

ADULT SS
BACKGROUND &
PURPOSE

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Underlying Assumptions/Goals in Adult SS for church as whole:

- 1. We must shift our focus from personal maturity and growth to building healthy churches.**
- 2. We must focus on the roots, not merely the fruit.**

“SKELETON AND FLESH OF THE CHURCH” APPLIED PT. 9

CBC, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021

IF we do NOTHING else together, the Collective People of God must:

- I. Worship God Together.** Romans 15:5-6
- II. Grow Individually and Corporately with a Growth that Comes from God.** Eph. 4:15-16
- III. Protect/Defend the Name of God—His character and Eternal Purposes.** II Tim. 1:13-14
- IV. Own the People in the Particular Expression of the Body of Christ where God has Placed you.** I Cor. 12:18, Eph. 4:16
- V. Spread the Glory of God** Hab. 2:14, I Pet. 2:9

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What comes to mind with the word culture?

- Creations of man
- Traditions
- Man-centered/ anti-God
- Ethnic beliefs
- Living/changing
- Differences
- Roots/origins
- Seems subjective according to me
- Worldview/way of thinking

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1 Peter 2:9-17

- We are not isolated from culture – we are immersed not only in it but with them
- We don't have merely a product or a message this interaction/behavior goes to care of our being
- Clear identity & standard for living – therefore clear difference in how we appear before world
- No question in your mind, that God is source of that change
- This should lead to clear opportunities to give glory to God by proclaiming the gospel
- By “fitting” in His Kingdom, we seek to “fit” in this kingdom

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What would need to be lifted up/allowed if want to build healthy churches with strong roots in **How we relate to culture?**

- Be a dolphin, not a jellyfish, in the current of culture– don't be swept away, but cut through (John Piper)
- More focus on God and his representatives in order to live in this world
- Rom. 12:14-21, how to interact with believers. The vestige of this will live out in the rest of our lives
- Cut against culture from where you are
- Jesus –being in the Spirit
- Phil.2 emptied himself, always do what is pleasing to them, Jn17. fellowship w/ God b/c of delight/love
- Bible has final word scrape culture from our interpretation
- There is something more/deeper – gives greater tie/greater hope
- 1 Peter 4:1-6, Different mindset concerning “what is life”, Deliberate effort with where to focus, Not looking to self to complete identity, instead feel the will of God

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Psalm 16

- Life's direction only from God – willingly, with whole heart seek His “paths”
- Flesh dwells securely, Lord is inheritance, refuge – comfortable in heaven's treasure
- Life, satisfaction, joy, security thrive/flourish with God
- Promises
- V. 10 – God's Word is so trustworthy that not even sheol/death breaks promises
- Free to learn even in “freedom of the night”
- God has total allegiance
- Totally impossible to have this perspective through “all” circumstances unless work of God in heart
- Jesus in His divinity lived through/with sin/sinners - to follow Him includes this
- Forsaking All, I trust Him

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What does the culture value and what are the corresponding biblical values? How would we foster these traits that we build healthy churches with strong roots concerning **How we relate to culture?**

Culture values:

- Happy, fulfilled, safe – you determine – expressive individualism, identity, self-discovery vs. survival
- Now or else can't
- Comfort
- Choices
- Right to not be offended
- Success (used to be financial, now perhaps attentions/popularity)
- I determine limits and definitions
- You must validate me to be in my world
- Therefore truth subjective
- Ceiling on truth

Biblical values:

- No ceiling but God with truth
- Conformity to God to keep that identity and fulfill missing regardless of circumstances
- Glory to God
- Defending honor of God's name
- Humility – submission to His Word
- Value/purpose in suffering
- All by – products/blessings under/for Him
- God has the right to offend me – when He determines limits, what is His goal
- Humility regarding our understanding of church history, study of the Word, Holy Spirit
- His attributes as He defines it

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Biblical values:

- Inheritance, heritage, and identity with God
- God's words are reality, life, freedom, purpose, hope, and healing. Therefore, follow them
- Suffering diminished because satisfaction/contentment with fellowship with God
- Motivation for obedience changed, ultimate unchanging standard not basis for our security
- Sometimes freedom comes when the choice is made for us
- Look farther (Opp. of NOW), look to God, not merely your benefit
- We give what we can (Die to self) rather than "get" all we can
- Blessings unshakable from now to eternity

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In Praise of the Boring Uncool Church - Comments:

- Choices – too many
- Do we have to understand all of what “they” want to communicate: what we learn, who God is
- In attempt to make more acceptable, instead of adding, we detract from sufficiency of gospel
- We forgot the relevancy of the Word
- Even good attempts at relating minimize a life-giving Word
- Substance – not natural to analyze desires for eternal effect
- Almost seems insurmountable but recognize that early church had Jews, Greeks, Romans against & continued confidently according to God’s Word
- How much do we have to “add” before Christ becomes sufficient/desirable
- Why we can’t keep ourselves from the “attractiveness of the world,” but Jesus said “do not be conformed to this world”

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A Conflict of Visions: Comparing Rick Warren's SBC speech and Juan Sanchez's Sermon -Thoughts?

- The “numbers” will be tested
- Numbers do matter
- What about the dying church – why figures lie, liars figure – must carefully analyze figures
- Definitions
- What is the proof of your faithfulness to Christ?
- How do you define faithfulness?
- Easy gains are not always the best gains
- Something/One bigger than person or activity holding attention

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How Movements Can Undermine Churches and Hurt Their Own Cause (Jonathan Leeman)

What did you hear? What is the danger listed, and what creates the temptation to head this way?

- Be careful/slow to “remove the ancient landmarks” – you do this at the expense of true growth
- Not only initial boundaries changing, the daily maintenance required for healthy Christianity is absent
- Word sufficient- it’s boundaries right until great numbers changed...- spirit-given boundaries/definitions/life must continue regardless
- What you save them with is what you save them to... we cannot compromise the boundaries of the gospel or we will have a different gospel which is no gospel
- Driven by desire for life, change, something worth being a part of
- Easy to drift in direction of “feelings determine success”/ looking for easier path is natural- takes intention
- Must replace with treasure
- Focused on what we think we need or what we want to do rather than seeking where we should fit in – what is a healthy church member
- Those movements have the tendency to focus on the emotion rather than getting their foundation from the Word of God

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How Movements Can Undermine Churches and Hurt Their Own Cause (Jonathan Leeman)

What did you hear in the second part of this article?

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How Movements Can Undermine Churches and Hurt Their Own Cause (Jonathan Leeman)

What must change in our understanding of the purpose of the church (or be intentionally strengthened/lived) if the church would better address the individual and corporate capitulation to this danger?

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We have looked at public worship services, relationships, growth, culture, now finally, What would need to be lifted up/allowed if want to build healthy churches with strong roots in **faithful service**?

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Through the lens of these two goals, what were some of the changes hoped for by intentionally changing the goals during our *Future Grace* study leading to an 8 year study of that book? (longer studies over the years preceding)

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Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that **you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;**

Philippians 1:27

Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, ² **make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.**

Philippians 2:1-2

Adult SS Purpose Talk Pt. 56?? CBC Sunday School, August 21, 2022

1. We must shift our focus from personal maturity and growth to building healthy churches. **2. We Must Focus on the Roots, not merely the fruits** worked on taking this out for spin (first fruits, not roots, now roots focus) FIRST, must have a Goal—where church heading; if roots, NOT what we value, but what about God's priorities? **I. Worship God Together** Rom. 15:5-6 **II. Grow individually & corporately with a growth that comes from God** Eph. 4:15-16 **3. Protect/Defend the Name of God: His character and eternal purposes** II Tim. 1:13-14, verses telling what to do if people won't stay in line w these doctrines **4. Own the People in the Particular Expression of the Body of Christ where God has placed you.** I Cor. 12:18, 25, Eph. 4 **5. Spread the Glory of God** Hab. 2:14, I Pet. 2:9 what does this look like practically? **What would need to be lifted up/allowed if don't want to neglect building healthy churches with strong roots in our corporate services?** relationships, growth **relationship to culture—what does the culture value OR** what do we value/society that governs HOW we seek to carry out our God-centered methods that speaks more of us/our kingdom/ words/goals than His? If they happy, we happy; if they not doing it, I don't have to; if trying, should get credit; if don't understand, THEIR problem, not mine b/r God; then what would God's roots cause us to look for w methods at church when it comes to culture? engaging but suspicious (how many new songs, drums—feelings, emotion, sermons where we are at OR where we need to go, dress, but also why seek to force relationships FROM God's Word, not from “clicking”—tend to “click” naturally) **faithful service—perhaps first, what IS service? Or what do we usually think of as service in the church? What does Numbers 4:1ff, 16-19, 22ff, 29ff., Romans 12, I Peter 4:7-11 do for guiding our service inside the church? NOW, go back and answer original question about how to serve focusing on service w healthy roots that will produce godly fruit of service, not fruits alone** what needs to be done to carry out God's intent for creation (YES, right relationship w Him, but leads to order, compassion, together, ON DISPLAY for glory of God—NOT merely task, look for where fit, but HOW fits toward God's kingdom goals in people's lives in front of world; **reading Quest for More**, possibly next summer trip **pp. 50-51**, then repeat what said starting w “what needs to be done to carry out God's intent”—I'm lightening someone else's load so they can do what THEY good at and I struggle w—**ie.** I'll watch their kid so they can talk w someone); looking for service that will help people move forward, continue on display for God's glory; **root work demands, mindset of officer (look outside of self, see whole picture NOT just your perspective)**, must examine what pieces we have in our own life that heads toward these goals; what pieces do we recognize in the lives of those around to head toward those goals; YOU not me, I am not YOU, so evaluate are they our goals, theirs, or God's); **character to look for these things and not merely results:** patience, diligence, completeness (ie. Half emptied dishwasher, ONE sock on floor in front of dryer, under clothesline, left in living room); it is slow, messy, character rather than results, internal rather than external is what noticing (ie. Spiritual snow shoveler), ability to live in a world that is less than ideal (not just noticing what is wrong, able to live WHILE things not way should be while doing your part), **then if truly an officer, must recognize not merely that something must be done, but that you are under authority**—recognize where orders come from, means to accomplish those orders—from God, we serve HIM (should show in hunger to know/understand His Word, vibrant prayer life holding these things before Him; because WE are not the determiner of what needs to happen and we not to lean on own understanding, must distill what we know about each other/ourselves so that we can fulfill our part in His work (I Cor. 12, Rom. 12); **you can't have everyone be hand (that is what would happen if everyone's though process like yours) so must see whole so that can stop trying to be what not/make others be that as well; Through the lens of these two goals, what do you think led to a change of focus as we studied Future Grace which turned it into an 8 year study and what were some of the goals that I hoped to achieve?** (longer studies over the years preceding) Need a foundation to care about things I read in Piper's book (didn't get it, didn't care to—either explain, or I don't need it) found this in Forgiveness Book years ago, then Instruments, etc.), again, if don't have shared roots, then must start from foundation—**Remember, said that I slowly realized that while I don't think way trained bad, other pieces weren't in place that allowed for slow growth;** seems impossible to get where God wants His children to go; MANY solutions proposed, **but I believe they are often unbalanced—focusing on one area of the problem w/o getting to the root**—while not ONE area will fix all (youth group, family devotions, mentoring, BIC, Sunday worship, worldchangers, etc.), **ALL become opportunities to work on roots; (point 2: roots, not fruits) tried to think, not what do YOU want, but what will help US grow from foundation up** (THEN focus shifts from not merely WHAT learn, but what purpose it serves in God's foundations so resulting fruit is growing godliness that spreads glory of God; **to do this, needed to create environment where what talking about/our discussion, though NOT where you are focused, would cause you to reach for it even through initial boredom, frustration, lack of understanding b/c saw that it might be part of producing the things you DID desire in a godly way;** looking to build love for God and character essential for growth like list in II Peter 1, OR expose lack of it; **ESSENTIAL b/c failure to have these**

roots exposed would keep from godly fruit of confession, repentance, growth, and worship; **WE GREW through Future Grace, but not all of us as fast as could**--growth is slow, all of us different, **but lack of intentional focus on roots left us looking for immediate understanding/relevance OR struggled to pay attention/value study**; easy to say, my brain works differently--give me clear teaching, reading, questions, deadlines, don't go on forever--**THOSE are character things**--can do differently once in awhile (book we are coming to)—intro to Behold Our God, he will talk about “another 12 week study”--people have been doing these forever and NOT changing--**goal is that you do this organically (I asked you each week to read the page/pages we were talking about--glance at the notes online, and come thinking about the stuff**--a couple did it—along way, I saw growth as others joined recognizing that perhaps some of these “heady” seemingly minor nuances mattered—started entering the discussion, following/thinking/ probing—recognizing that there were MANY relevant avenues even if didn't go down them all, know that they exist; **so excited when people tried to read, asked questions, tried to find what Piper/me talking about**; THIS leads to people learning to care about sourcing our life in Christ in way that brings His fruit regardless of what circumstances He chooses to place us in--**officer mentality**; THAT is ROOTS from Christ that WILL produce spiritual fruit; **point 1**—But then, these “Officers” are NOT independent of one another—Eph. 4, I Cor. 12, Rom. 12 speak of inter-connectedness—proper working of each individual part causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love; growth in the church as whole shows by how we learn to handle Scripture AND sit under elders/overseers AND learn from/with one another (Eph. 4 body builds itself up in love); **therefore, these “open forum SS” are NOT open forums, they are guided toward goals BUT because discipling, I am intentionally NOT doing all the finished work**, If you are focused on being overwhelmed w heavier book like Future Grace or annoyed b/c you get it and keep staying on it, OR disagree, then you are focused on your personal holiness journey **where focus on whether you get it or not, like it or not, growing or not, but** other side, if about building a church (love neighbor, all for their upbuilding, bring glory to God by building strong churches, then **if you get it or find something helpful; help others IN class/afterwards interact**—discuss what get, what could do to get more/if disagree, start picking through why so you/body will grow; **if not getting it, humble self and ask someone who is answering—be thankful if they get and not you b/c they part of you and will trickle to you eventually if people care about whole instead of just themselves**; **I/others can help some of you along w personalized questions to answer during the week**, but don't demand whole church stop for your frustration, lack of understanding or need for what talking about OR the church as a whole will grow weaker; (not better/worse, WE ARE MEMBERS OF ONE ANOTHER); **In order for this to happen w church, you have to be able to deal w people NOT like you; together w one voice Rom. 15 can glorify God**; need to figure out how to help others in here wrestle through the issues—ALL without requiring us ALL to agree on every piece all the way through (help head in main direction as wrestle w specifics) **when struggle w THIS, would go to Head of Church and ask Jesus for help**; THIS would be a healthy church—NOT perfect, but growing together w Christ as Head—this church (of which you can be/are members if saved is small part of universal church I Pet. 2, we like living stones are being built up together! How? **Eph. 4 according to proper working of each individual part causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love**--we are looking to develop whole church—SS has become front lines for addressing these issues for me (sermons are given—preaching of Word central—need more from own undershepherds, not less), **THEN SS first, pr. mtg. Bible study place to address these worldview issues--** these different goals are focus through lens of whatever study we are doing; must know these and work on these together or will be frustrated; **I'm seeing changes from some of you that may explode the growth in a good way in future**--doesn't mean that growing more, it means foundation laid, people of God coming alive and taking their place actively, individually, and then corporately to do the work of the kingdom as God designed it; **(WE ARE GETTING THIS—I'm VERY THANKFUL)** Without further ado, and noting these two assumptions of building church & roots/foundation, let's start

Philippians 1:27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Philippians 2:1-2 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,² make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

Ephesians 2:17-22 AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR;¹⁸ for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.