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The Church

The church must be a community that experiences + reinforces biblical values - and we must have the strength to live antagonistic at key points to the world around us.

To succeed + live with these different values we must be a countercommunity. 1. a Christian cannot maintain Christian values in this society unless he is a part of a community that reinforces these values. If Christians don't act like Christians sooner or later they will stop believing like Christians. So our Christian community - our church is a crucial area.

In the N.T. Jesus gathered his band around him - they were a counter-cultural community + Jesus spoke out strongly to establish the fact that he + his disciples were different.

In Acts + the epistles the church - the Apostles simply repeated what Jesus had done with them. Jesus had prepared for Pentecost, + all the new believers by training a small community of people. They could handle 3000 new converts by following the example of Jesus - + with the help of the H.S.

i.e. Jesus had small groups in homes + outdoors - koinonia groups - cell groups who met for prayer, fellowship, teaching + the Lord's Supper. They not only knew how to experience community they also knew they were a distinct people.

The first step is to find the best way to do it

and then to do it as efficiently as possible

and then to do it as cheaply as possible

and then to do it as quickly as possible

and then to do it as well as possible

and then to do it as often as possible

and then to do it as long as possible

and then to do it as short as possible

and then to do it as early as possible

and then to do it as late as possible

and then to do it as soon as possible

and then to do it as fast as possible

and then to do it as slowly as possible

and then to do it as quietly as possible

and then to do it as loudly as possible

and then to do it as secretly as possible

and then to do it as publicly as possible

and then to do it as privately as possible

2) The early church had a strong countercultural consciousness - they saw themselves as neither Jew nor Gentile but something NEW - Transcending both - they were now ONE ^{Body} IN CHRIST JESUS. This was in those days a real social revolution.

Here in America most of the church is just a sub-culture, not a counter-culture.

Why? When the church fails to oppose the culture where it pays allegiance to alien gods - then the church functions simply as a sub-culture, not a counter-culture.

But if we start functioning Biblically as a countercultural community, then we will be both dynamic and love mission outreach.

We will have both a positive and a negative concept -

(1) Negatively - We take a strong stand against the surrounding culture & we have fundamental points of antithesis - e.g. against abortion, extramarital sex etc.

(2) Positively - the counterculture of our church is also positive - we offer a genuinely wonderful alternative to the world culture. We claim to be better than the world's culture by offering God's framework, His love, community.

We have answers for life-questions and solutions for personal problems.

We go on the offensive & storm the strongholds of Satan & we prevail against them. We have the answers to life.

③ The Biblical base for the Counter culture Community of the Church.

(Jo. 15:18-19) "In the world - but not of it" The tension we have to maintain as disciples of Jesus is in the world but not of it - we are not to withdraw from the world nor to become one with it. We are to maintain that tension against the strong pull to a more comfortable position either out of the world or totally of the world.

That's why we have to have a (a) community & that's why we also at the same time emphasize (b) evangelism.

(Rom. 12:2) To avoid conformity to the world we have to have each other - brothers & sisters in a community.

(Lk. 12:29-32) A flock and a kingdom. What a contrast of weakness & yet strength! Jesus says by depending on him ^(Flock) we will inherit the kingdom of God.

Having traded the values of the present world for the truth of God we become enrolled in an army: we are soldiers in a battle raging between the kingdom of God & the powers of the enemy. It's very important for us as soldiers in God's Kingdom, to be on the offensive ~~and~~ to live & fight for the values of God & renounce the values of the world's culture.

The first part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the general theory of the problem. It is shown that the problem is equivalent to a problem in the theory of differential equations. The second part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the special case of the problem. It is shown that the problem is equivalent to a problem in the theory of differential equations.

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