problems or are persecuted because they believe the word.
  - Luke - They believe for a while, but *they wilt when the hot winds of testing blow.*
  - It is in seasons of adversity that one discovers if the seed took hold:
  - People either fall away and out of fellowship or they draw closer and discover just how valuable the Gospel and the church is to their life.

#### **Romans 12 – Continued**

<sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another. (*The world will know us by our love and unity*) Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. (*Celebrate diversity*)

- Only is authentic church do to rich and poor sit side by side. (All are equal in Christ)

<sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. <sup>20</sup>On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (*Do the opposite of what your human nature wants to do – don't withdraw, press in!*)

- The enemy hates community because there is power in unity and he knows it.
- It's time to pull the entire family closer together in unity.

- A place to celebrate what we have and who we are in Christ.
- Let's all become a team to make Sunday a great event. A place to invite the un-churched.