

PEOPLE-FOCUSED—RELATIONSHIPS COME BEFORE PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

- Key Scriptures
 - ◆ Matt 22:39, “And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.’”
 - ◆ I Cor 3:6 “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.”
 - ◆ Col 3:23, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men;”
- Application
 - ◆ Whose church is it?
 - ⇒ It is Christ’s church
 - ⇒ Eph 2:19 – 21, “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.”
 - ⇒ Jesus Christ Himself is the cornerstone
 - * We typically think of the cornerstone as what? – the place where they hide documents to be opened when the building is demolished
 - * However, the cornerstone was the key stone in the foundation from which the building was built
 - ◆ Who is building the church?
 - ⇒ Again, the answer is Jesus Christ
 - ⇒ Matt 16:1,” And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”
 - ⇒ Jesus Christ is building HIS church and has for over 2,000 years, in spite of persecution and other things, satan has NOT overcome it nor will he ever
 - ◆ We need to be careful that we don’t try to “market” the church or “entertain to attract”
 - ⇒ Remember this verse: Col 3:23, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men;”
 - ⇒ Programs and facilities are for men, not necessarily God
 - * Programs are designed to be the latest fashionable thing to do to “lure” men
 - * Facilities need to be the most grandiose and elegant, again, to “lure” men?
 - ⇒ Saw huge difference in church building here and in Brazil
 - * Here, new construction not opened until everything was complete
 - * In Brazil – raw concrete floors, plastic on windows, ducting in ceiling wide open, lawn chairs for seats

- ◆ There is a tendency among some church leaders to read up on the latest and greatest innovative ways to make the church grow
 - ⇒ Reminds me of the management approaches being touted
 - ⇒ But church is not a business, it is about people and Kingdom work
 - ⇒ However, we tend to be a “fad” driven society
 - ⇒ Just look around and see how things come and go
 - ⇒ But the Bible says that, Heb 13:7 – 9, “Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by ceremonial foods, which are of no value to those who eat them.

- ◆ The temptation to go for the latest fad is strong
 - ⇒ Recall Young Life program – the comment was made to “help God out” by starting with secular songs
 - ⇒ The temptation is always great to find another program to insert to “help” things out
 - ⇒ So many attempts at different programs soon we lose sight of the main thing being the main things

- ◆ I really believe it comes down to do we believe what the Bible says and do we really trust that God will deliver
 - ⇒ Doing the programs thing, says we are there to help God out
 - ⇒ Isn’t God sufficient to build His own church?
 - ⇒ Matt 6:33, “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well

- ◆ So why is this such an easy trap to fall in to?
 - ⇒ We have defined what “success” for the church is – listing numbers, for example
 - ⇒ Again, it’s a temporal versus eternal thing as we kept saying last week
 - ⇒ How can we handle drawing people using temporal tools rather than God and His Word – eternal tools

- ◆ Look at successes in the Bible
 - ⇒ Abraham – go and he went and God blessed
 - ⇒ However, Abraham did it his way – Ishmael, then finally God’s way - Isaac
 - ⇒ The disciples in building the first church in Jerusalem: Acts 2:40 – 42, “With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. The Fellowship of the Believers. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.
 - ⇒ What was their secret – Scripture based, many other words, and no programs “many other programs”

- ◆ Look at current examples of trusting God at His Word and not our own
 - ⇒ Church in Curitiba
 - ⇒ Adam and Cindy
 - ⇒ Nancy and me and Mexico
 - ⇒ We have learned that as we trust God He provides
 - ⇒ We need the patience to know that God’s ways and timing is not ours
 - ⇒ If we truly believe this is His church and abide by His Word, He will make it happen

- How will this distinguish GBF?
 - ◆ GBF will not be characterized by programs
 - ◆ Rather we will be characterized by God-centered and Bible-based seed planting by manifesting Christ’s love in our lives and allowing God to cause the growth