

When We Come Together

Part 3: Sunday Service

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AUGUST 6TH, 2018

Full Text (for reading on your own)

No Coronary Heart Disease!

Debra shared how she was healed by the Lord of coronary heart disease. She was going in Thursday for a coronary heart scan which is used primarily to detect a build up of calcification in your arteries. On Thursday morning she was on the prayer call with Lori and Brenda. After they finished praying for the church Debra asked them to pray for her since she was anxious about the test.

They prayed and Lori said “oh Debra let’s pray about the dye” since Debra was getting a contrast with dye. Lori declared that as the dye was going into Debra’s veins that the presence of God and His angels will be in her body and healing every part of her body that it touches.

During the scan as the dye was going through Debra’s veins her mind was flooded with healing scriptures she had been proclaiming for the past many weeks. God was now speaking them back to her “I am healing you now. By Christ’s stripes you ARE healed. You will be in good health and prosper.” Her mind was being flooded with God speaking those scriptures to her as the doctor performed the test.

On Friday morning the doctor called Debra and said “the test came back completely normal and your arteries are completely clean and completely clear.” Debra asked him if he was surprised with the result. He said “somewhat but not that surprised but we can disregard the previous results of the stress-echo test now.” The doctor then said “what I WAS surprised with - what was very unusual - is for a 60 year old woman with your big family history of heart disease you had a calcification level of 0. I see many patients just like you. This is remarkable. This is very rare.” Praise the Lord!

Also, when Debra arrived, her heart rate was at 74, but it needed to be 60. She did not want to take the medicine to lower her heart rate because she is very sensitive to medication. Her nurse’s name was Lori and a believer so Debra asked her if she would believe with her and pray with her that her heart rate would be at the desired rate through that test so they wouldn’t have to give her any medicine to bring it down. The nurse prayed and believed with Debra and Debra’s heart rate was just a little above 60 the entire test!

Scriptures about Sunday Service

Framing Question: What can we conclude scripturally about Sunday service?

Scriptures for Reference:

Acts 2:42

Acts 2:46

Eph. 4:11-16

Heb. 10:24-25

Acts 20:7

Please note: Try to limit yourself to these scriptures otherwise it will take a long time to study this out. Brad and I both searched the NT for all the scriptures on Sunday service. As far as we could find, these are it. Obviously you will probably reference other scriptures but base your study on these.

Some Take-aways

There were things said in the different groups that are so good that everyone should hear them. Here are some things that people in our body heard from each other that they thought others should hear too:

- What stuck out to Ana was “continual” and even the breaking of bread late in the evening! Fellowship (and even teaching one another) extended far beyond Sunday morning service. (Acts 2, and Acts 20)
- Kelsey noted that Ephesians 4 says that we are protected from being “tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting” not only by the 5-fold teaching (v.11) but also by all of our connection to the rest of the body (v. 16) In fellowship we are protected.
- Joe shared from Acts 2 about “family.” They were going from house to house and it was easy. There was gladness and simplicity of heart. People come over and help us sweep up before we host house church!
- Sheri or Derrick shared that breaking bread was part of every single verse except in Ephesians 4.
- So what can we conclude scripturally about Sunday service. Acts 2:46 was “daily.” The only verse that talks about the 1st day of the week was Acts 20:7 and it appears that the only reason that was

the 1st day of the week was because Paul was there at that time so he shared on Sunday and everyone was going to continue meeting daily and it didn't really matter.

- Aaron said that it was like church in the park all the time. (Brad, Megan, and I were just talking about that.)
- Taylor shared from Hebrews 10 that in order to stir up love and good works you absolutely need to be getting together and seeing one another often for this to happen. If we're not meeting it's not happening.
- Margie mentioned that connection within the body is what makes the work happen. If you think about a body being able to do work, it's the joints! Christ is Who joins us and fits us together. Christ is the connector.

Some Surprises

As I mentioned, this is really all the scriptures we could find about Sunday service in the New Testament. There are many scriptures about general gatherings, fellowship, get togethers, meals together, etc. but really only these that lean towards speaking about Sunday service.

I know some of you may be thinking "what about Paul going to the synagogue all the time on the sabbath" (in Acts) ... Why did Paul go to the synagogue? To preach the gospel! He would go to where they were customarily meeting so that he could witness to them. In the Greek cities, by contrast, he would go to Mars Hill or wherever the community was gathered and could hear the gospel.

Being that these are pretty much all the scriptures about Sunday service, Daniel shared one observation that was surprising - that the emphasis was really on meeting throughout the week not just one day.

Here were some other surprises:

- There wasn't a time constraint it seemed. It didn't have to be long. It didn't have to be 90 minutes. They just got together. There was no structure time wise.
- It wasn't pastor-centric. It was people getting together. There was a 5-fold team.
- There's 5-fold leadership: their job is to impart grace to their listeners that all believers could function pastorally in some level, teaching in some level, prophesying in some level, evangelizing, and building the kingdom in their sphere of influence.

- At the end of the Ephesians passage, we see that the body is built up through what every person in it supplies. The effective working comes when every part does its share which causes the growth of the body.
- Also in Hebrews 10, we see “consider one another” - a deliberateness. It wasn't just “we're getting together to shoot the breeze” but there was an intentionality that whenever they were together they were considering one another and how they can stir each other up to love and good works. And this of course not only a great encouragement to one another but also a great protection for one another.

Empowerment

Jesus said that human tendency is to search the scriptures thinking that in them is eternal life ... yet the scriptures speak of HIM!

Who did Jesus demonstrate perfectly? The Father! So when we read the Word it reveals the Father. And all of our identity comes from seeing the Father and seeing ourselves as the Father sees us.

So a really powerful way to read scripture is to not stop at doctrinal understanding but to also ask the question: “Who do these scriptures show the Father to be?”

So looking at these same scriptures -Who do they reveal the Father to be?

Community - He's always existed in community.

Humility - God relies on others when He doesn't NEED to partner with us; He could just do it on His own.

Empowering is what stood out to me personally. God could have set up Christian gathering any way He wanted to! I see these scriptures and I see “empowering!” We have an empowering Father.

What's the opposite of empowering? Empowering vs. what? Control! Control is the opposite of empowering, right?

Now, what's all control rooted in?

Fear.

(This is another powerful way to work through scripture. First we can ask what it reveals about our Father and second we can use scripture to interpret scripture.)

Let me ask you ... does God have a problem with fear in Himself? No! Why? Because perfect love casts out fear!

So, bring it full circle ... where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is FREEDOM!

May we link hands and release empowerment to one another! Paul often released impartation to those he ministered to: “grace and peace to you.” Grace and peace were not ideas; they were heavenly realities Paul was releasing in manifest form to those he ministered to. I believe that in this season God is partnering with us to release empowerment to each other!

I heard the Lord say “there’s an invitation at foot.” I said “You mean ‘at hand?’” I see / hear again “at foot.” I said “Lord, what does it mean that there’s an invitation AT FOOT?” He said “because you’ve got to step into it!”

There’s an invitation, an opportunity, for the empowering of the body to do works of service far greater than any leader. Jesus Himself demonstrated it - He said “greater works than these will YOU do!” That’s the sort of leadership that’s supposed to be coming from me and the other leaders in the body of Christ. There’s an invitation and it’s only the beginning to step into some things.

Don shared that when you are stepping into it, there’s always a door open, God’s grace opens doors in such a way that makes it easy to step!