

Lesson 5: Core Values – Live as Christ Lived

Opening:

Today, let's start with a question: "What does it mean to live well?" We might ask it another way: "How do I know that I am living a good life, the life that God intends for me to live?" For the Christian, this means that I must learn to live as Christ lived. (Read 1 John 2:5-6). When John writes that we "ought to walk in the same way in which He [Jesus] walked," he means that believers are called to look to Christ as our example. We must learn to submit our wills and our actions to Him. We must let the Holy Spirit lead us. (Read Galatians 5:25).

Read the following passages and write down a characteristic that you learn about the way Jesus lived from your reading of the text:

- John 6:38 _____
- 1 Peter 2:21-23 _____
- John 17:4 _____

Central Truths:

- Living as Christ lived is possible through the power of the Holy Spirit and the witness of the scriptures.
- Living as Christ lived keeps us focused on the will of God and fruitful labor for the kingdom of God.
- Living as Christ lived frees us to be a people of joy who celebrate the work of Jesus' redeeming love.

Core Values: Live as Christ lived

The third core value that gives direction to our church is: We want to live as Christ lived. Living as Christ lived requires us to adopt four basic principles: 1.) Our hearts must be continually transformed into the image of Christ (Ephesians 1:17-20); 2.) Our mission must be transformed from one of self-focus to a resolve to follow Him (Philippians 2:1-5); 3.) Our words must be transformed so that we preach the gospel (Acts 10:42-44); and 4.) Our fellowship must be transformed so that we bear one another's burdens and become a people filled with joy and peace (Ephesians 4:1-3).

Examine the Text:

Reading the Biblical Text: Philippians 1:20-27

²⁰ as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

²⁷ Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,

Look at VV. 20-22 Paul begins this part of the text by noting that his greatest desire is to honor Christ. When you think of honoring Christ, what does that look like? What comes to mind? Paul continues to say that honoring Christ “means fruitful labor.” The fruitful labor of the church is to move from being self-centered to honoring Christ in all we think and do. This means that we must examine every area and every program to ensure that it is fruitful. How can we know if an area of ministry is fruitful? To answer this question we must ask another question: does this area of the church encourage, empower, and release us to be people of expectation and hope (see V. 20) in a world that lacks these things?

Look at VV. 24-25 Notice that Paul’s purpose for remaining here on earth is the progression and joy of the people around him. For the church, living as Christ lived means determining the message that the church communicates. What do we as a church communicate to the world around us? Are we people who progress in the faith and find joy in knowing Christ? Do we spread joy into the world around us, because we know the peace of Christ?

Look at VV. 26-27 Living as Christ lived means placing glory where it belongs (on the One who saved us and freed us from our sins). As we read and study the word of God together, celebrate Him in worship, and trust in His intercession for

us, we are reminded more and more each day of all the Jesus has done for us, and therefore we want to be like Him because we both love Him and look up to Him.

Applying the Text:

- A church that lives as Christ lived seek restoration at all times. (Galatians 6:1)
- A church that lives as Christ lived must operate from a motive of love. (John 13:34)
- A church that lives as Christ lived builds community with others. When we create Christian community, we come to believe that we are to value other people and love them for who God is making them to be. (Ephesians 4:2-6)
- A church that lives as Christ lived uses the small moments to teach big truths. (Matthew 18:1-4)