

Crossroads Community Church

Sunday July 20th, 2014

We rejoice with heaven and earth as 9 church family members committed their lives to God through a Believer's Baptism; pictured here are Joe and Shelley Leslie with Pastor Don Hume,

Joe declared, 'I am getting baptized with my Best Friend!'

This Sunday was buzzing with excitement indeed. We gathered before God to rejoice with Him as we prepared for an afternoon 'Believer's Baptism' following our morning service. It is a time of great joy and celebration for all of us who love and follow the Lord. After an exhilarating time of worship Pastor Don shared announcements and prayed; 'Dear Father God, we humbly come before you to give you glory and praise for all you have done for us and continue to do through us. We thank You for building part of your family here at Crossroads, help us always love, care and respect one another for your name's sake, In Jesus Name Amen.'

Our God is always forming and building, I believe He is right now, right here at Crossroads. He is building His family into a community of believers able to witness on His behalf and reach out to the world with the love and saving grace of Jesus Christ. Why do we come here? It could be for the same reason as the old Cheers theme, 'Everybody knows your name' but surely because it is God's plan to join us together so we can grow in faith and encourage each other; 'Let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near,' Hebrews 10:25. Jesus' desire is for us to treat each other with care, compassion and genuine love, being united like family, (John 17:23).

How can we promote this attitude of family unity? Let's start by praying for one another, humbly working together, speaking kindly of each other instead of gossiping, all to exalt Jesus in our words and actions. Before Jesus, the term church was not used; it was more a chosen people or nation. Jesus was the beginning of the concept and the creator of the church on earth when He told Peter that He would build His church upon the Rock; (Matthew 16:15-18). We can perceive that a church is not a building but rather a group of people who believe, follow and obey Jesus, (1 Peter 2:4-8). Since Jesus himself is our builder He makes us whole, He works through us so that together we grow in His knowledge and we glorify Him, (Ephesians 4:15-16). The Apostle Paul presents the church with this allegory; 'The Body of Christ', of which Jesus is the head and we are its many members, (1 Corinthians 12:12). The efforts and talents of many are multiplied when we join them with Christ. It isn't about going to church or doing church, it is being the church as Jesus wants us to be. The Church is not a creation of man's imagination like a literal building made of bricks, it is a divine institution personally made by Jesus.

Jesus is the reason we are the Church and we are a body, a family, a fellowship. Certainly, fellowship is something we do when we spend time together around a cup of coffee or a picnic as we will this afternoon, but fellowship also means we are in a relationship with each other through the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The more we spend time with Jesus together the more we will grow to be like Him. This does not mean we become like robots without any individual thoughts, it means we will set aside petty differences and arguments so we can work together towards the common goal of unity, harmony and peace in Christ for the good of everyone, we will agree to live by the word of God to honor the name of Jesus, and we will show that we belong to Him, (1 John 4:17, Romans 12:16-18, John 13:34,35). For us to live in harmony our attitude should be as of Christ; tolerant and forgiving, we should never try to get even with someone or disgrace someone to exalt ourselves to feel vindicated, (1 Peter 3:9). God calls us to be a blessing to others not a thorn on their side, we are to build a loving church not a condemning one.

Beloved the greatest commandments are 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.' And, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' When we come together Sunday mornings we have the opportunity to show our love by listening to each other's needs, encourage someone with a word, a smile or a hug. We can pray for each other asking God to show us how to fulfill those needs, sometimes it is through us and other times it is through miracles, and sometimes just knowing we are not alone we feel refreshed, and our hope is renewed, our faith is strengthened and we don't give up because a string of many strands is stronger than just one, (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). Today we rejoice for the string is getting stronger by 9; the family is growing praise the Lord. Let us all go and encourage someone today to come close to God, who knows, it may be just what they were waiting

for?.Asherey Shalom!

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