

## Church, a Team Sport

### I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2 Baby Dedication 1st Serv: (Des) *Jonathan and Kristin Ferrell, Ellie Grace Ferrell.*
- B. Slide3,4 Larry: Peru. Harvest.
- C. Slide5 Men's Breakfast & Fight Club Series.
  1. 160 men signed up already...but **success** will be seeing a *measurable difference* in...*how we fulfill our roles as husbands, fathers, community leaders & world changers.* Will **marriages** be saved? Will **Families** be strengthened? Will **God** be honored by our lives? Will we become *more like Jesus*?
  2. Chad Robichaux & Jeremy Stalnecker of *Mighty Oaks Warrior Program* sharing.
  3. We got the books in! \$10 for books & includes breakfast. (Sat 14th. 7:30-10:30)
- D. Slide6 Sun Night Prayer/Tonight: Spiritual Warfare (Fall). Agape Rm.

### II. Slide7 Intro: Church, a Team Sport

- A. Paul reminded us we are *rich beyond measure...yet living like beggars.* Because were ignorant of our *wealth.*
  1. Ch.1-3 was about understanding our *spiritual wealth* [our heavenly bank account]
  2. Ch.4-6 is about understanding our *spiritual walk* [how we should behave ourselves]
- B. The Christian life is compared to **a walk** because it starts with **1 step of faith**, involves **progress**, and demands **balance and strength.** *Wiersbe*
  1. If we do not learn to **walk**, **we** will never be able to **run or stand** in the battle.
- C. Slide8 This morning lets look at ch.4 w/a **sports theme**, & see Jesus as *The Head Coach.*
  1. The Jews and Gentiles have been playing on **different** teams.  
 But in the 1st century A.D. Jesus came up with **a New uniform.**  
 It had new **colors**, a new **logo**, a new **team name**, complete w/your name printed on the back *when you join his team.* [**\*Note also**, was soon as Jesus started His ministry He immediately put together **a team of 12.** This was not the church yet, **but** they would be the 1st part of *the coaching staff*]

2. Now, *the new uniform* isn't the reason to join the team, *it's* to **play the game**.
- There are some *good, talented, gifted, people* out there, *but* they're not on this team, His Team, called *The Church*.
  - Let's also remember that *in this building* that we usually call *the church*, **this is not the stadium where the game is played**. This is...*the locker room*. This is where we come for pre-game. For rally. Build our spirits up. Tape up *life's* injuries. **And** hear an inspiring challenge from one of His coaching staff (see 11,12).
  - And the Church's measure of success is not filling the stands...but in the playing of the game**. What team do **you** belong to?
- D. Slide9,10 Outline: *Church is an Active Sport. Church is a Team Sport. Church has different Leadership Positions. Church has different Positions to be Played.*
- E. Slide11 *"The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime."* ~ Babe Ruth
- F. Prayer: Lord, help us *play well with others*. Help us to not think "we" are the whole team. Lord, our **success** is only...to please You, our Coach.

### III. Slide12 **CHURCH IS AN ACTIVE SPORT (1,2)**

- A. A prisoner of the Lord - *A mere Caesar could not arrest an Apostle w/o God's permission.*<sup>1</sup>
- He considered himself **shut up w/God**, **not** just *shut up*.
  - Paul, thrown in the **Pen**...so that's what he picks up & writes away.  
**Barred** from the world...yet no bar could barricade his **Prayers**.  
**Silenced** in prison...no, his prison became his **Pulpit**.  
 Nothing but **chains**...so, he made them dance, cling-n-clang **God Praise**.  
 From prison came his **Plea**...to be set free? **No**, for us to **Walk Worthy**.
- B. **Walk** - Do everything we can in our power to live lives that are *worthy* of our calling.
- Not sit** in the stands. **Walk** in the world *worthy of your calling*.
  - Learn how to walk**, so you'll be able to **run**, so you'll be able to **stand** against your *competitor, contender*, your *enemy*, the *devil*.

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<sup>1</sup> Phillips

3. We do not live for Christ to **get something**; we live for Christ because He has **already done so much** for us. *Wiersbe*

C. Slide13 So, **how** do we *walk worthy* of our calling? vs.2,3.

1. Don't take this as a **to-do list**. But it's **who we've become** as new believers.

a) It's Jn.15, **we are the branches** attached to **Jesus our Vine**...sap running **through Him to us**...enabling us to *do these next things*...by **His** strength.

D. **Lowliness** (2) - Humility.

E. **Gentleness** - Be tender warriors.

1. It's the ability to blend **strength w/tenderness**. [1 who doesn't abuse their power]

2. Stu Weber, *A Tender warrior has a tender heart beating beneath his armor. He's Steel & Velvet.*

F. **Longsuffering** - the **opposite** is *a person w/a hair trigger temper; who explodes in fury, rage, & rejection at the slightest provocation.*

1. **Every person** has in his personality certain **minefields**, made of mines that are hidden beneath the surface. These are sensitive points where we respond out of proportion to the situation because these are areas wherein we are easily provoked.

**In some people's** field, there may be only 1 or 2 mines for every 10 acres of field.

These people are rather easy to get along with.

**With other people**, there is no safe passageway through their field, because it is wall-to-wall mines. They are touchy, sensitive, always getting angry, always getting upset, & always causing problems. *Sproul*

G. **Bearing w/one another in love** - (CCBC next Sun Night Chapel) Having the spirit of Love.

H. *To be worthy of the calling, we must reflect the character of God. We must live in a manner that honors His work.*

#### IV. Slide14 **CHURCH IS A TEAM SPORT (3-6)**

A. Team Sports vs. Individual Sports. *Players working together towards a shared objective.*

B. Paul does not tell us to **manufacture unity**, but to maintain/keep the **unity** already existing in the body.

1. **This is not** organizational **uniformity**, a **super church**. **This is an organic, living union and unity.** *Wiersbe*

- C. **Bond of peace** - The HS is literally the *cement* that binds people together.
- D. **Slide15 7-Fold Oneness** [remember Jew & Gentile divisions].  
*Possibly reflects an early Christian confession of faith.*
1. **One Body** - The **Visible** church is cut up into **all different Groups**.  
 The **Invisible** church however is **One Universal Church** (catholic).
    - a) Gk. *Katholikos kata*/with respect to + *holos*/whole.
  2. **One Spirit** - who indwells us & joins us together as a body.
  3. **One Hope** - Eternal life.
  4. **One Lord** - The triune God.
  5. **One Faith** - the Christian faith.
  6. **One Baptism** - may refer to **water baptism**, the outward symbol of the inward reality, **or** it may refer to **a believer's identification with Christ and His death**.
  7. **One God** - He's **above** all (Sov. & Transcendent). He operates **through** all.  
 He resides **in** all (believers).
    - a) These **7 characteristics** spell out for us the basics of **unity** in the body of Christ.

## V. **Slide16 CHURCH HAS DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP POSITIONS (7-13)**

- A. Paul gives a 3-fold goal for Jesus' new Team: That they be *equipped, mature & settled*.
- B. He moves from **Unity** to **Diversity** (7,8)
- C. Descended at **incarnation**, **not** speaking of *His death* (9,10)
- D. All Christians are **gifted** by the **grace** of God, **but they don't** get the *same* gifts.
  1. All believer's get a God-given calling and ability to **serve in ministry**.
- E. **Slide17a** (11) Phillips NT in *Modern English* (1958) gives as definitions...
1. **Apostles** = Those equipped to **Guide** the infant church in ways it ought to go.
  2. **Slide17b Prophets** = Those equipped to **Guard** the infant church in what it ought to know.
  3. **Slide17c Evangelists** = Those gifted to deal w/*sinners*. **Also** can be speaking about present-day missionaries. (see BKC)
  4. **Slide17d Pastors & Teachers** (go together in Gk.) = Those gifted to deal w/the *saints*.

- a) **Pastors** - called to *Tend* the flock of God. [shepherd/protect the flock]
  - b) **Teachers** - called to *Teach* the flock of God. [those who faithfully pass on the teaching of Christ, especially through *reading, explaining, applying* Scripture]
- F. (12) Chuck Smith said, *The primary prospect of the church isn't to convert sinners to Christianity, but to perfect the saints for the ministry & edification of the body.*

## VI. Slide18a **CHURCH HAS DIFFERENT POSITIONS TO BE PLAYED (14-16)**

- A. (14) **No longer be children**...in this way...(i.e. the rest of the vs.)
  - 1. **By the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting** - almost sounds like the numerologist David Meade (world didn't end Sept.23rd). **Planet X didn't strike earth** (cover up by NASA). **Starts the clock ticking** (no, it's been ticking)
- B. **We are given 2 ways to be like children**...
  - 1. We are to approach the kingdom of God w/a simple, childlike **Trust** in God Mt18:3
  - 2. In regards to **Evil** be infants, **but** in your **thinking** be adults. 1 Cor.14:20
- C. (15) **Spiritual birth** must lead to **Spiritual Growth**.
  - 1. **Are you Growing old or Growing up?** Growing up, i.e. no longer adolescents in our faith. **To grow up** in all aspects of Christ.
  - 2. **As a farmer would you be content to grow corn & get only ½ an ear?**
    - a) Are you content with being *a green blade* when you could advance to *a full ear*?
- D. **Speak the truth in love** - L. **Truthing** - not only *speaking* the truth **but doing** it.
  - 1. **Love w/o Truth = Hypocrisy. Truth w/o Love = Brutality.**
  - 2. Here is where **growth** is maximized.
- E. **Slide18b** (16) Paul uses this metaphor to explain how **many people with different roles and gifts can work together in unity**.
- F. **Note also, the whole body**. CM can't be the body of Christ, we are **part** of the body of Christ.
- G. Human bodies normally grow w/**all** parts *in proper relation to each other*.
  - 1. **Think about this**...If even **1 Christian** fails to develop spiritually, the church as a whole is not as strong as it ought to be. **How's your growth?**

What **position** are you playing? Are you more comfortable in the **locker room**, or sitting in the **stadium**, or playing on the **field**?

2. Slide 19,20 **Walk**, so you can **run**, so you can **stand** in the battle.

H. **Communion**: Remember the *after game* get together. Meeting up at the famous Pizza place in town. Talk about the game. The plays. What could be done better/different next time. It was about Fellowship. The Team. The plays. Coach & His coaching staff were there. Eating Pizza & drinking coke together.

1. **Communion** is about the church fellowshiping *around the table* (not Round Table). It's the Team getting together *eating & drinking* to the *remembrance* of **Jesus** in what He's done for the Team.

2. Bread:

3. Cup: