

Planning and the Gospel of Christ

Becoming a Person with a Plan

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Bible Text: 2 Corinthians 5:14-15
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It is wonderful to have you in our services today. Thank you so much for coming. If this is one of your first services here, or if, maybe, you have just never taken the time to introduce yourself to us, we would be delighted for you to do that if you are ready to take that step. And the way we do that around here is that there is a little tab in the back of the program that you received when you came in. We would be delighted if you would fill that out and drop it in the offering plate later on this morning when it comes by, or you can leave it at the welcome center any time today, if you would like.

I also want to encourage all of us to review the prayer requests that are listed in the program. We have a number of reasons to rejoice right now. We have folks in our church family who are rejoicing and also some things that we really need to take before the Lord regularly on behalf of our brothers and sisters in Christ in our church families. So I want to encourage you to plan to have regular times of prayer all through this week where you are concentrating on those requests and others in your life.

Today we are going to do something a bit different for our church family. That is, we are going to celebrate the Lord's table as part of our Sunday morning service. You know, the Bible doesn't instruct us exactly when or exactly how frequently we ought to participate in the Lord's table. And the closest thing we have to that is this passage, 1 Corinthians 11:26 where Paul says:

“For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.”¹

And we would understand that to mean that, well, there ought to be some kind of regularity in the way followers of Christ participate in the Lord's table. For us that is generally on church family nights which typically fall the first Sunday night of each month. And we do it that way for a variety of reasons and many of us would say that that is a highlight of the month, because it just a natural opportunity for us as the pastor goes no to say, to examine ourselves and to confess any known sin between us and the Lord,

¹ 1 Corinthians 11:26.

between us and other people. And then we are able to participate in the Lord's table, as Paul says later, in a worthy manner.

So we love doing it monthly because it is a natural opportunity to examine ourselves. It also gives us regular opportunity to reflect on the great price that was paid to secure our redemption. And we believe that that has a way of just putting everything else in perspective when we think about the great love that God had for us.

So for many of us around here, celebrating the Lord's table and church family nights, they just go hand in hand and they are a highlight of the month for us. However, this year we have a couple of Sundays scheduled where we would actually like to celebrate the Lord's table during our Sunday morning service. And we are doing that for several reasons, too, but one of the big ones is we are trying to work hard at creating a family atmosphere in each one of our core morning worship services and that is going to become even more important, Lord willing, in the fall when Faith West opens and we have six morning worship services. We want to do everything that we can to create a family atmosphere even within each one of our services. And we thought today would be an especially appropriate Sunday to do that, because we have just concluded a nine week study on becoming a person with a plan.

And if you are a regular part of our church you have heard me talk about that a lot, right? And I have encouraged every person attending our church to do this, to be working on a specific growth plan in your personal life. And also to be making a corresponding plan for how you can improve in the ways that you are serving here at our church. I have also encouraged you to plan to participate in our five year strategic planning process we are doing as an entire church family and then maybe even applying some of these principles we have studied from the Word to your own work or your own business.

And I imagine that for many in our church family right now we are somewhere in between excitement for what could be accomplished and concern, maybe even fear, that we might not be able to fulfill [buzz]