

Brookside Sunday 24 June 2012

Kingdom Cultures:

Heavens Relational Government – modelled through the Church Family

Have you noticed? The Holy Spirit is strengthening the experience of family among us – listening to people's language; Alpha, Facebook, Draw Near

Kingdom Culture of Family

The church is God's plan to reveal Himself through His Son and His Kingdom to the communities of this world.

Too often the church is seen as:

- A building
- Religious traditions
- Opposing fun!
- Boring
- Dull
- Irrelevant
- etc

John 17:20-25 – Heavens government is relational family, a 'secure trinity'

Ephesians 3:10 – God's purpose for the church is incredible

Galatians 6:9-10 – The church as household, family

We Dream of a Church – 2004

Video

Family

Expected outcome = Bringing heaven's relational government (family) to earth

God's authority is fundamentally exercised through relationship between each of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Unity in relationships is at the core of heaven and is a major contributing factor in experiencing more of the kingdom of heaven on the earth and in our lives. The purpose of God's 'government' is not about securing rules and regulations but rather a relational environment where God's presence is tangible and relationship with Him is rich and liberating.

The world needs the church!!

Establishing and enjoying church family – some key principles

- Leaders who model and don't control. Establishing and guarding the family environment. Lots of empowerment, affirmation and encouragement for the priests

- Living in grace and not law, no rules and regulations but restorative relationships. Modelling what we are for and not campaigning for what we are against
- Believing truth and experiencing on-going transformation in our minds. Shaped by the truth of who Father God is and how He feels about us and NOT by our experiences
- Ever increasing personal security, wholeness, generosity and kindness
- Lots of acceptance, care and hospitality – all you need is love!! Doing good in the household of faith. Treating others as we like to be treated ourselves. Being inclusive and resisting exclusivity. A cliquey church is a leaky church!
- Fun, faith and reality. Lots of perseverance.
- Engaging in the big picture across the city – generosity in attitude and action
- Massive in thanksgiving, celebration, praise, worship and stories of God’s goodness
- Fully utilising the gifts of the Holy Spirit to encourage and build one another up
- Having a ‘long haul’ mentality rather than demanding immediate ‘success’

Question for Cells

Consider the following quote;

When people attach themselves to your church group they ought to quickly feel at home. Your church circles should be semi-circles, opening to include new people. But here's the rub: deep down many church-folk are scared of their 'networks' becoming flexible, because their security is tied up with the predictability of those relationships. In church after church I ask the leaders: Is yours a friendly church? To which they mostly answer, 'Yes'. Then I ask: name the adults who have joined your church through conversion in, say, the last eight years. Many churches have great difficulty naming them. And when I talk to people who tried to 'break into' an established fellowship they say, 'They were nice to me the first few Sundays, but I didn't seem to get invited to any of their homes. They didn't give me the "cold shoulder". I just knew I wasn't welcome.' Why is this? Deep down we are fearful of new people upsetting the chemistry of the group that satisfies our needs! So we preserve the group intact at all costs - even if we don't realize we are excluding others.

Rowland Crowcher – Australian Speaker & Church Leader

1. How can we grow into people who cultivate deep and meaningful relationships whilst ensuring we are accessible to new people in the church?
2. Are there other issues raised in the above quote?