

## CHURCH AS A FATHER-FOCUSED FAMILY

Sid Galloway 1997

**“We bow our knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.”  
Ephesians 3:14-15**

Do you know what makes a group of believers a true church (*ekklesia* = “called out ones”) and not just a Bible study, sing-a-long, or social entertainment center? The difference is *disciplined* discipleship that will © **L.E.A.D.** to restoration and maturity in Christ’s character, through **Love, Encouragement, Accountability, & Discipline** (Mat 18:15-20; 28:18-20; 1 Cor 15:24-28; Gal 5:16-6:3; 2 Tim 2:1-4).

The central need of our day is for genuinely intimate, family relationships that reflect the *oneness* of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God the Father is calling His children to return to His *simple*, family design for ministry, both at home and gathered as His church.

### **New Testament Church Distinctives**

One of the main distinctives is an effort to balance both *public* preaching as well as the *private* personal ministry of God’s sufficient Word. The *personal*, practical application of God’s counsel for real life is often neglected in modern churches.

Essential to the beauty and function of God’s design are the *hypotasso* (*structure of authority*) principles perfectly embodied in His Son, our Lord Jesus the Messiah. That is, humble *sub*-mission to God’s ordained authorities: government, elders, husbands, parents, etc. (Pro 30:2-6; 1 Cor 15:1-28; Eph 3:10-6:20; 1 Peter).

Husbands, wives, and parents not only need to know *what*, but also *how* to successfully fulfill the roles, ranks, and responsibilities that are designed and assigned by God in His Word. Please remember, if we busily do a lot of “good” things, but don’t have time to build God’s *best* (i.e. relationships), we’ve failed!

As the family of our Father, we must hold one another accountable to accomplish His priorities – *solī deo Gloria*. In contrast to the “business” and “entertainment” models that now characterize many churches in affluent America, God’s Word emphasizes intimate, knowledgeable *koinonia* (John 13-17).

### **SIMPLICITY**

- Reflecting God’s image through providential trials, using biblical discipleship-counseling and church-discipline for growth toward maturity as individuals and a unified body (family). The goal is our Father’s honor either by restoration or if needed separation. Jam 1:2-8; Mat 18:15-17; 1 Cor 5:9-13

- Embracing different people groups to build His church family without prejudice or partiality. There is no such thing as **black** or white people. We are all one race and one color (the pigment melanin, tan). The belief in different races is a racist concept invented to divide and control others. Eph 2:14-18

- Home hospitality as the hub of ministry, more than a big building. 1 Cor 16:19

- Whole families worshipping and studying together (*parents modeling for little ones*). Encouraging fathers to © **L.E.A.D.** at home and gathered as the church. Exo 12:26; 13:8, 14; Psa 78; Philemon.
- Each husband learning how to humbly submit to Christ and minister the Spirit & Word of God to his own family, personally discipling his wife and each of his children. Eph 5:26; 2 Tim 2:1-4
- Each wife learning to become a helper to her husband (his *cheerleader* not his *coach*). Mom as a *model* of humble submission under authority, for her children to see and *emulate*. Titus 2:3-5
- Parents learning to train/disciple each of their own children as a blessing not a burden. *Socializing* children, youth, and singles through *family-together* groups more than age-segregated, peer-dependent groups. Deu 6:4-9; Eph 6:1-4; 1 Tim 3:4-5; 1 Pet 5:1-9
- Church elders *equipping* heads of households through *personal* family discipleship and mutually sensitive accountability; encouraging families to set aside part of Sunday for home family worship. 1 Tim 3:4-5; Eph 3-6
- All believers learning to walk/march (*stoicheo*) in humble submission to God's Spirit, transforming (*metamorphosis*) progressively into the unnatural/supernatural reflection of His image and character. 2 Cor 3:18; Gal 5:16-24

**“My little children, for whom I labor in birth again  
 until Christ is formed in you ....”**  
**“.... The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,  
 kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control ....”**  
**If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk (march / stoicheo) in the Spirit.”**  
**Galatians 4:19; 5:22-25**