

# Rooted - April 25th - How To Grow a Healthy Church - Troy Knight

## TALK IT OVER

### Key Scriptures:

Colossians 4:7 - 14

2 Timothy 4:9-10a

### Start reading

#### Colossians 4:7 - 14

7 Tychicus will give you a full report about how I am getting along. He is a beloved brother and faithful helper who serves with me in the Lord's work.

8 I have sent him to you for this very purpose—to let you know how we are doing and to encourage you. 9 I am also sending Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, one of your own people. He and Tychicus will tell you everything that's happening here. 10

Aristarchus, who is in prison with me, sends you his greetings, and so does Mark, Barnabas's cousin.

As you were instructed before, make Mark welcome if he comes your way. 11 Jesus (the one we call Justus) also sends his greetings. These are the only Jewish believers among my co-workers; they are working with me here for the Kingdom of God. And what a comfort they have been! 12

Epaphras, a member of your own fellowship and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you his greetings.

He always prays earnestly for you, asking God to make you strong and perfect, fully confident that you are following the whole will of God. 13 I can assure you that he prays hard for you and also for the believers in Laodicea and Hierapolis. 14 Luke, the beloved doctor, sends his greetings, and so does Demas.

2 Timothy 4:9-10a  
9 Timothy, please come as soon as you can. 10 Demas has deserted me because he loves the things of this life and has gone to Thessalonica.

### Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Have you ever been a part of a dysfunctional family? business? church? What are some common characteristics of dysfunctional families and organizations? What are some common characteristics of healthy ones?

### Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- **Read Colossians 4:7-10.** Have you ever heard of Tychicus? How did Paul describe his ministry? How would an outside observer describe your ministry?
- Do you know your spiritual gifts? What's your plan for identifying and using them?
- Discuss the history of John Mark. How did the conflict arise between Paul and Barnabas? Discuss the history of Onesimus.
- How did Paul confront these potential awkward situations? Discuss the statement, "To be unclear is to be unkind."
- Are there any awkward situations or potential conflicts that need to be confronted in your life? Without betraying a confidence or slandering someone, discuss with your small group your plan for resolving the conflict.
- **Read Colossians 4:11-13.** What's your tennis ball?

### Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- **Read Colossians 4:14-18.** Who was Luke to Paul? Who was Demas? Have you ever been hurt in a relationship or friendship in the church? You are in a small group so obviously you've decided relationships are worth the risk, but how did you come to that decision? What would you say to someone who has been hurt in past relationships and is hesitant about putting themselves out there?
- Troy spoke of several relationships of his within Generations throughout the years within Generations that ended up having a painful end of some sort. In these situations, either we can hold everyone at arms length and not let people know who we really are or we can let our guard down and let people get close to us. Which one do you have a tendency to do and why?
- Have you ever visited a church where everyone looked good on the outside and talked very formal as if everything is always good? If yes, how did that make you feel?

### Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- If you haven't already, commit to discovering your spiritual gifts and use them, as well as pursuing some deep relationships within the church.

### Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

- Jesus, thank you for the examples of how we are to grow a healthy church in your Word. Help us to be willing to step out and discover and develop our spiritual gifts. If we need to confront someone who we feel has wronged us, please help us to do that. Also help us to pursue deeper relationships within the church. Help us to reach more people for you Jesus here in Brunswick County. In Jesus Name - Amen.

### Start digging. For further study.

- Read the 2nd page and discuss it.

## **Question: "What is the purpose of the church?"**

**Answer:** Acts 2:42 could be considered a purpose statement for the church: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." According to this verse, the purposes/activities of the church should be 1) teaching biblical doctrine, 2) providing a place of fellowship for believers, 3) observing the Lord's supper, and 4) praying.

The church is to teach biblical doctrine so we can be grounded in our faith. Ephesians 4:14 tells us, "Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming." The church is to be a place of fellowship, where Christians can be devoted to one another and honor one another (Romans 12:10), instruct one another (Romans 15:14), be kind and compassionate to one another (Ephesians 4:32), encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11), and most importantly, love one another (1 John 3:11).

The church is to be a place where believers can observe the Lord's Supper, remembering Christ's death and shed blood on our behalf (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). The concept of "breaking bread" (Acts 2:42) also carries the idea of having meals together. This is another example of the church promoting fellowship. The final purpose of the church according to Acts 2:42 is prayer. The church is to be a place that promotes prayer, teaches prayer, and practices prayer. Philippians 4:6-7 encourages us, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Another commission given to the church is proclaiming the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). The church is called to be faithful in sharing the gospel through word and deed. The church is to be a "lighthouse" in the community, pointing people toward our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The church is to both promote the gospel and prepare its members to proclaim the gospel (1 Peter 3:15).

Some final purposes of the church are given in James 1:27: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." The church is to be about the business of ministering to those in need. This includes not only sharing the gospel, but also providing for physical needs (food, clothing, shelter) as necessary and appropriate. The church is also to equip believers in Christ with the tools they need to overcome sin and remain free from the pollution of the world. This is done by biblical teaching and Christian fellowship.

So, what is the purpose of the church? Paul gave an excellent illustration to the believers in Corinth. The church is God's hands, mouth, and feet in this world "the body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). We are to be doing the things that Jesus Christ would do if He were here physically on the earth. The church is to be "Christian," "Christ-like," and Christ-following.