

## WHAT WE VALUE 2

Last week Allan spoke through some of our Values as a Vineyard Church. Our Value of Scripture, Place of the Holy Spirit and Grace and Mercy... This week we get to our values of healing, relationships and reality, the kingdom of God, and reconciliation...

### HEALING

A grace-based community will be there to heal broken humanity; in whatever area it is needed. Does God heal today? Should we pray for healing? Absolutely!! I remember 1<sup>st</sup> healing I saw as a child... Rhema in Constantia Cinema in Rosebank... Saw a person get out of a wheelchair... Seeing healing fairly regularly throughout my life...

Luke 10:9 Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.'

GOING OUT to preach and heal was a central part of the commission of Jesus. Jesus said (ACP - from Mat, Mark & Luke)

"I have been given complete authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. " REMEMBER, Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. These signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons, heal all diseases, free the oppressed, set the captives free and tell the world that the time of the Lord's favour has come...

The Greek word in the NT for Healing, *SOTERIA* which means:

- Salvation, Wholeness, Deliverance, Preservation, Welfare, and Restoration, as the total result of the work of Christ.

In speaking of healing, we mention: Physical, Mental health, Spiritual health, Social health, and Emotional health, all are part of the healing Christ brings.

Going out to preach and heal was a central part of the commission of Jesus. Vital to being a healing Church is understanding the Biblical emphasis on the not-yet believers, the poor and the oppressed... These are those who are the object of God's grace.

A COMMENT: It is a momentous mistake to ask ourselves whether or not we have enough faith for certain healing to take place... That is faith in faith, not faith in God. When we do this we base healing ON OUR FAITH AND NOT ON GOD. Your faith should not be based on a healing taking place but in God's faithfulness, goodness, power and mercy... Our commission as healers is to commend the sick to the Lord, trusting in his loving goodness; our task is not to predict what the Lord will specifically do. Having said that healing is a high value for us and because it is we have some Priorities that come out of this value:

EVANGELISM TO NOT YET BELIEVERS MUST BE THE CENTRE OF ALL HEALING; otherwise, we will end up with a merely social program or perhaps a humanistic psychological technique... WHY? Because the ultimate lostness is to be separate from God forever we have to keep the edge of confronting people with eternal issues. Remember the ministry of healing depends completely on the ministry of the Holy Spirit... So it is a priority to create continual opportunities, in meetings and in day to day life, where we minister to each other and people outside the Church through the prophetic gifts, the laying on of hands, creating situations where we wait for the Holy Spirit to work.

So now we get to the how:

1. Personal friendship-evangelism through the encouragement of a non-religious, relevant lifestyle.
2. We engage in grassroots involvement in situations of need
3. We take every opportunity to spend time laying hands on the sick and waiting on the Holy Spirit to do the healing.

## RELATIONSHIPS AND REALITY

People come to Church for a whole lot of reasons, but they stay for one... Connection in Relationship... It is vital for us to understand the importance of relationships. Paul's whole emphasis on being 'IN CHRIST' introduces a profoundly personal and intimate understanding of our relationship with Christ.

From ACTS to 2 Peter – Do you know how many times the phrase “In Christ” appears? 89 times in the NT...

1Co 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

The vertical relationship is then given the test of its outworking in love between people.

1Jn 4:20 If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

We cannot say that we love God, who we have never seen if we do not love our brother, who we do see. It's easy to say we love God when that love doesn't cost us anything more than weekly attendance at religious services... But the reality of this whole thing is that the real test of our love for God is how we treat the people right in front of us... These Biblical principles means that our relationships with each other develop out of our relationship with God... There is a release that happens in worship that opens us up and makes it possible for us to love and embrace people we wouldn't have loved before.

Look around, these are the people you are going to spend eternity with... Some of you look worried.

Therefore, our worship leads to fellowship, and the goal of our fellowship is wholeness. This creates a need for community, which leads us to place great emphasis on meeting together in 'Discovery Groups'. It is fundamental to live a relational Christianity... People IN relationship come FIRST before the 'system' - People before programs...!!!

Given this is our understanding, If the Church structure or 'wineskin' does not fit the needs of the people, we change its shape. The love of God calls us to put others first... RELATIONAL CHRISTIANITY IS FOCUSED ON REALITY... It is a fundamental part of this value to avoid religious pretence & legalism... TITLES... When you call me pastor you are reducing me to a function you are insulting me...

What we are, is known to God and it is useless to try to pretend to Him, or ourselves, or others... We do want to be exactly what we appear to be. WYSIWYG people. WE HAVE A RELATIONAL RATHER THAN A LITURGICAL STYLE OF CHURCH... Meetings are important times because of the value of worship and the preaching of the Word, but being church means far more than attending meetings... It works out in all the relationships mentioned, all the time... This is what the NT calls *koinonia*, shared life, or the 'common life'.

Act 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship (*koinonia*), to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

THE INGREDIENTS OF PRETENCE ARE AVOIDED, be they liturgies of the Middle Ages, masks, affected devotion, religious noises or clichés, stagemanship, special clothes or titles and exaggerated advertisements.

How do we do this?

- We use 'DISCLAIMER' LANGUAGE with spiritual gifts and revelations.
- We AVOID RELIGIOUS TITLES AND FORMAL DRESS. – I avoid telling people that I meet what I do OR rather what my vocation is... They change...
- We SPEND TIME BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS with each other, one on one, and in smaller groups of various shapes and types, eating together, praying together, playing together and relaxing together. Recreation is holy, just as worship is holy.

- We demonstrate a family atmosphere in our meetings where humour and passion for God are combined.

Remember: Christianity is Not A System Of Religion but a Set Of Relationships: With God, Ourselves, Our Spouse / Children, Fellow person in the Church, Employer/employees, Fellow person in the world/society, Within the setting/context that God has placed us in...

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) were not written primarily as history books, but as teaching manuals for the church to learn how to do Jesus' works and speak his words... We are part of those who become disciples and so in turn need to make disciples... We are part of the continuation of this process... Jesus has called us and he commissions us.

*It is about both* THE WORDS AND THE WORKS OF JESUS... We want to be faithful to the biblical text and the missional call of Jesus... WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE KINGDOM AND THIS KINGDOM COMMITMENT WORKS ITS WAY OUT IN TERMS OF MISSION AND TRAINING:

### MISSION

How do we understand this word, MISSION? We understand mission to be more than evangelism, more than proclamation and witness. Mission includes the whole vision of the extension of the kingdom of God, to disciple people individually and nations through conversion to the social implications of the gospel. It is fundamental to our reason for existence to spread the kingdom through renewal and planting churches as *the* method sanctioned by God. PLANTING CHURCHES and GIVING AWAY THE MINISTRY FOR THE RENEWAL of others are the two `tracks' the Vineyard runs on.

### TRAINING

Part of the mission's value is being trained and equipped to do the work. There are two parts to this, LEARNING AND TRAINING.

It is basic that we should never stop learning and changing... That is why we continually embrace new perspectives and models in ministry to keep the edge on our readiness to spread the gospel. As we learn ourselves we teach others... In fact the primary method of discipling and teaching is having others watch us as we learn to do it ourselves. To fulfil the commission of Jesus we live in a continual cycle of LEARNING & TRAINING, SENDING & IMPARTING.

So we get to the what and how... We send trans-local ministry out from CVCF. This can be in the form of particular ministries released to this sphere (WORSHIP EVENINGS) or in teams who go on particular ministry trips at their own expense to extend themselves beyond their normal activities. We pool the resources of congregations (VN and VMA) to release the leaders to do regular ministry in church plants and missions.

The aim is to bring the whole body, every person into the priesthood of every believer so that all can and do minister in some way... Everybody gets to play...

## RECONCILIATION AND RESTORATION

We Value healthy-real-restoration and reconciliation in Christ between all categories of individuals and groups who are estranged from one another. This is a non-optional aspect of our communal life and ministry. We see every person as equal in Value. Every person is equally loved by God. As Christians, we are committed to see all people as God sees them. We strive to see people from God's viewpoint.

*Galatians 3:28* There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

We want to be engaging in relevant forms of ministry and action to model and facilitate Kingdom reconciliation between God and people, as well as people groups and individuals. This means we will not be content with mono-cultural churches or ministries, but commit ourselves to practical, multi-cultural,

generational and gender diversity in our leadership teams, ministry expressions and local churches, where Galatians 3 v 28 will be lived as well as believed.

- We will constantly move toward being reconciled to our Lord; We will be reconciled in our relationships with one another; Learn to love all people, and see all people as the Lord does

Here is who we are – Our Values in a nutshell

Respecting the Bible as God's Word; With Christ as our Head; The Holy Spirit administering; Relating as adults; Upholding the dignity of Individuals; With healing and Mercy in mind; Living holistically; Toward a reconciled world

So now let's have a time of commissioning for us as a Church, I would like to pray over you for impartation, activation, and authorisation.