

Study Notes
October 27, 2021
Pastor Brent McDougal

Chapters 5 and 6 of *Untamed* deal with the church and family. Tonight we will look at Ephesians 4:4-15 and a few other verses

Big idea: God has both a design for the church and the human family that will accomplish God's purposes in the world.

"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it... So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 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. 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 people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ" (Ephesians 4:4-7, 11-15, NIV)

"Every believer a church planter, every church a church planting church." From the Chinese Underground Church

As a seed contains the full potential of a tree, so the tree contains the full potential of the forest. Likewise, as a spark contains the full potential of the flame, so the flame contains the potential of the forest fire. It's all contained in the spark. Recognizing the world transforming power of the people of God is essential to becoming a missional church again in the west.

Part of the problem: people may attend church with consumeristic values. It's not all bad. There's nothing wrong with caring for people well and helping people to feel comfortable. But discipleship is impacted if people essentially see themselves as a consumer of religious goods and services. No longer is the church a disciple-making movement operating under the Great Commission.

Conversion is commission. We're very familiar with this idea because Baptists have traditionally held to the concept of the priesthood of all believers.

Several shifts that need to take place in the local church:

1. Creating more ministry teams to serve
2. Lifting up the APEST gifts from Ephesians 4
3. Discipling men and women

“It is easy to think that the church has a lot of different objects – education, buildings, missions, holding services... but the church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them into little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became man for no other purpose. It is even doubtful, you know, whether the whole universe was created for any other purpose. It says in the Bible that the whole universe was made for Christ and that everything is to be gathered together in him.” **C.S. Lewis**

Table talk: What do you think about the statement: every disciple carries within themselves the potential for world transformation. Do you think this is true?

Pre-conversion discipleship —————> post conversion discipleship

Belonging precedes believing. People don't need to agree with us on the finer points of theology in order to belong. They are invited into a journey that leads to Jesus. The closer people get to Jesus, the more they are pulled into his orbit, and eventually to conversion.

“You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9, ESV).

Our role is to mediate the true knowledge of God and maintain the God relationship. We introduced people to a right understanding of God.

Table talk: How can you be a priest in your own neighborhood?

Refocusing the Family

Hirsch: One of the major reasons for a current lack of hospitality to the stranger lies in the modern redefinition of what it means to be family. The nuclear family is a relatively new concept. In past times, spouses, children, and servants would work together and produce goods. The family would include relatives and friends within the social unit. But now the family has narrowed and as a primary or unit of consumption.

The church is described in the Bible as the family of God. The family is not the social agent or the primary vehicle of God's grace and salvation. It is the church. Restoring and redeeming the family begins with the church, not with the nation or the family itself.

Practical takeaways.

- 1. Welcome the outsider.
- 2. Practice regular hospitality.
- 3. Do a social audit of your relationships.
- 4. Eat with people.
- 5. Consider the assets you have, including your home, to welcome others.