

## Where *Koinonia* Grows

Ephesians 1:20 – 23

### I. Intro

- A. Continuing on with importance, necessity of *koinonia* (person-to-person), one-on-one relationships among believers in Christ; so far, looked at the Why's and the What's
- B. Last week saw – nobody can have this *koinonia* relationship with everybody, but everybody can have this *koinonia* relationship with somebody
- C. Today, talk about Where – where is this *koinonia* relationship best cultivated; **Question**: Is there an ideal place for these relationships? Two plans – God's Basic Unit Plan, and *Ekklesia* Unit Plan

### II. God's Basic Unit Plan

- A. From beginning of creation God has formed units where relationships could be built, deepen, and grow
- B. First unit God created, in garden of Eden, call the “family”; families turned into extended families, then claimed territories, then ultimately nations
  - i. Genesis 17:5 (ESV)  
<sup>5</sup>No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.
- C. Abraham's grandson, Jacob, gave birth to 12 sons and the 12 tribes of Israel were established
- D. From the beginning, all through history, [SLIDE] God's intention has been about units in which relationships would emerge and grow
- E. Just like plants/any vegetation need certain environments in order to experience healthy growth, so do relationships
- F. Once God had established the nation of Israel, His chosen people, chosen to bring God's redemptive plan to the world – He hangs out with them for hundreds of years interacting and investing in them with the purpose of teaching them to build close/intimate, spiritually-focused *koinonia* relationships – first with God Himself and then with each other
- G. Many of the commandments in the law were given to show how to live in this community/*koinoia* relationships with others
- H. Jesus comes along, He promotes/teaches the same concept, and establishes a new kind of unit of spiritual community – calls it His body, the church
- I. [Briefly summarize words leading up to passage] **READ Ephesians 1:20 – 23**

### III. *Ekklesia* Unit Plan

A. Another Greek word in NT – *ekklesia*; word Jesus used when He told Peter, disciples - Matthew 16:18 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup>... you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

B. REFER v. 22, 23

C. *Ekklesia* (Gr. literal meaning) – called out; when Jesus used this word, disciples knew the word very well

D. Romans would conquer territory set out to occupy it they would establish an *ekklesia* – the only way they could carry out their plans was to establish these smaller units of people in smaller towns – so an *ekklesia* was really a smaller community within a larger community

E. Christian believers have fallen into the trap of thinking we can gather up in Christian organizations (ie. national/state conventions) or large single or multi church events/services – be kind to one another, do nice things locally or globally and in those environments we're building/cultivating one-on-one deep/spiritually-focused/*koinonia* relationships

F. [SLIDE] If we're going to develop/cultivate kind of relationship that Christ talked about in NT, we need to be in environment that He talked about specifically designed for this kind of relationship – smaller units in specific places that's part of larger unit (universal body of Christ) – called local church, the *ekklesia* unit plan

G. Every early Christian church in the NT was an *ekklesia*

i. Acts 8:1 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup>... And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, ...

ii. Acts 13:1 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup>Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

iii. 1 Corinthians 1:2 (ESV)

<sup>2</sup>To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

H. It's within the local *ekklesia* (church) where *koinonia* (deep/intimate/spiritually-focused) relationships originate, are cultivated, and grow; through these *koinonia* relationship in a local *ekklesia* is where the greater/real spiritual transformation in individual people takes place

### IV. Close

- A. Couple weeks ago, started talking about *koinonia* relationships, mentioned in NT 50 passages about “one anothers”; [SLIDE] Every single instance of “one anothers” is enveloped in the environment of a specific local *ekklesia*
- B. Relationship become deeper/closer in smaller units; it’s in these smaller units (local church) where spiritual oversight, accountability, transparency are found; in smaller units (local church) where plans are put in place to make disciples who make other disciples and true “one another”, *koinonia* relationships are built
- C. Right here, FBC Mt. Vernon GA, we have real potential and opportunity to achieve what the Lord has always intended for His followers, His church – foster deep/close/intimate/spiritually-focused *koinonia* relationships
- D. First step – kind of relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; next step – taking every opportunity to establish kind of relationship with one another
- E. Repeat – [LAST SLIDE] Nobody can have a *koinonia* relationship with everybody, but everybody can have a *koinonia* relationship with somebody