

“THE DNA OF ABYSSINIAN BAPTIST CHURCH”
PART IV: OUTWARD

“WHAT ARE WE MADE OF?”

I CORINTHIANS 12:4-14

ICEBREAKER

WHAT IF THE CHURCH DIDN'T EXIST? WHAT WOULD THE WORLD BE LIKE? IMAGINE THAT WITH ME FOR JUST A MOMENT.

NOW, I'M GOING TO ASK YOU THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION ANYONE COULD ASK OUR CHURCH: WHAT WOULD NEWARK BE LIKE IF OUR CHURCH DIDN'T EXIST?

NOW, HERE'S A SOBERING QUESTION: WOULD ANYBODY NOTICE?

IF SUDDENLY WE WERE FORCED TO SHUT THE DOORS OF THIS PLACE AND NEVER MEET AGAIN, WOULD THE CITY NOTICE.

WOULD PEOPLE IN THIS COMMUNITY WEEP? OR SIMPLY SHRUG THEIR SHOULDERS?

INTRODUCTION

I'M NOT GOING TO PULL ANY PUNCHES WITH YOU THIS MORNING. THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION WILL DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT OUR CHURCH IS STILL HERE IN ANOTHER 20 YEARS.

THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION WILL DETERMINE IF OUR CHURCH IS GOING TO REACH OUR GOD-GIVEN POTENTIAL.

THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION WILL DETERMINE IF WE ARE FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION.

AND AS WE CONSIDER THAT QUESTION, I WANT YOU TO KNOW SOMETHING: YOU CHOOSE HOW THE QUESTION IS ANSWERED.

AND HOW YOU CHOOSE TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION WILL DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR CONGREGATION.

WHAT KIND OF CHURCH WILL WE BE? ARE WE GOING TO FOCUS INWARDLY?

ARE WE GOING TO BE PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH BEING COMFORTABLE AND HAVING OUR NEEDS MET?

OR ARE WE GOING TO FOCUS OUTWARDLY?

ARE WE GOING TO BE PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH WINNING OUR COMMUNITY AND CITY TO JESUS?

WE STAND AT A CROSSROADS. WHICH DESTINY WILL WE EMBRACE?

I HOPE IT'S THE ONE DESCRIBED IN THIS STATEMENT:

THE MISSION OF ABYSSINIAN BAPTIST CHURCH IS TO HELP PEOPLE KNOW GOD, TO GROW PEOPLE INTO FULLY DEVOTED DISCIPLES OF JESUS, AND TO EQUIP PEOPLE TO GO IMPACT THEIR WORLD FOR CHRIST.

LAST WEEK, WE TALKED ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A FULLY DEVOTED DISCIPLE OF JESUS AND HOW WE CAN MOVE PEOPLE FROM "CONVERT," TO "DISCIPLE."

TODAY'S FOCUS IS THE 3RD AND FINAL PART OF THE MISSION STATEMENT I'D LIKE FOR YOU TO EMBRACE FOR OUR CHURCH:

TODAY'S FOCUS: "TO EQUIP PEOPLE TO GO IMPACT THEIR WORLD FOR CHRIST."

SO THIS MORNING I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO CORE VALUE 5 AND 6 FOR OUR CHURCH. AND I WANT TO CHALLENGE YOU TO EMBRACE THESE VALUES IN YOUR OWN LIFE:

I. VALUE # 5: EVERY BELIEVER IS GIFTED TO SERVE AS THE CHURCH. (I CORINTHIANS 12:4-14)

[4] NOW THERE ARE DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS, BUT THE SAME SPIRIT.

[5] AND THERE ARE DIFFERENCES OF ADMINISTRATIONS, BUT THE SAME LORD.

[6] AND THERE ARE DIVERSITIES OF OPERATIONS, BUT IT IS THE SAME GOD WHICH WORKETH ALL IN ALL.

[7] BUT THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT IS GIVEN TO EVERY MAN TO PROFIT WITHAL.

[8] FOR TO ONE IS GIVEN BY THE SPIRIT THE WORD OF WISDOM; TO ANOTHER THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE BY THE SAME SPIRIT;

[9] TO ANOTHER FAITH BY THE SAME SPIRIT; TO ANOTHER THE GIFTS OF HEALING BY THE SAME SPIRIT;

[10] TO ANOTHER THE WORKING OF MIRACLES; TO ANOTHER PROPHECY; TO ANOTHER DISCERNING OF SPIRITS; TO ANOTHER DIVERS KINDS OF TONGUES; TO ANOTHER THE INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES:

[11] BUT ALL THESE WORKETH THAT ONE AND THE SELFSAME SPIRIT, DIVIDING TO EVERY MAN SEVERALLY AS HE WILL.

[12] FOR AS THE BODY IS ONE, AND HATH MANY MEMBERS, AND ALL THE MEMBERS OF THAT ONE BODY, BEING MANY, ARE ONE BODY; SO ALSO IS CHRIST.

[13] FOR BY ONE SPIRIT ARE WE ALL BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY, WHETHER WE BE JEWS OR GENTILES, WHETHER WE BE BOND OR FREE; AND HAVE BEEN ALL MADE TO DRINK INTO ONE SPIRIT.

[14] GOT THE BODY IS NOT ONE MEMBER BUT MANY.

A. STATEMENT: NOW, THAT MAY SOUND CONFUSING. YOU MIGHT BE THINKING, WHAT DO YOU MEAN, “SERVE AS THE CHURCH?”

- 1. WHAT IT MEANS IS THAT YOU ARE THE CHURCH.**
- 2. THE CHURCH IS NOT A BUILDING OR A SERVICE OR A MEETING PLACE.**
- 3. IT’S YOU. IT’S US, TOGETHER. WE ARE THE CHURCH.**
- 4. WE ARE THE VESSEL THAT GOD HAS CHOSEN TO USE TO CONVEY HIS LOVE TO THE WORLD.**

B. THAT SHOULD MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF.

1. **GOD HAS CHOSEN TO USE YOU TO LET THE WORLD KNOW HOW MUCH HE LOVES THEM.**
2. **HE'S GIVEN YOU CERTAIN GIFTS TO USE FOR HIS GLORY.**
3. **SOME PEOPLE CALL THEM TALENTS OR ABILITIES, BUT WE'VE ALL GOT THEM.**
4. **WE ALL HAVE CERTAIN THINGS THAT WE'RE JUST NATURALLY GOOD AT.**
5. **HERE'S HOW PAUL DESCRIBES THEM IN I CORINTHIANS:**
 - a. **[4] NOW THERE ARE DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS, BUT THE SAME SPIRIT.**

[5] AND THERE ARE DIFFERENCES OF ADMINISTRATIONS, BUT THE SAME LORD.

[6] AND THERE ARE DIVERSITIES OF OPERATIONS, BUT IT IS THE SAME GOD WHICH WORKETH ALL IN ALL.

[7] BUT THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT IS GIVEN TO EVERY MAN TO PROFIT WITHAL.
6. **I WANT YOU TO PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO VERSE 7: NOW TO EACH ONE THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT IS GIVEN FOR THE COMMON GOOD.**
7. **"TO EACH ONE." THAT MEANS EVERYBODY IN THIS ROOM. NOT JUST A FEW. NOT JUST MOST OF US. "TO EACH ONE" OF US. TO EACH ONE OF US GOD HAS GIVEN GIFTS TO USE FOR THE COMMON GOOD.**
8. **YOU SEE, WE HAVE THIS TENDENCY TO PUSH MINISTRY AND SERVICE OFF ONTO OTHER PEOPLE. THAT'S WHY IS MOST CHURCHES, 20% OF THE PEOPLE DO 80% OF THE WORK.**
9. **THAT'S ALSO WHY MOST CHURCHES AREN'T GROWING.**

10. WE HAVE THIS TENDENCY TO THINK, “WELL, SOMEONE ELSE WILL DO IT.” OR TO THINK, “I COULD NEVER TO DO THAT. SOMEONE ELSE WILL DO IT.
11. OR MY FAVORITE, “THE PASTOR WILL DO IT.

II. BUT LISTEN, THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR OWN SPIRITUAL GIFTEDNESS.

- A. THE PURPOSE OF YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT IS TO SERVE OTHERS AND GLORIFY GOD.
 1. GOD GAVE YOU CERTAIN TALENTS AND ABILITIES FOR YOU TO USE.
 2. HE BLESSED YOU WITH YOUR GIFTS SO THAT YOU COULD SERVE OTHERS AND BRING GLORY TO HIM.
 3. SO WHY YOU ARE SITTING ON THE SIDELINES WATCHING EVERYONE ELSE DO THE WORK GOD HAS GIVEN YOU TO DO?
- B. EVERY CHRISTIAN HAS A GIFT AND EVERY GIFT IS IMPORTANT.
 1. DID YOU KNOW THAT?
 2. MAYBE YOU’RE JUST HONESTLY CONFUSED ABOUT WHERE YOU FIT IN TO THE GRAND SCHEME OF THINGS.
 3. MAYBE YOU’RE UNSURE ABOUT WHAT GIFTS YOU HAVE AND HOW YOU CAN BEST USE THEM.
 4. MAYBE WHEN I SAY, “YOUR GIFT IS IMPORTANT” YOU THINK, “YEAH RIGHT.”
 5. BUT IT’S THE TRUTH. AND LISTEN, WITH ONE QUESTION, I’M GOING TO TELL YOU HOW TO FIND THE BEST WAY TO USE YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT.
 6. READY? HERE’S THE QUESTION: WHEN YOU LOOK AT OUR CHURCH AND OUR COMMUNITY, WHAT BREAKS YOUR HEART THE MOST?

7. **IS IT THE POVERTY PEOPLE ARE LIVING IN?**
 8. **IS IT WHEN PEOPLE ARE HURTING IN OUR CONGREGATIONS AND GET OVERLOOKED?**
 9. **DOES YOUR HEART BREAK WHEN YOU THINK OF ALL THE CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY WHO DON'T KNOW GOD'S LOVE FOR THEM?**
 10. **THOSE THINGS THAT BREAK OUR HEART HAVE THIS WEIRD TENDENCY TO NOT GO AWAY.**
 11. **HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THAT?**
 12. **THEY JUST CONTINUE TO BUILD AND OUR NATURAL RESPONSE IS TO SAY, "SOMEONE SHOULD DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT!"**
 13. **AND A LOT OF TIME WE GET TO THINKING THAT WHEN NOTHING IS BEING DONE ABOUT IT, SOMEBODY MUST BE TO BLAME.**
 14. **AND IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL, WE CAN BECOME BITTER AND ANGRY BECAUSE WE SEE THIS REALLY PRESSING NEED AND IT SEEMS LIKE NO ONE CARES ABOUT IT.**
 15. **HEY, LISTEN? THAT NEED THAT'S BREAKING YOUR HEART? THAT NAGGING FEELING THAT JUST WON'T GO AWAY? THAT'S GOD TRYING TO TELL YOU, "I WANT YOU TO USE THE GIFTS I'VE GIVEN YOU TO GLORIFY ME BY SERVING THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE THIS NEED.**
- C. ALL GIFTS MUST BE DEVELOPED AND EXERCISED**
1. **AND THIS IS WHERE THAT WORD, "EQUIP," COMES IN.**
 2. **IT'S ONLY A 5 LETTER WORD, BUT ITS IMPLICATIONS ARE HUGE.**
 3. **ONE OF THE GREATEST CALLS ON THE CHURCH IS FOR HER TO EQUIP HER MEMBERS FOR MINISTRY.**

4. **IT'S SOMETHING I'M STILL STRUGGLING WITH AND WRESTLING WITH, BECAUSE IT IS SUCH A HUGE TASK.**
5. **SO I JUST ASK FOR YOUR PATIENCE WITH ME AS I GO THROUGH THIS PROCESS OF LEARNING WHAT IT MEANS TO EQUIP EVERY ONE OF YOU FOR MINISTRY.**
6. **I SEE IT AS THE 2ND BIGGEST RESPONSIBILITY I HAVE AS YOUR PASTOR.**

**III. VALUE #6: ALL BELIEVERS ARE COMMANDED TO USE THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE WORLD FOR CHRIST.
(MATTHEW 28:16-20)**

[16] THEN THE ELEVEN DISCIPLES WENT AWAY INTO GALILEE, INTO A MOUNTAIN WHERE JESUS HAD APPOINTED THEM

[17] AND WHEN THEY SAW HIM, THEY WORSHIPPED HIM: BUT SOME DOUBTED.

[18] AND JESUS CAME AND SPAKE UNTO THEM, SAYING, ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME HEAVEN AND IN EARTH.

[19] GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST:

[20] TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU: AND, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD. AMEN.

- A. THIS STATEMENT: IT'S NOT OPTIONAL. IF YOU CALL YOURSELF A FOLLOWER OF JESUS, YOU'RE COMMANDED TO EVERYTHING YOU CAN TO MAKE JESUS KNOWN.**
1. **THE CHURCH IS THE ONLY ORGANIZATION IN THE WORLD THAT EXISTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE NOT YET IN IT.**
 2. **YOU MAY BE FEELING THIS MORNING THAT THIS TASK IS TOO BIG FOR YOU.**

3. **MAYBE YOU FEEL LIKE THIS IS TOO BIG FOR OUR CHURCH.**
4. **BUT I WANT TO POINT TO 3 LITTLE WORDS IN THIS PASSAGE THAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW IS THERE: "BUT SOME DOUBTED."**
5. **IF YOU DOUBT, YOU'RE IN GOOD COMPANY.**
6. **SOME OF THE APOSTLES WERE DOUBTING, TOO.**
7. **AND IT WAS TO THESE DOUBTING MEN THAT JESUS GAVE THE GREAT COMMISSION.**
8. **SO I WANT TO ENCOURAGE YOU THIS MORNING, NO MATTER WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT YOU WEAKNESSES OR THE WEAKNESS OF THIS CHURCH, JESUS HAS CHARGED US TO CARRY ON HIS MISSION TO THE WORLD.**
9. **HE TRUSTS YOU WITH THIS MISSION.**
10. **HE TRUSTS OUR CHURCH WITH THIS MISSION.**
11. **ALL I'M ASKING OF YOU THIS MORNING IS THAT YOU TRUST YOURSELF AND OUR CHURCH, TOO. DON'T EVER FORGET, "IF GOD IS FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?"**

CONCLUSION

- A. **GO YE THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL MEN.**
- B. **BAPTIZING ALL NATIONS.**
- C. **TEACH THEM TO OBSERVE ALL.**
- D. **JESUS SENT US IN THE WORLD ON A GREAT MISSION FOR HIM.**
 1. **HE DIDN'T GIVE US A BODY GUARD.**
 2. **HE DIDN'T GIVE US A SWORD OR A SHIELD.**
 3. **HE DIDN'T GIVE US A VISIBLE MEANS OF PROTECTION.**

**4. BUT HE SAID, "LO, I AM WITH YOU, EVEN TO THE
END OF THE WORLD.**

a. IN EVERY DECISION

b. IN EVERY TRIAL

c. IN EVERY SONG

d. IN EVERY SICKNESS

e. IN EVERY TRIBULATION

E. SO, GO ON OUT CHURCH AND TELL THE WORLD