

Heart Attitude #5: Participate in the ministry

Memory verse: 1 Peter 4:10, or Ephesians 4:16

Week one

In review there are Seven Heart Attitudes. We can actually break these down into two groups. The first four that we have covered have to do more with personal relationships—how we relate to each other. The last three have more to do with how we relate as a whole, as an organization.

The first Heart Attitudes:

- #1 Put the goals and interests of others above your own
- #2 Live an honest, open life before others.
- #3 Give and receive Scriptural correction.
- #4 Clearing up relationships.

Heart attitude #5: Participate in the ministry

If we are a part of a church we have a relationship and responsibility to the church as a whole. We have a responsibility to see our team succeed. The first four heart attitudes are a very important part of participating in the ministry. We have to have healthy relationships with each other to be able to function well together as a team.

This heart attitude is about...

being a church family.

being a community of connected people.

having a common cause.

accepting the responsibility of being family, being connected, having a cause that we are together on. So, Heart Attitudes 5, 6 & 7 fit into this category.

To share in the ministry of the church. It's to participate. To be involved.

Key Verses:

Lets look together at a couple verses that give the big picture, the framework for this heart attitude.

1 Corinthians 12:7 (NLT)

“A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church.”

Ephesians 4:16 (NLT) “Under His direction, the whole body is fitted 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.”

What do these verses say about...

Why is it important to participate? So “the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

How does the body become healthy and growing and full of love? This happens “as each part does its own special work.”

That’s why it is so important that we understand this as a whole. What about you as a part of the whole? What is your part? Why is this important for you?

Lets look together at some reasons why this is important.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

1. WE WERE MADE FOR MINISTRY

This is what we were made for. God made us for this purpose. We were designed for it.

Ephesians 2:10 *“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Jesus Christ to do good works [that’s called ministry] which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

God designed everything on this earth for a purpose. The Bible says we were put on this earth for a reason. Human beings are here to serve and help each other. God says, That’s why we’re here, he created us for ministry. We were made for this.

When finding a flashlight and turning it on, it may not work. When you look inside to check the batteries, you might discover that from not being used, they had gone bad and corroded and leaked all over and not only were the batteries bad the flashlight would be ruined. Why? Batteries are made for a purpose. If they’re not used for their purpose they go bad.

How might this illustration about batteries relate to us participating in the ministry?

People are like batteries. When we’re not used in serving God and other people, we get corroded, ruined on the inside. God says we were made for ministry. We were made to participate.

Not only have we been made for it, we’ve been gifted, given a special ability to do it well.

2. WE’VE BEEN GIFTED FOR MINISTRY

1 Peter 4:10 *“God has given each of you some special abilities. Be sure to use them to help each other.”*

Some people seem to get confused with this and they think and act like the special abilities they have are there for some other reason. Like...to make a lot of money, or to

impress other people, or something else. But it doesn't say that. It says "Be sure to use your abilities to help each other."

To help each other is called ministry. If we have given our lives to Christ, the Bible says God has given us talents and abilities for us to use in helping other people.

All of us are gifted in some way. Some are gifted singers. Some are gifted teachers. Some are gifted organizers. Some are gifted with children. Some are gifted at encouraging or helping. The key is to "be sure to use our abilities to help each other."

If we use our ability's in the ministry, others are helped and blessed by who we are and what we bring to the table.

3. OUR CHURCH FAMILY NEEDS US

1 Corinthians 12:27 *"All of you together are the one body of Christ and each of you is a separate and necessary part of it."*

We are a part of the body of Christ, the family of God. We are all needed and necessary.

What happens in our life when one part of our body doesn't do it is part?

We get sick and may die if one part of our body doesn't do it is part. If we are Christian that means we are part of the body of Christ. If we are not functioning it makes the rest of us sick. It makes an unhealthy body. It makes a dysfunctional family, a dysfunctional ministry.

God says we are all needed, we are all necessary.

Sure we could survive without one of our kidneys... feet... lungs... but God's intent is not for us to just limp along! "All of you together are the one body of Christ and each of you is a separate and necessary part of it."

Our family needs us! "All of us together." That's what this Heart Attitude is about. The word participate is the description of what each part does. When we do our part our church becomes healthy.

4. SERVING OTHERS IS THE WAY TO SERVE GOD

Colossians 3:23 *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men... It is the Lord you're serving."*

Jesus said, Whatever you do for others, you're doing for Me. Even a cup of cold water given in my name, it's like being done to Me.

"Whatever you do...do it with all your heart."

If your setting up chairs—do it as if Jesus was going to sit in that chair, on that row.
If your greeting people at the door—do it as if it were Jesus you are greeting.
If you sing or play an instrument—picture Jesus sitting in the front row!
If your trying to encourage someone into the kingdom—do it as if their life depended on it, because it does.
“Whatever you do, do it with all your heart, as if you were doing it for Jesus...”

Why is participating important?

5. BECAUSE PARTICIPATING MAKES LIFE MEANINGFUL

Mark 8:35 (NTL) Jesus said it like this, *“If you try to keep your life for yourself, you’re going to lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, and for the sake of the good news, you will find true life.”*

We are going to give our life away for something. Some people give their life away for a career. Some people give their life away for money. Some people give their life away for that guy or girl. Some people give their whole life to get some kind of thrill or some kind of pleasure or to attain some level of status.

What are you giving your life away for?

We are going to give our lives away for something. The question is are you going to give your life for the right thing. How much is it going to matter in eternity? How much is it going to matter forever? When you die is what you gave your life for going to matter at all?

People want to live longer. That’s not the real issue. It’s not how long we live that matters, it’s how we live that matters. It’s how we live our life that counts. It’s what we give our life for. It’s who we give our life to.

When people live for themselves, they eventually get bored and they feel unfulfilled, unsatisfied, discontent. On the other hand, when you say, “God, I’m going to live for You and Your people” that brings fulfillment, satisfaction, significance. Life becomes meaningful.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (GN) *“Keep busy in your work for the Lord since you know that nothing you do in the Lord’s service is ever without value.”*

A lot of what people do is of no real long term value. But nothing we do in the Lord’s work is ever without value.

The Bible says the real happiness and joy God intends for our life is found in giving our life away, in living for God, in living for others. When we get involved and participate life becomes meaningful.

6. IT'S ALL ABOUT ATTITUDE

Matthew 20:28 Jesus said, *“Your attitude must be like my own, for I did not come to be served, but to serve.”*

To be a Christian means you develop the attitude of Christ. And His attitude was, as He said, “I came to serve”. His attitude was not about himself, but for others.

He came to sacrifice himself for others. Human nature does not like this. We want to be served. We want others to participate in the ministry so there are plenty of people doing what we need. Human nature says, “who is going to serve me.” When I look at life from my own viewpoint I say, “Who’s going to meet my needs? Who’s going to help me with my problems? Who’s going to help me with my hurts? Who’s going to help me? What about me?”

But the maturing Christian changes that around. The maturing Christian says, “Whose needs can I meet? Who can I help? Who can I serve? How can I be part of what God wants done?” Where can I be a part? How can I participate? How can I look the needs and interests of others? They say that because they realize the more they give their life away, the more life they find, the more God blesses their life.

If we have no desire to help anyone else, we must have our wires crossed. As Jesus said, “Your attitude must be like my own, for I did not come to be served, but to serve.”

This is what we were made for; this is why God gave us special abilities; and our church family needs us and we don’t want to let them down—if we don’t do our part people are hurt; and I would say being involved, being connected, being part and participating in the ministry makes life meaningful.

Assignment

Along with this assignment start a facebook message that you can communicate through during the week. Encourage your group to ask questions of each other as they go through this assignment. Set the example in this. Have them ask question of the group like... What do you think my spiritual gift is? What have you seen me get passionate about? What do you think I am good at doing?

Discover your God given S.H.A.P.E

Make an appointment with yourself this week. Pray and ask God to help you answer these questions. Write down your answers to these questions as you reflect on how God has uniquely shaped you.

Spiritual Gifts

What spiritual gifts did God put inside me?

If you know your spiritual gifts then write those down. If you have not even thought about it, as you walk closely with God you will begin to discover that you have some unique God given abilities. There are some good assessments online you can take that help in the process of discovery. Offer your AVAILABILITY to God before you discover your ABILITY. Start serving and you will begin to discover what does and doesn't work for you.

Heart/Passion

What would a friend say that you would stay up all night talking about? (besides someone of the opposite sex.) You may say I love to help children. You may say I love to help people who are homeless. What is James Dobson passionate about? What is Billy Graham passionate about? What was Mother Teresa passionate about? We can all think of times when we heard about or saw something that grabbed our hearts. What won't let you go? What motivates you? When do you say: I love to see this happen and I can't stand to see this happen?

Abilities

What are you really good at? Someone may feel called to play an instrument or sing.....CAN YOU? Are you good with hands-on projects, building skills, administration skills or writing skills?

Personality

Lead from your strengths. Again, if you know some about your personality then refresh what that is. If not ... take an assessment to begin to see what your personality is. Your SHAPE does not excuse you, but it does explain you.

Experiences

What has happened in your life that God can use to help others?

What is your training and education? God will use that.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

God is a good steward and He doesn't waste anything. Your shape will use your experiences....even some bad things that have been redeemed and that you have learned from.

Want to take a spiritual gift test or personality test? Go to...

<http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes1.htm> for a spiritual gift test, or

<http://www.kodachrome.org/spiritgift/download.htm> for a personality test

Week two

- Share from quiet times
- Debrief assignments
- Check verse
- Review what was shared last week.

Activity

Materials Needed:

Long soft cotton rope

A small note for each participant

With a soft cotton rope tie everyone together with a couple of feet in between each person. Write on separate note cards to give each participant, “at the signal from me to go, you all go to the exit door”. One person you give a different note that says ...”at the signal from me to go, you will sit down on the floor.”

Debrief Questions:

What happened?

How does this relate to the body of Christ carrying out its ministry?

Which role in this activity best describes your current participation in ministry?

Wrap Up:

Ephesians 4:16 (NLT) *“Under His direction, the whole body is fitted 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.”*

Discussion questions:

If someone were to say to you, “Why participate? Why get involved? Why put out the energy and effort?” Why would you say that’s important?

What is your participation level in the ministry right now?

Have you stretched yourself to participate lately? How?

What do you need to work on because of what you have heard?

What specifically will you do that is measurable to work at participating? (Help them come up with a plan for how they can participate more)

Assignment:

Choose one activity this week that will help someone else accomplish their goals. Listen and watch to learn what others are doing for the ministry. Decide something specific you will do this week that will help them accomplish their goals. Come back prepared to share what you did.

PARTICIPATING IN THE MINISTRY
Heart Attitude #5

Heart Attitude #5: _____ **in the** _____

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