

Who is in your community?

Part II – Developing your community

September 10, 2023

Primary: Mark 3:31-35, Galatians 5:16-23

Supplementary: Joshua 24:14-15, I Kings 5:12; 10:23-27

Last week we talked who/what was family?
This week, we will explore...how do develop your community.

GOD's WORD defines family in the Old Testament, as a "circle of relatives". In the New Testament, notion of family is the "family and his descent...a group of families or a whole race."

We have been conditioned to recognize a family as a, "chosen group of individuals."

This chosen group of individuals are individuals which meet an accepted "criteria".

They are related by:

- a. Biology,
- b. Marriage, or,
- c. Situation

By situation I mean:

- a. Military,
- b. Sports, or,
- c. Common situations or interests.

This understanding of “family” informs, determines how we will treat them.

We are taught to create two groups, namely:

- a. Us, and,
- b. Them.

Us is entitled to:

- a. Trust,
- b. Belief,
- c. Grace, and,
- d. Help.

Them are given:

- a. Mistrust,
- b. Hatred, and,
- c. Abuse.

The line between the “US”, and the “THEM” can be drawn by a single event!

And sometimes, once the individual has “crossed the line”, it is virtually impossible for that individual to be “re-accepted”!

This is the opposite of grace!

Here is what I find amazing!

What we need from GOD....

What we want from GOD....

What we can't survive without from GOD...

is exactly what we will not give!!

Grace can't come unless we can forgiveness!

And....we should be able to forgive because we need to be forgiven!

Yet....we WILL NOT FORGIVE!!

This lack of the capacity to forgive, comes from a warped mind!

We want...no...we demand to be forgiven,
sometimes for the most heinous

behavior....again...again....again....again....and again!

Yet, when it is our turn to forgive, we will not!!

This comes from a “GOD” complex!

I know best!

Therefore, I know when, where and how to forgive.

I forgive.....when it suits me!

This attitude has profound impact on the community as a whole!

This attitude which results in a similar behavior leads to a **lack of cohesion** in the community.

This attitude which results in a behavior leads to a lack of **trust** in the community.

This attitude which results in a behavior leads to a lack of **peace** in the community.

This is why we can't solve the problems of the world.

This is why we can't truly have:

- a. Power,
- b. Protection,
- c. Provision, and,
- d. Peace.

The enemy has convinced us that it is not possible, UNLESS, we take care of us..... to the exclusion of everyone else.

This leads to loneliness, hatred and all kinds of destruction to self and others!

It says, it teaches "ME-ISM"!
Exactly what the enemy wants!

Your "family" is a circle of ONE!

Why??

Because you are the only one that you can...that you will trust!

But...here is the deal...the real deal!

No woman/man can truly be an island.

Have I convinced you that this “GOD” complex is not good?

Ok....let's see what it looks like....

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

There is a war going on. The war is with you and satan. satan uses your flesh....the part of you that is NOT like GOD to war against GOD! This is why we lose....and “the deceiver” knows it! How does he know it? Because he tried and failed!

Galatians 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

This means that we should have no fear of...or dread....from GOD. This means that the law does not relate to us....as long as we don't live like this....

Galatians 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

This is the result of a hardness of the heart by being “self-focused” and unforgiving. This is what the “GOD” complex looks like. It says, “I do what I want to do, where I want to, and with whom I

want to.....with NO apologies. And when there is a negative impact on me....I don't care about you, then I demand that you:

- a. Understand,
- b. Be compassionate, and, of course,
- c. Forgive me.

You owe me, but I owe you nothing!!

Everything and everyone is here to serve me!

This behavior is the exact opposite way that family and community can be created and maintained.

But...we are more tolerant to those who are in "our family"!

Since a community is made up of many families, who is in your community?

The Bible teaches that families and communities are bound by knowledge and belief....in GOD!

Joshua 24:14 "Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in

sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!

15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

This is why JESUS identified HIS family as:

Mark 3:35 For whoever **does the will of God** is My brother and My sister and mother."

It is impossible to do the will of GOD, if you don't know GOD!

You will not know GOD, unless you want to know GOD!

You will never truly know GOD unless you change your idea of “family” and learn how to live as GOD says.

Don't let the enemy trick you into thinking that your family and implicitly your community are only those who:

- a. Look like you,
- b. Talk like you,
- c. Agree with you,
- d. Live with you!

This is a trick of the enemy!

Your family is....

Mark 3:35 For whoever **does the will of God** is My brother and My sister and mother."

But...you can't create and maintain family unless you know how to live!

So....let's see how we ought to live in a family/community environment.

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

So...who is family?
Those who do the will of GOD!

How do we create family!
By showing the will of GOD in our lives!

Is it going to be easy?
NO!!!

In order to begin this journey, you have to want to!
You must **want** to increase your community!

You have to **want** to be obedient...to GOD!

Do you **want** to be increase your community and be obedient to GOD??

Before you answer....let me say this...

The only time that Israel has every had peace as a nation, the only time that Israel has prosperity as a nation, the only time that they had joy as a nation was when Solomon reigned and they followed GOD.

1 Kings 5:12 So the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty together.

1 Kings 10:23 So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

24 Now all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.

25 Each man brought his present: articles of silver and gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year.

26 And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.

27 The king made silver *as common* in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedar trees as abundant as the sycamores which *are* in the lowland.

So...who is in your community?

Better yet....who do you want in your community?

Everyone!!

Everyone??

We've got some work to do!