
SG020107

The Whole Counsel of God - Genesis 10-11

Got questions? Email Pastor Jason at jasonduff7@gmail.com

(You can download this message as a pod cast by searching Jason Duff on I-Tunes)

Introduction & Overview of the Section

Introduction

Tonight we fill in the time frame of what happened from the time of Noah's sons to the time of Abraham, the next great patriarch that we will spend a few weeks covering. Not only do we see how we get from Noah's sons to Abraham but really, chapters 10-11 could be called, "A tale of two cities".

A Tale of Two Cities – Genesis 10-11

#1 – The Beginnings of Babylon – Genesis 10:1-11:9

Babylon was not just a city in Mesopotamia; Babylon was a kingdom and a concept against the true and living God. Tonight we see the "Genesis", the beginnings, of a city that will turn into a nation that will turn into a culture against God. A culture that has lasted well into our time

#2 – The Beginnings of Jerusalem – Genesis 11:10-32

Jerusalem also has its Genesis in tonight's story. But the way the city of God was formed and put together couldn't be any more different than the beginnings of Babylon. The city of Jerusalem, that would also become a culture in submission to God is still with us today as well.

Key Issues or Words

"One language" (11:1) – literally means "one lip" – I don't think there is any spiritual significance to that, I just thought it was funny, a bunch of people running around, all with one lip.

"From the East" (11:2) – first of all it should be translated, "to the East" because the people were moving from the area of Ararat where the Ark came to rest, toward Mesopotamia, which is modern day Iraq. That direction is toward the East, not from the East. Every time you read the phrase, "toward the East" in the book of Genesis it speaks of a move away from God. (Gen 3:24, 13:11, 25:6) Does that mean God lives on the West Coast? I don't know, but it sounds Biblical!

By the way...

Genesis 11:1 – "Now the whole earth had one language and one speech."–

The Bible tells us the whole earth had one language and one speech, but what language was that? Many Bible scholars believe that language was Hebrew. The reason this may actually be so is because every name up until this point in the book of Genesis only has meaning in the Hebrew language. That detail will change by the end of chapter 11, but when everyone spoke one language, the meanings of the names they gave their children only have meaning in the Hebrew language. Who knows???

Additional Notes

(unless you want to stay 'til 10, we won't get to this)

Notes and facts from the genealogies listed in Genesis 10 and Genesis 11:10-32

Nimrod (10:8) Nimrod is considered the founder of Babel, this society against God and the when the Bible speaks of him as “a mighty hunter before the Lord,” it is probably understood better as a mighty hunter opposed to the Lord, for this descendant of Noah’s son Ham was following in his great grandfather’s footsteps.

Eber (10:21) Eber, a descendant from Noah’s son Shem is considered to be the forefather of the Jewish people. Many Bible scholars believe that the name Hebrew is derived from the name Eber.

Peleg (10:25) Peleg is another descendant of Shem of whom the Bible says, “in his days the earth was divided.” Some believe this is speaking about the continents being divided from what some call “Pangea” to what we know today, but that is highly unlikely considering the time frame and the complete devastation it would have caused the world. It would have been Noah’s flood all over again. The most plausible explanation is it was during Peleg’s days that the story of the tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-9) and the dispersing of people groups occurred.

Jobab (10:29) Some Bible scholars believe Jobab mentioned in Genesis chapter 10 is the same man we know as Job mentioned in the book that bears the same name. It is possible that Jobab in Genesis 10:29 is the same man we know as Job because Job is most likely the oldest book of the Bible and the events of the book take place around the year 2000 BC. This was around the time of Abraham, and yet before fall of the Ur of the Chaldeans (the original home of both Job and Abraham) shortly after that, so the timeline fits. However it is more likely if Job is mentioned in Genesis it is probably the Jobab in Genesis 36:34-35 for reasons we will get to when we get to those chapters.

Going Deeper

(think it over yourself or discuss with the family)

Questions to ask the younger kids....

Read the story of the Tower of Babel together. (Genesis 11:1-9) Why do the people want to build a tower? What is their goal? Did their plan work out for them? What does that teach us about how we are to live our lives?

Questions for the rest of us...

Why do you think men and women desire community? Is there any indication from the Word that God puts that desire in our hearts? What can learn from the story in Genesis 11:1-9 about how community is to be developed in our lives and how community should not be developed in our lives? Try to find Biblical verses to back up your opinions.

Further study...

Read Revelation Chapters 21-22 and see how it relates to our story in Genesis 11:1-9. What conclusions can be drawn?

Homework 4 Next Week – Genesis 12-13

Read Genesis 12-13 – Start to think through what things Abraham did that we should emulate in our lives and what things did he do that we can learn from as mistakes.

Genesis 10-11

“A Tale of Two Cities”

Introduction

- Tonight we are going to continue our study in the foundational book of the Old Testament and really all of the Bible
 - Remember the content is not hard to remember, because the title says it all

The word Genesis means “beginnings”

- And truly so many things in Scripture have their beginning in the book of Genesis
 - The universe
 - Life in general
 - Man, marriage
 - Sin and evil
 - Language, government, nations
 - Specifically we will see the nation of Israel
- In fact understanding that this book means and is about beginnings really is a good way to divide up our look at this book as you can see in your book intro sheet

Outline for the Book of Genesis

Chapters 1-11 – The Beginning of all nations

- Chapters 1-2 – The Creation
- Chapter 3 - 5 – The Fall
- Chapter 6-9 – The Flood
- Chapters 10-11 – The Tables of Nations

Chapters 12-50 – The Beginning of the Jewish nation

- Chapters 12-23 – Abraham
- Chapters 24-27 – Isaac
- Chapters 28-36 – Jacob
- Chapters 37-50 – Joseph

As we come now to chapter 10 I know as you open it up and look down at the page or maybe if you did the homework and read ahead, you must be thinking, why does the Bible have such genealogies

- I mean really it's like looking at a page from the Jewish phone book
 - I can't pronounce the names and even if I could I just don't read the phone book
 - My life is not that exciting, but at least it is more exciting than that
- So why are genealogies in the Scripture?

We have already had one huge genealogy in chapter 5 that covered about 1,600 years of human history

- And the two genealogies both in chapter 10 and in the end of chapter 11 cover about another 400 years of human history – so by the end of chapter 11 we are only 11 chapters into the Bible and yet we have covered half of time period the Bible covers, because from Abraham to the time of the apostles is only another 2,000 years and by the end of the chapter 11 we have covered 1/3 of the way to

even today from the creation of man, since we are only 2,000 years after NT times

- So besides covering huge amounts of time, summed up by the phrase, he lived, he had some kids and then he died
- What is the purpose of these genealogies?

Well again, church, understand the Bible is telling a story

- as we said in our introduction tonight, the same introduction we will do all through the book so it will be ingrained in your mind before we are done, God is building a nation
 - not just all nations, but He is building the Jewish nation

So each of these genealogies cover the same format

- the line of people who don't follow the Lord and therefore are not part of the final story are followed for a few generations and then they are left off
 - great example – Genesis chapter 4-5 – Adam and Eve have two sons, Cain and Able, Cain killed his brother as soon as he was Able, ☹ - I'm sorry that was horrible. Adam and Eve had another son by the name of Seth, who called upon the name of the Lord
- So the Bible follows the line of Cain, the ungodly line of Cain for a few generations and then stops
 - But Seth's line is followed all the way, 1,600 years of human history until we get to Noah
 - And that is where chapter 5 ends – getting you to Noah, through whom the Jewish nation, the Messiah and all nations would come from

Noah then has three sons – Ham, Shem and Japheth

- and chapter 10 follows their genealogies again telling the story of how we get to the Jewish people and eventually Jesus
 - and chapter 10 starts by following those sons that didn't end up following the Lord, follows them for a few generations and then stops

The first son the Bible focuses on is Japheth because he seems to be the most prominent and has the most numerous descendants

- he settles north of modern day Israel and becomes the Father of the European and Asian people and every culture that has come from those two continents
 - so most of us in the room are probably related to Japheth in some way originally unless you are purely middle Eastern or African in your descent

The next son of Noah Genesis 10 deals with is Ham who becomes the father of the people of African decent, including the Egyptian people and Canaanite people who we will read a lot about as the story of the Bible continues

- and of course just like was prophesied, the sons of Ham, especially the sons on Canaan will be a thorn in Israel's side for many, many years to come
 - so the Bible follows Japheth for a few generations so you can see which sons settled in which parts of Europe and Asia
 - the Bible follows the sons of Ham for a few generations so you can see which sons settle in which parts of Africa and north Africa
- and then it stops following these genealogies – why?
 - Because Europeans, Asians and Africans don't matter to God – hardly – He loves and died for all of mankind

- No, the reason God stops following their genealogies is they are not part of the story that God is telling
- I know when you watch the Greatest Story Ever Told – Jesus looks Swedish in decent, but sorry whities in the room (I speak as if I am not one of you) – but our forefathers did not bring about the Messiah, whom this book is about

So God stops covering the lines of Japheth and Ham and focuses in on Noah's third son Shem

- Shem would become the father of Middle Eastern People, not just the Jewish people, but most of people in the Middle East, not already talked about
 - And I find that interesting because Noah says, "blessed be the God of Shem" – showing Shem was already in a covenant relationship with God

Shem, who was in a covenant relationship with God, who really knew who God was, and Shem from whom comes the middle eastern people, is really the Father of all the Monotheistic religions

- Islam, and Judaism, from which then comes Christianity all comes from people who were originally in covenant with God, so they had a right idea about who God was
 - Obviously we disagree with Islam's views on God, but the fact they believe in one God and their ancestor was someone who was in covenant with God is very interesting to me
- In other words it's not Shem's descendants that teach we are all gods, or everything is god or the Moon is god
 - Again that is you whities that came up with that stuff, our forefathers, not in covenant with God came up with those crazy ideas
 - The descendents of Shem, though again, I am not saying in anyway that Islam, Judaism and Christianity are the same, but the idea there is one God – that came from Shem and his descendants who really knew God
 - I don't know – I find that interesting, but moving on

As we continue in Shem's line in chapter 10, we get to a son of his by the name of Eber

- and in the end of chapter 11 the Bible will chronicle the story from Shem, the son of Noah, through Eber one of Shem's sons, to Abraham the Father of the Jewish people
 - but it is from Eber that the name Hebrew is derived – the Hebrew people are "from Eber"
- Now in the study guide I have pointed out some interesting things from the genealogy, but...

Some of you are wondering, why did we even take 15 minutes to cover that

- just tell us God is telling the story of the Jewish people, following the ungodly lines for a few generations and then focusing in once again on the line that will lead to Jesus
 - why go over this in any more detail than that?
- Well, because an overarching lesson to these genealogies is this – these were real people just like you and I
 - they were born – they grew up, got married, went to work at some job, had some kids and then they died

- and that is where the story ends – unless they served the Lord, then we get more info, there we see a continuation of the line, and their lives now matter for eternity

The lesson is we think we are so important with what we are doing and the little kingdoms we are building

- But if you are not following the Lord and letting Him, well then eventually your story will be, he was born, he got married, had some kids, went to work and then he died
 - But if you want your life to matter for eternity, then like Seth, you need to be a man or a woman who calls upon the name of the Lord
- Like Shem, you need to be a man or a woman who is in covenant with God, a real genuine relationship with God
 - Then your life, even if it seems insignificant to you right now, you have no idea how God is using it to touch others and the next generation and moving along His divine plan

Anyway – that is as interesting as I can make chapter 10, the Jewish phone book, but that lesson continues into chapter 11

- now some of you who have read ahead have already been thinking I don't get it
 - in chapter 10 everybody is spread all over the whole world and in chapter 11 they are all gathered in one place and God has to spread them out
 - what happened, did everybody come back together?
- The answer to that is no, not at all
 - What you have happening here is a common Hebrew literary device which is to give an overview and then provide some detail

We saw that in Genesis 1-2

- Genesis 2 is not another creation or a contradiction – it is simply letting you know more detail of what happened in the end of chapter 1

Well, in the same way chapter 10 is the overview from Noah really to Abraham's forefathers

- But it speaks many times in the chapter as you read through it about people being dispersed, the world being divided
 - The detail of what it is speaking about is given to us in the first 9 verses of chapter 11
 - And what it is, is another beginning
- Remember Genesis means beginnings and here in chapter 11 we have the story of another beginning
 - The beginning of two major themes that run through all of Scripture until the end of the book of Revelation

Some of you have read Charles Dickens' book, "Tale of Two Cities" – it was the best of times...

- well in a very real sense, the Bible is also the tale of two cities

The Bible is really the tale of two cities

#1 - The City of Babylon

#2 - The City of Jerusalem

The City of Babylon has its beginnings here, in chapter 11 of Genesis, on the plains of Shinar, as man began to collectively rebel against the Lord

- they built this tower as we will see in a minute, but more than a tower, they built the foundations of a nation, a culture, a city that would become Babylon, a people group in rebellion against God

Later in this chapter we see another critical beginning, as God calls Abraham out of this Babylonian culture to begin another nation, whose capital city would eventually be called Jerusalem

- so really chapter 11 is a tale of two cities

But understand as we move through the Word of God, there is more to these two cities than physical dwellings

- They represent two kingdoms, two world views, that are not just a thing of ancient Bible history – they are with us to this day
 - The kingdom of God, and the people of God
 - The kingdom against the Lord, those opposed to the Lord
 - And those of us who are for Him and with Him
- All that we see in our day and age
 - The struggles and battles we face today – all have their beginning here in chapter 11
 - Well, let's see it unfold

The Beginning of Babylon – Genesis 11:1-9

- Noah had told his sons to disperse, but at least for a while they stayed together
 - They were united in location
 - And they were united in language
- They had one language – many scholars believe was Hebrew
 - The evidence for this is the names recorded thus far in Scripture only have meaning in the Hebrew language
 - So very well could have been Hebrew was the one language
- So they are speaking one language, they are moving as one people, united in one location

However these people are united against the Lord

- Babylon has its beginnings in rebellion
 - What rebellion? – understand God told the sons of Noah to spread out, populate the earth
- But here they are, it doesn't make sense to do it God's way, we are better off together, we don't need to follow God's plan
 - And so they stayed together, rebelling against the heart and wisdom of the Lord
- They went "East" geographically from the mountains of Ararat where their fathers had gotten off the Ark, they moved East to the plains of Shinar, but it was more than that

Because when you read the phrase "from the East" it infers in Genesis a move away from God

- Adam and Eve were sent East out of the Garden
- Lot went East away from Abraham toward Sodom and Gomorrah
- Abraham sent Keturah and her sons Eastward from Isaac

"East" speaks of a move away from God

- Which of course proves that God is on the West Coast – my friends in Texas would really disagree with that – but you can't argue with the Bible
 - When the Bible speaks of a move East at least in the book of Genesis it is never a good thing, it is a move away from God
- These descendants of Noah were commanded to disperse but they went Eastward from Ararat to the plains of Mesopotamia and settled there

Babylon has its beginnings in rebellion and it had its foundation in pride

- notice verse 4 why they are building this tower, **“let us make a name for ourselves” – Genesis 11:4**
 - Not only are they rebelling against the plans of the Lord, they are doing it so they may be great
- And you can tell by this who it is that is really behind this movement against the Lord, his fingerprints are all over it

It was Lucifer who while in heaven said, “I will be like the Most High, I will exalt my throne above the heavens” – Isaiah 14:13

- Here are the “children” of the devil uttering the same things – “we will make our name great”
 - It's pride, and it is the foundation of Babylon

Babylon has its beginnings in rebellion, it has foundations in pride and we also see it is based on the work of man

- verse 3 says they built this tower, which by the way we have ruins of these type of structures in the Iraq area, they were later called ziggurats and used to worship the many false gods of the Babylonians..
 - but they were built verse 3 with bricks and held together with mortar

You understand that bricks and mortar are things man produced, works of his hands as opposed to the building materials God always used in the Scripture, stone, that He made

- And so with these things they constructed their tower, in rebellion to God, which would eventually be used to worship other gods, would eventually become the foundation of the city, the nation, the culture of Babylon

And this lives on today

- a heart of rebellion – we will not live as God has called us to
 - and pride – man is great, man is god
- And we can do things our selves without you!!!!

Notice what the Lord does with this rebellion in verses 5-9

- The Lord comes down
 - And in the original language, you that are sarcastic by nature, like I am, God is being very sarcastic

They are building a tower to reach to the heavens and God says, well I have to come way down to see it

- oh is that your little tower, I hurt my back bending way down from the heavens to see this great tower you have made
 - you know I said “earth” and you know what happened, but good job on your tower
 - He is mocking them
 - So you mockers, you need to save it for appropriate times, there are times to mock and be sarcastic

The language is sarcastic, but what is happening is no laughing matter, and God being loving and gracious comes down to them

- God comes down to them

Not to be informed with what is happening, but to once again intervene in the lives of men

- Although this was the beginning of the great rebellion we are living in still today, God does not destroy, as He promised – He gracefully intervenes to get them to stop before

God does this by confusing their languages

- One guys all of sudden said – “hand me the hammer” – and his buddy said, “parka”
- So he said, again, “hand me the hammer” and another working with him said, - “was ist das”
 - what is going on – they can no longer understand each other
 - And so they no doubt find those who speak their own language, and migrate to the areas outlined in Genesis 10

Understand though, this stops the building temporarily, some will settle in the region and continue the rebellion and culture of Babylon as we will see as we continue to study the Word

- But God steps in and confuses their language to curb their rebellion
 - Before we go any further, I think we need to focus on this and draw it to some important conclusions

Man was doing his own thing, depending on Himself, and God did something to make it hard on them in order to help them get to where He wanted them to be

- now you carry the thought through and you see, God also did what He did at Babel so they would in theory turn to Him and depend on Him
 - You mean that happens?
 - God allows things to happen to us, things to make it hard on us?

He certainly does, but He does it that we might learn to depend on Him

- I think for an example in Mark chapter 6, before Jesus walks on water, and Peter does too, and all of that, we have the account where it says, **“Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat, and go before Him.” – Mark 6:45**
 - So we notice that the disciples being in this storm was no matter of chance, it was ordained by the Lord, not to just freak out the disciples, but so that they might learn just Who was among them

And I believe God often puts us in circumstances where we have to stretch us, to teach us to depend on Him, so we would know Who it is that is among us in our lives

The last week I was at board meeting for the church in Paris last weekend and we were talking about taking steps up faith, and I mentioned, yeah God has always met us when we prayed, obeyed, even if it seemed like the money wasn't there. And one of the guys who has been there since the beginning said – yeah, He always gets us through our little hiccups – hiccups – I reminded him, I don't know what it was like for you who had a fulltime job to feed your family, but for me who was dependant on the church doing well so my kids could eat, they weren't hiccups – I remember when our monthly tithes and offerings had finally reached \$10,000 a month and we were so happy, I mean I remember running the church, and my salary on 3,000 dollars a month, and now I had an assistant

pastor, we were saving money as a church – Lord we got this now, the afore- mentioned assistant pastor who was doing construction put \$10,000 on the church credit card without asking me – and I had to go to the Lord and say, God I'm sorry I wasn't paying attention oh show up and take care of us and all of that was preparation for a few years later, when the church budget was now \$80,000 dollars a month, and we were sailing – now a staff of 8 assistant pastors, I just studied and taught the Word and were moving into a gigantic new building all paid for – Lord we got this now until a different pastor ran up \$100,000 of construction above what we had budgeted for our new building – and again I was taking walks in the Woods – God show up please!!!! – Yes when we start to think we have got this and we don't need you – God puts us into situations, He causes things to come about in our lives that make things difficult

And we have the choice – to learn to trust and depend on Him as He makes us more like Him

- Or we have the choice to rebel at circumstances, to find an easy way out and refuse to learn from the trials God sends our way in order to get us to depend on Him

The only problem with getting out of problems is, I have often seen people leave one trying situation and get right into another.

- We want God to fix the problem, but often times He puts us into a fix, to fix us – so if we get out of the fix prematurely or by our own resources, well then God because He loves us will have to put us into another fix to fix the fix He wanted to fix in the first place
 - Clear as mud?
 - Let me say it another way
- I have seen marriages end because one or the other couldn't handle this about the person
 - Only to see them end up in another marriage and facing the exact same circumstances
- God is trying to grow His kids, and we can't avoid the lessons
 - We can only grow in them!!!!

Well, enough said on that – We have the tower of Babel, the beginning of Babylon and all that that represents in rebellion against the Lord.

- Now as we get to verse 27 we see in this chapter not only the beginning of Babylon and the rebellion against the Lord, but we also see the beginning of the Hebrew nation and the people of the Lord – And of course this begins with Abraham

The beginning of the Hebrew nation, the people of God and eventually their capital city, Jerusalem –Genesis 11:10-32

We will get into Abraham's call from the Lord next week as we study chapter 12

- but as we have in account for us here in chapter 11 the background of God calling Abraham to be the foundation of the Jewish people, the people of God represented by their capital city of Jerusalem
 - I find it interesting to see the contrast

Babylon began with rebellion

- Jerusalem, the people of God began with obedience
 - Though the actual call of God is recorded in chapter 12, as we study the genealogy you see the picture of what happened when God called

- God said, 'get out of your country'
 - And Abraham obeyed

In contrast to the people of Babel who must have thought why would we scatter as God said, it makes so much sense to stick together

- Abraham who could have just as easily said, "It makes more sense to serve You in my homeland, I will stay"
 - No – Abraham, from him the Hebrew people, the city of Jerusalem – it began with obedience to God's word
- And the same thing will be true of all God's great moves in your life

They being so often not with pomp and circumstance, but with simple obedience to the word of God

- The beginning was obedience

Notice also, Babylon was founded of pride

- But Jerusalem, the people of God was founded on faith
 - The people of Babylon said, "We are going to make a great name for ourselves"
- To Abraham God promised, "I will make your name great, I will make you the father of many nations"

Now understand the power of verse 30, "Sari was barren, she had no children..."

- It didn't make sense, why leave our homeland, how are You going to make a great nation from us
 - Yet the people of God began with obedience, they are founded on faith

And of course the same is true today, God's work begins with obedience, but its foundation is faith

- in **Hebrews chapter 11, verse 6 it says, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."**
 - Do you see that – we must believe that He is, that God is real
 - But we also must have the faith that God rewards the obedience to Him
- And though there may seem to be little evidence
 - God's work is always founded on faith

Babylon began with rebellion, it was founded on pride, and it was based on the works of Man

- But Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish people who would come from Abraham, began with obedience, was founded on faith, and was based on a work of God

This was not Abraham and Sari trying to make a great nation

- It was God's work – a work of grace as Abraham was an idol worship pagan in Ur of the Chaldeans.
 - It was the work of God who decided to show His glory by using a barren couple to bring about a great nation
- It often didn't make sense, but it was a work of God and so it was blessed

The people of Babel said they were going to make their name great

- how did it work out for them?
 - Well, do you know the names of those who worked on that tower?
 - Anyone – Buler? Buler?

- You Bible nerds are answering – Nimrod – okay, Bible nerd can get one – but how many out in the world have ever heard of the tower of Babel, let alone can tell you the project was headed up by a guy named Nimrod
 - And that was the greatest project of mankind at the time – do you see what I am saying?
 - That is the result of Man’s work – it is someday forgotten

God said to Abraham, “I will make your name great”

- How many people know Abraham?
 - Well, three major religions consider him their foundation
 - You see that is a work of God

When the people of Babel made the tower, they made it with bricks and held it together with mortar – the work of Man

- when Jerusalem’s temple was build, God had them make it of stone, and the stones were so perfectly fit together the Bible specially says, “no mortar is to be used” – it doesn’t need to be held together with man’s devices, because it is the work of God

And friends we need to see this

- As we respond to God with obedience
 - As we found what we do on faith
 - As we allow God to work in our lives instead of basing everything on Man’s work and wisdom
- So too with the work that He does in our lives, it will not have to be held together with man’s devices

Be it a marriage – you can do it in your own strength, but then you have to maintain it

- Or you can surrender to God

Be it this fellowship – I don’t want it to be a work of man, then man will have to maintain it, and I would have to be that man, and I have enough to do

- Or I, we can surrender to God – this is Your fellowship, - You do with it as you desire

There is a stark contrast between the kingdom of rebellion which has its beginning here in chapter 11, and the kingdom of God’s children, which also has its beginnings here

- there are great differences and we must choose which one we are going to be a part of,

And I think this applies to one more aspect of our lives and then we will be done tonight

- the buzzword around Christianity right now is community
 - everybody, especially younger Christians are saying, we need to have community
 - We need to be intentional about having community

And it seems like that desire is fresh and new, but the reality is, the desire for community is as old as the book of Genesis

- What are they essentially doing here at the tower of Babel, they are saying, we want to be united
 - We want to have community
 - We want to be together
- And I believe with all of my heart that is not a bad desire to have

- It is how you get there that is the issue

You see I just finished the book of Revelation for the church in Paris and I was struck last Sunday that we end up, those of us who know and love the Lord, we end up in one giant community of people who love and honor Jesus

- and because we were created for that, I think that is why we long for that now
 - and why people that don't even know God long for that now
 - We have been made for community
- But again the problem is not longing for it, the problem is how we get to it

The problem for the people in Genesis 11 who wanted community is they tried to have it outside of God being the center

- And that is not at all what God desires
 - In fact in the New Testament, in the book of Acts we have in chapter 2 the reversal of the tower of Babel
- You have Jerusalem packed with people from all over the world, descendants of all the sons of Noah, speaking all kinds of languages and yet when the Spirit shows up
 - Everyone heard everything in their own language
 - they connected, there was community, there was unity
- not because they had rallied, not because they had protest and not even, though I mean no disrespect, I believe in this concept – but it wasn't even from being intentional about producing community
 - it was the Spirit of God
 - now what are we supposed to learn from that

I think that if we are going to be intentional about having community, then the number one thing to be intentional about is together to grow in our relationship with God and a right relationship with His Spirit

- you see that's the pattern in Scripture
 - We see in Ephesians chapter 5 and 6, the great discourse on relationships, rules for husbands, rules for wives, rules for parents and children, employees and employers
- Before God tells us how to be husbands or wives...
 - He tells us in Ephesians 5:18 – we must be filled with the Spirit
 - We need to be right with Him, we need to be in community with Him if we will ever enjoy healthy community with anyone else

We need to hear this

- because some of you are at your wits end with your spouse, why aren't you fulfilling me – why are you not meeting my deepest need
 - because blockhead – because sweetie, you were not intended to find fulfillment in anything other than Jesus
 - but when I am right with Him, then I am free to have real friendship and community with my spouse because I am not looking for them to fulfill me

Same thing with our friends

- some of you are smothering your friends, because you can't understand why they don't see the need to meet the deepest longing of friendship in your heart

- they weren't meant to
- but when you have the right community with Jesus then you can have the perfect community with your friends

One more – same thing is true with this church

- we can think – why doesn't Calvary Chapel Vista fulfill my needs?
 - What's wrong with that place
 - What's wrong with Pastor Jason, what's wrong with Pastor Rob?
- What's wrong – Pastor Rob, Pastor Jason, Calvary Chapel Vista, Oceanside, North Coast, Baptist, this, Presbyterian, that – was not meant to fulfill you, to meet the deepest longing in your heart
 - Jesus was
 - And when Community is right with Jesus, then you can be part of Body and enjoy it, and be fulfilled in it
 - Because real community is people in community with each other (spouses, friends, church families) with Jesus at the center

You see we try to have community apart from Jesus

- we think if we just hang out, and be intentional about it, then we will just love one another and care for one another's needs
 - but here is what the church is finding, here is what young people are finding
 - it doesn't happen – because people outside of Christ are selfish, they don't care about your needs
- that is not new to this generation – what were the disciples doing when Jesus said – hey guys I really need to pray, watch with Me for one hour, I am about to die
 - did Peter, James and John care – no, they slept
 - do you think your friends, in the flesh are going to be more godly than Peter, James and John

You see community, which man wanted at the tower of Babel and one day will have in Revelation 22 – happens simply because we want it or are being intentional about having it

- it happens as we make Jesus the center
 - then the fruit of the Spirit is what? – Love – then I begin to care about others
 - I enjoy real community with others
 - Because I am in right community with Jesus
- Let us not make the same mistake as those who gathered in the plains of Shinar in Genesis chapter 11
 - There is and will never be community outside of being right with Jesus
 - But once that relationship is right – every other relationship will become what your heart truly desire, because the desires of your heart are being met in Him