

Introduction:

- On this Memorial Day...
 - IE. America - *"My country tis of thee," sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, Land of the pilgrims' pride, From every mountain side Let Freedom ring." "Our fathers' God to Thee, Author of Liberty, To thee we sing, Long may our land be bright With Freedom's holy light, Protect us by thy might Great God, our King."*
 - Butch O'Hare WWII fighter pilot.
- God is not saving us as individuals to prepare us for heaven. No, He is creating a people for His name among whom God can dwell and in their life together will reproduce God's life and character.
 - God wants to dwell in us.
 - God wants us to be His representation in the earth.

I. The Priority of The Presence

- A. We must love the Presence of God. The Presence must be what we desire over all.
1. Theologian Gordon Fee said this, "Presence is a delicious word—because it points to one of our truly great gifts."
 2. Nothing can take the place of presence. Gifts, calls, pictures, mementos...nothing can take the place of presence.
 3. IE. Ask a person who lost a life long mate what they miss most is invariably the 'presence' of a person. I.e. What makes life pleasurable are not the games, walks, concerts and outings we share but the 'presence.'
 4. *"And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago."* (Ephesians 1:13, NLT)
 - a) Ezk 36:26,27 "I will put my Spirit in you." THE PRESENCE!
 - b) Joel 2:28,29 "I will pour out my Spirit." The PRESENCE!
 - c) Mt 3:11 He will baptize you with Holy Spirit and fire. He wants His people immersed in His presence.
 - d) We have been talking about God building His church. We talked about the gifts: salvation, Holy Spirit, Five fold gifts, spiritual gifts. All of these have to do with the Presence!
- B. God is not building an institution. What He is building is a living breathing organism called the church. It is not a building and it is not an organization. It is living organism.
1. *"My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.* Jn 10:10
 - a) rich and satisfying = Gr. hyperperissmos - hyperabundant!
 - b) Zoe-life! Vitality of life. The true life of God is indestructible!
 2. *"He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that **the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.**"* (Ephesians 4:16, NLT)

3. The church is fed the Word of God. And in Jn 6:63 Jesus said, His words were spirit and life. Jn 21 Peter is exhorted to feed God's lambs.
 4. Holy Spirit often gets minimized/marginalized by the next generation. They must have their own Holy Spirit experience.
- C. This living organism is called: The Church, A Spiritual Temple.
1. He is building his church. Mt 16:18 The called out ones are being assembled to prevail.
 2. He is building a spiritual house 1 Peter 2:5 pneuma-wind, breath, Spirit.
 3. The Spirit Gives life the flesh counts for nothing. Jn 6:63
 4. He Jesus is the head we are the body. 1 Cor 12:27; Col 1:18

II. The Priority of A Presence Driven/Filled People

- A. God wants us filled with the presence. The key to the Christian experience is not just praying the prayer it is experiencing THE GIFT given to the church...the Holy Spirit!
1. Baptism in Spirit...again, He wants us immersed.
 2. He wants us to show forth His presence...He wants us to be His expression in the earth. 2 Sam 5:1; 1 Chron 11:1 *We are bone of your bone.*
- B. God wants us moving in the gifts for the gifts are an expression of His presence.
1. When Paul wrote 1 Cor 12 it was not for us see which 9 of the gifts we have it was to bring correction in mis use of the gifts in the church. Paul could not imagine a church without the gifts/graces. To have a church without the gifts was to have a church that had become an institution instead of a living organism. It moves. It breaths. It overcome darkness. It encourages. It gives life. It builds up!
- C. God want us to be relational with each other. If the church is all of the above point: moving breathing, encouraging, building, giving then God must be in it and to capitalize on that Presence we must be in relationship with each other.
- D. God wants us to be creating community through:
1. Love-Love is the glue that holds the church together and keeps it from becoming an institution. **God is Love** 1 John 4:7
 2. Grace-God's ability in me to do the things I cannot do in and of myself.

III. The Priority is One Another

- A. ONE OF THE PREVAILING BUT MOST OVERLOOKED WORDS OF THE NT is: "ONE ANOTHER" Gr. *allalon*
- B. We are connected
1. *"so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other."* (Romans 12:5, NLT)
 2. *"Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another."* (Ephesians 4:25, NKJV)
- C. We edify each other

1. "Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing." (1 Thessalonians 5:11, NKJV)
 2. "Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another." (Romans 14:19, NKJV)
- D. We care for one another
1. "that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same **care for one another**." (1 Corinthians 12:25, NKJV)
- E. We love one another.
1. "And may the Lord make you increase and abound in **love to one another** and to all, just as we do to you," (1 Thessalonians 3:12, NKJV)
 2. "But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to **love one another**;" (1 Thessalonians 4:9, NKJV)
 3. "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all **abounds toward each other**;" (2 Thessalonians 1:3, NKJV)
 4. "Owe no one anything except **to love one another**, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law." (Romans 13:8, NKJV)
- F. Bear with one another. Gr. Bastazo- to lift up, to carry away.
1. "with all lowliness and gentleness, with long suffering, **bearing with one another in love**;" (Ephesians 4:2, NKJV)
 2. "**Bear one another's burdens**, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2, NKJV)
- G. Forgive one another.
1. "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another**, even as God in Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32, NKJV)
 2. "bearing with one another, and **forgiving one another**, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do." (Colossians 3:13, NKJV) one another x3 in one verse
- H. Honor one another
1. "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each **esteem others** better than himself." (Philippians 2:3, NKJV)
 2. "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to **one another**;" (Romans 12:10, NKJV)

Conclusion:

- We are the body of Christ!
 - Too get saved is to become a member of that body.
 - We are interdepend of one another. Each supplies what the other is lacking.
- What make us different in the earth is the Presence of God in us.