

## Healthy Church

Titus 2:11-14, Ephesians 5:22-32, 1 Thessalonians 2:8

August 1, 2021

Titus 2:11-14

11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Ephesians 2:14-16

14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

This new Christ centered community is the Church.

Ephesians 5:22-32

22 Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body. 31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”[c] 32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Church is meant to look like a marriage.

Qualities that make a healthy marriage also make a healthy church.

Acts 2:44-47

44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:8

Just as a nursing mother cares for her children,<sup>8</sup> so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.

The gospel is not just about conversion but includes community.

Healthy churches share life through a commitment to Christ and one another.

Healthy churches are secure and safe places.

### Matthew 18:15-18

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

### 1 Peter 2:9-10

9 But 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. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Healthy churches are filled with people that have made oaths promises.

We often define ourselves by what we do but the Scriptures define the Christian first by who you are with. For the Church to be healthy, it has to be together.

### **Grow Group Discussion Questions**

- What did God say to you during our Sunday gathering?
- How did your connection to church change over the last year? What did you do that was different? What did you appreciate? What did you begin to miss?
- Discuss how you and others experienced isolation?
- How does the gospel involve more than conversion but establishes a new people? Is this a new idea for you? Discuss the sense that we've made Christianity more personal and private rather than communal.
- What qualities make for a healthy marriage? Describe what it would look like if these qualities were also qualities of the church.
- As you think about your connections and commitment to the church, how would you describe its current quality (from "all in" to casual observer)? When has your church connection been the strongest? What would be a next step for you?
- How can your Grow group help you apply this teaching to your life this week?