HOMEROOM 2021 – **It’s Not A Place - wk 3**

**(Garage sale puzzle) Church, what a loaded word- stirs love, hate, sadness, joy, memories, A word meant to be beautiful - not abused.**

**I love our church - the people – our mission – vision – where we meet - I love what makes us different - how about you?**

**At Livingway our mission is clear... everything we do, attempt to accomplish, and what drives our direction is our mission to develop authentic fully devoted Followers of Christ. Living life in 3-D!**

* **The 3 D's of Livingway: Discover - Develop – Deploy**

**It goes by many names in the Bible: Names for church in the Bible**

**• The church is a city on a hill! Mountain of God (Beacon of Hope)**

**Matthew 5 - Jesus tell his followers to be a city on a hill / Rev 21**

**• The church is Zion! (The city of God)**

**OT = Jerusalem / NT = The church is Zion / Heaven is Zion - John 5 / Heb 12:22**

**• The household of God! (God's family)**

**Ephesians 2:19, 1 Timothy 3:15, 2 Cor. 6:18; 1 John 3:1,2; Gal. 6:10**

**• The church is the body of Christ! (The hands and feet of God)**

**Ephesians 1:22,23, Colossians 1:18,24, Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Cor 3:9**

**• The church is the bride of Jesus! (Jesus’ beloved)**

**Ephesians 5:22-25; Rev 21**

**Jesus’ love affair with his bride, it’s a great love story! Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. (the church) 26That he might sanctify and cleanse it (the church) with the washing of water by the word, 27That he might present it (the church) to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it (the church) should be holy and without blemish. (He died so that we can become His bride!)**

**Christ greatest passion, deepest desire, and greatest focus and force in the world the church – But often The Bride of Christ looks like – the Bride of Frankenstein.**

* **How many of you know someone who does not go to church?**

**Top Reasons People don’t go to church?**

1. **Church people are hypocrites (they don’t reflect Christ)**
2. **Church only cares about your money (many, too much emphasis)**
3. **Church is irrelevant and boring (Don’t need it / the “non’s”)**
4. **Church makes me feel guilty (it’s not meant to guilt – but convict)**
5. **Church is too organized and political. Corrupt organized religion.**
6. **Church is just not that important (hang w/ Christians or by myself)**
7. **Church doesn’t meet my standards (can’t find one I like, unhealthy)**

**Many have sour views of church… in many ways they’re right.**

**(See chart) Past 10 yrs, 50 mil Christians have left church. less than 20% of Americans attend - those that go, 74% don’t engage. 1 in 3 Christians have stopped going and watching services since covid.**

**Reality, the church has and will continue to be imperfect – you know why? Because we show up, it’s run by imperfect people**

**In all this we must realize the church is God’s chosen vessel to reveal his hope. He loves to use imperfect people to reveal his perfect plan.**

**Our passionate pastor requests our presence. Who’s the pastor? Jesus. The church is his passion and love.**

**Eph 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, (pastor Jesus) 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (As Jesus is the Icon of God the church is to be the icon of Jesus)**

**Jesus came to build the C/ died so we could become the C/ His blood bought the C / owns the C / commissioned the C/ empowered the C/ Pastor's the C/ calls the C his beloved / and coming back for the C**

**I'm head over heals in love w/ Jesus bride - to love what He**

**loves - though it's lost a few beauty contests. I love the bride!**

**Because it’s you - you are the church! Not a building or place.**

WHAT IS THE CHURCH? **2 words - It’s Ekklesia and Koinonia!**

**Church = Ekklesia (Gk) 500 yrs before Jesus Athens Greece- called out people who assemble weekly to work on ways to make Athens better.**

**An assembly of impactful citizens – a gathering of called out ones.**

**By its own definition it is impossible to do alone. That is what makes the church so special – together making a difference - Ekklesia (church) is not and cannot be done alone – solo.**

**(To understand what it means for us, let’s go back the first mention of it by Jesus - rarely used but people were familiar with.) Matthew 16:15 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. (A God thing) 18 And I tell you that you are Peter (Petros - stone / boulder), and on this rock (Petra - a Mountain) \*\* Have pictures.**

**2 diff Rocks - one was a significant rock, but not the mountain. This is a major difference between Catholics and protestants.**

**Matt 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter (stone), and on this rock (mountain of what you just said) I will build my church (new context for a familiar word - new kind of gathering for a new community of called out ones in my name), and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.**

**\*\* Church is - Followers of Christ who purposely and regularly meet together to grow in Christ together and to extend Christ together.**

**Not a structure, but a culture of people committed to life together and giving life to those around them - The Vive! (LIFE)**

**Not a place, program, event, band, speaker, a light show, it’s not just when people get together or watch online - it's more…**

**What is the church? What is Ekklesia? Let’s take a closer look…**

**1) Ekklesia is a community of - believers (the pieces)**

**Peter proclaimed, “You’re the Messiah, the Son of the living God” –**

**\*\* What exactly did Peter say? Believers in what?**

**\*\*Promised anointed one – Very God in the flesh!**

**True Ekklesia is a community of believers in the deity and saving work of Jesus. That Jesus Christ is who he says He is! God our savior.**

**Jesus says on the Mountain of that truth – My church is built!**

**(It was with this that Jesus says) John 14:6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (Jesus the only way - no exceptions. The church follows this truth) “Jesus is the...”**

* **Early believers were referred to as a group called “The Way”**

**Acts 9:2; 19:9; 19:23; 24:22, 24:14 – “believers of the way!”**

**They believed the way, proclaimed the way, died for the way.**

**2) Ekklesia is a community of - followers – Disciples**

**Jesus was asking his disciple and was speaking to his disciples… not just believers – but those who follow Jesus.**

**Not fans, or just fanatics, but followers - Last week…**

**Matt 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter (stone – a piece), and on this rock (mountain of what you just said) I will build my church**

**If you are in Christ, we all play a part as little stones. Some bigger than others - but we are all stones for the mountains glory!**

**I think of this puzzle piece – we all play a part in God’s picture.**

* **Followers of the way first called “Christian” - “little Christ’s”**

**Acts 11:26 The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.**

**To know Jesus intimately and surrender our life to his will – to follow Him - that is the call of the church.**

**3) Ekklesia is a community of people not a building built by people**

**(Jesus said) I will build my church… not a person or personality, not a building or worship band. Those things will build an experience… but do not last.**

**Jesus says “I will build” it – it is to be His plan and His mission.**

**It’s not about you or me - what we want or looking for. Jesus birthed it, empowers it, gave his life for it, and says, don’t dare make it about you!**

**Church: home of the Narcissistic Christians- it’s our way or no way - possibly one of the most destructive forces on Ekklesia**

**We want you to move from spectating to participating.**

**Life teams / Livingway the way course / Outreach**

**As Jesus is building it – and it’s getting remodeled all the time.**

**A community in constant motion in method but not in message.**

**Hebrews 13:8 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.**

**The early church led of the HS changed methods, styles, days, customs - whatever it took to reach those who had yet to hear, as a result, lives changed. Methods may change – message will never.**

**4) Ekklesia is a community that does not sit still!**

**Jesus told peter - Matt 16:18 …I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (Overcome what? Ekklesia - Jesus says because it's mine - Hell itself can’t stop it!)**

**Gates are defensive – Hell is on the defensive! We are on the offensive – we do not “hold the fort – we harass the foe”**

**\*\* We are not to sit around and do nothing as hell works!**

**Some of you know what hell looks like in your life (explain) as a church we’ve seen it - been thru it… In Christ we stare down hell.**

**I look at our challenges - this is Jesus’ church hell can’t stop us.**

**WHAT IS THE CHURCH? The church is Ekklesia and it’s Koinonia!**

**Koinonia (Gk); is communion, fellowship, connection, sharing in.**

**This is a sharing of burdens, joys, fears, laughter, pain, resources - life!**

**1 John 1:6 If we claim to have fellowship (koinonia) with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship (koinonia) with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.**

**Our koinonia with others is a reflection of our koinonia with God.**

* **Koinonia is being in relationship with one another, being united in purpose together, and serving alongside each other.**

**When we get on the same page in ourpose… stand back!**

**When we are in agreement and in unity… get ready!**

**This puzzle box picture - says what our pieces should look like - a picture to follow. We have one too - God's word - Jesus - the NT.**

**Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship (Koinonia), to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.**

**How do we get to the last part?**

**A glimpse of the first Ekklesia in koinonia together – the 1st church.**

**WHAT IS THE CHURCH? What is Koinonia?**

**Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching**

**1) A community where God’s word is faithfully taught**

**Teaching God’s word - the apostles’ teachings of Jesus.**

**Ekklesia is committed to sound Biblical teaching.**

**…and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.**

**2) A community where God’s people faithfully connect**

**3 things here – Fellowship (personal interaction) Break of bread (love feast) meals and conversation – Prayer (knowing each other’s needs)**

**Intentionally and faithfully connecting to each other.**

**Koinonia is about being family – Living life together**

**\*\* How do we do this during COIVD???**

**43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. (Notice this is by the apostles – but the principle is…)**

**3) A community where God is faithfully moving**

**God’s power working in us – to do the impossible.**

**We believe in the power of God to save and work in our lives.**

**44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.**

**4) A community where God’s people are faithfully generous**

**They lived communally (Jerusalem was a hostile post Jesus culture). This was not the case in all the churches in the Roman empire.**

**But they all shared the same heart of giving and generosity.**

**They were faithfully giving to the kingdom and to each other.**

**46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts…**

**5) A community where God’s people are faithfully met together**

**It was intentional and consistent – even times of chaos**

**When Ekklesia and Koinonia meet – Life change happens! That’s why the writers says in - Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider how we may spur one another (“par-ox-oos-mos” – to provoke, a jab, to kick each other) on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another (To fight alongside one another – I am with you – to lock arms in battle) and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (As the days get more difficult)**

**Koinonia is understanding that you are valuable to my spiritual health – and the person sitting next to you is valuable to yours**

**47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.**

**6) A community where God’s people are faithfully seen favorably**

**They may not agree with us – may not like our positions – may not like what we believe - but they can’t deny our love, compassion, our hard work, our unity, our care for each other, our humble submission to authority, people of integrity – seen favorably.**

**We are to be a positive example to follow in a world filled with hate. Not angry divisive mean-spirited people.**

**47b And (equal sign – this is the prescription) the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.**

**That is what it is all about – people meeting Jesus! They were not playing church, checking off a list, but changing lives.**

**We can do this!**

**We can do this – even during a pandemic!**

**Pray Pray pray – neighborhood prayer walks**

**Consistent giving – enables us to be and send where you can’t**

**Work as unto God – great work and divine conversations/ pray**

**Go to your relationships – to neighbors / family / friends**

**Commit to making at least 1 disciple**

**We can live the great commission! We can each be making disciple! We can as a community working together to see lives changed!!!**

**Puzzle piece - We're incomplete without you - missing a piece We go on a manhunt to track it down - your presence matters!**