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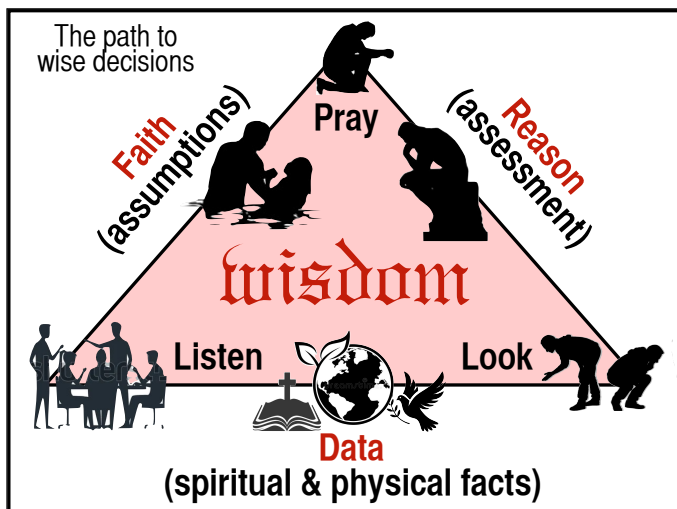
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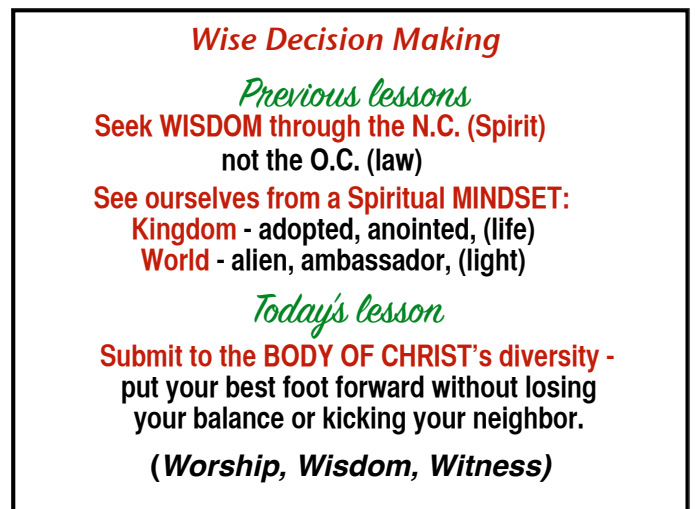
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4



5



6

John 16

"¹³ But **when he, the Spirit of truth**, comes he will **guide you into all the truth**; . . . ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take of mine and will disclose it to you."

2 Corinthians 3:6

"who also made us adequate as servants of a **new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit**;"

Mark 2:22

"And **no one puts new wine into old wineskins**. If he does, the wine will burst the skins—and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins."

1 John 2:27

"And *as for you*, the anointing which you received from Him remains in you, and **you have no need for anyone to teach you**; but as His anointing teaches you about all things,"

7

Wisdom is a dynamic responsibility,
not a search for proof texts, signs or feelings.

Acts 15

"⁷ And after there had been **much debate**, . . . ²⁸ For **it seemed good** to the Holy Spirit and to us. . . . ¹⁵ And with this the words of the Prophets agree, **just as it is written**, (Amos 9:12)"

1 Corinthians 6:5

"... Is it so, that there is not among you **one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren**, but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?"

8

Examples of Freedom in decision making

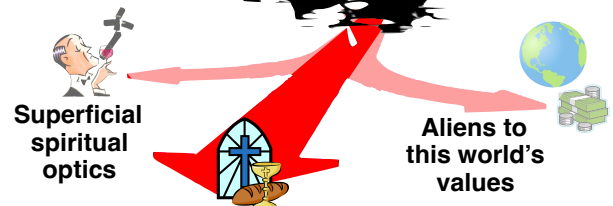
1. **Marriage** — *1 Cor. 7:39* "A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is **free to be married to whom she wishes**, only in the Lord."
2. **Giving** — *2 Cor. 8:13* "For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but **by way of equality**"
3. **Sabbath** — *Rom. 14:5* "One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be **fully convinced in his own mind**."

9

WISE decisions are easier when we
face in the right DIRECTION,
with Godly **GOALS** and Kingdom **VALUES**.

Strategic (macro)
decisions set the stage
for good tactical
(micro) decisions.

We must
take our
baptism
seriously.



10

Treat a baptismal covenant like we would treat a marriage covenant or legal contract.



Baptism does not call us to think less of ourself
but think of ourself AS:

- **ADOPTED**
joint heirs
being "in Christ".

- **ANointed**
Christ's Spirit dwells
in us with gifts
and power.

- **ALIENS**,
not at home in this
world, nor placing our
hope, or finding our
peace through it.

- **AMBASSADORS**
to this world where the
light within us eclipses
the fire around us.

11

The structure of Ephesians

ch.1-3
What Christ has done
FOR us.

Our Identity

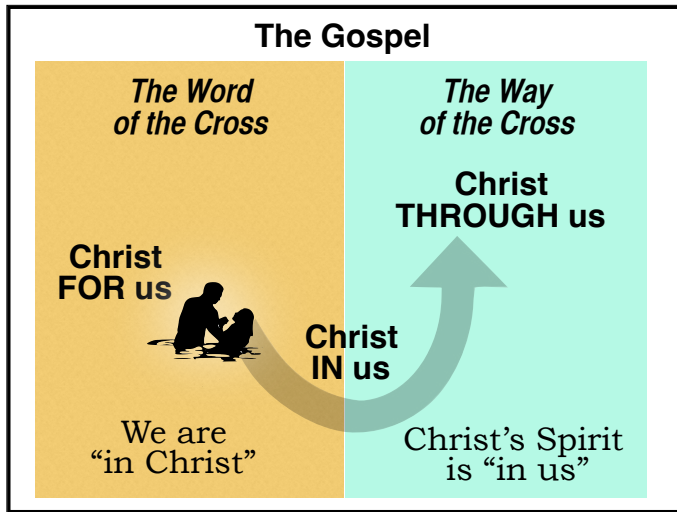
ch.4-6
What Christ is doing
IN and **THROUGH** us.

in Action

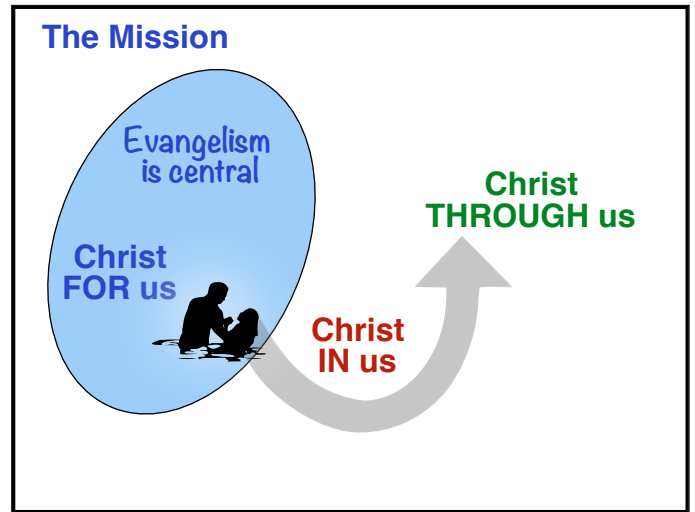
What is our calling?

"Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of **the calling with which you have been called**," 4:1

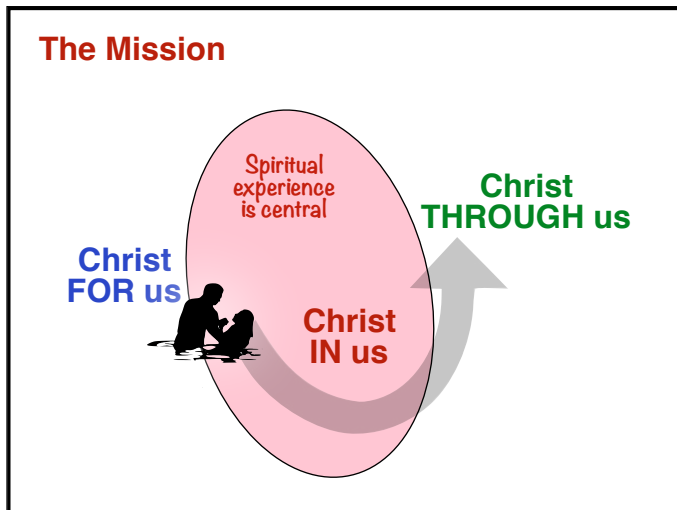
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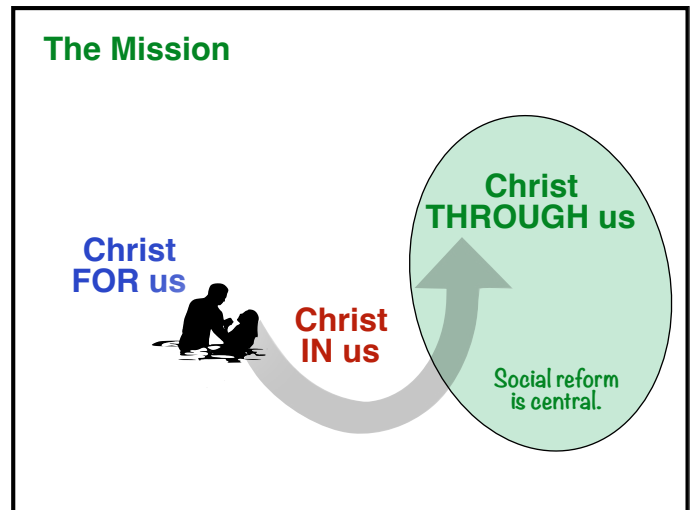
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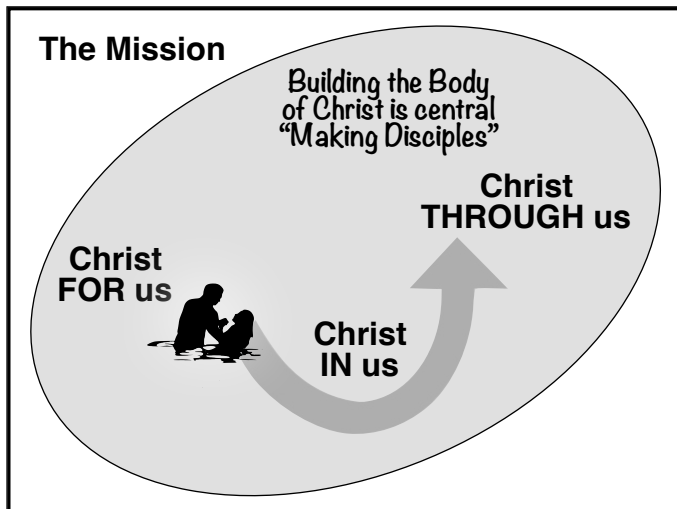
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15



16



17

Ephesians 4

"11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 **for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;** 13 until we all attain to the **unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man,** to the measure of the stature which belongs to **the fullness of Christ.** 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but **speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ,** 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for **the building up of itself in love.**"

18

Ephesians 4

“11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 **for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;**”

Our mission is to
“**EDIFY the Body of Christ**”
(the kingdom of God).

Wise decisions > **build up the Body of Christ** (not our “fleshly” comfort)!

19

Ephesians 4

“13 until we all attain to the **unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God**, to a **mature man**, to the measure of the stature which belongs to **the fullness of Christ.**”

Our mission is to
“**UNIFY the Body of Christ**”
(unity with diversity is God’s glory)

Wise decisions > **unify the diverse members of Christ’s church**
(bring an answer to Jesus’ prayer)!

20

Ephesians 4

“14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 **but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ,**”

Our mission is to
“**STABILIZE the Body of Christ**”
(speaking the truth in love unites & stabilizes).

Wise decisions > **radiate truth & love!**

21

Ephesians 4

“16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by **that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part**, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”

Our mission is to
“**DO OUR PART in the Body of Christ**”
(the whole is better than the sum of its parts).

Wise decisions > **put our best foot forward, without losing our balance, or kicking our neighbor!**

22

Note the emphasis

is not on evangelizing the lost, forming Christian nationalism, or reforming the world.

It is focused on:

- Building the Body of Christ (the church).
- Respecting our role in the Body of Christ.
- Speaking the truth in love as Christ’s Body.
- Moulding converts to be mature disciples of Christ.
- Promoting both unity & diversity in the Body of Christ.

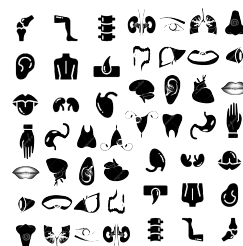


This is “making disciples”.

23

Community is a part of God’s design and calls for input from all of us.

The church is NOT the **Body Parts of Christ**.



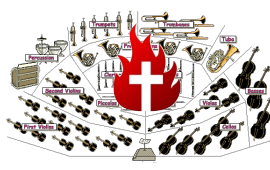
The church is the Body of Christ **but only when the pieces function as attached to one another and the head.**



The body is greater than **the sum of its parts.**

24

The Body of Christ is a family, team, orchestra.



The church is the Body of Christ, but only when the pieces function by **doing their part while attached to one another and the head (Jesus).**



not **clones** of one template



not **body parts** disconnected



not a **class system** of value differences

25

Why it is important for Christian congregations to respect and welcome the whole Body of Christ?

- **Making disciples of Christ** is incomplete without it.
- **Separating MAJOR from minor** doctrine needs it.
- **It promotes** humble, openminded, community.
- **The glory of God** deserves and demands it.
- **Reaching the world** is hindered without it.
- **Breadth & depth** of spirituality needs it.



26

A "HAMSTRUNG" congregation is where:

- **mission** is focused on only one aspect of Body life - evangelism, denominationalism, charismatic experience, social reform, etc.
- **unity** is tied to minor behavioral and theological issues.
- **legalism** is majoring on both ethical & doctrinal issues.
- **"orthodoxy"** tries to mix Old & New Covenant culture.
- **membership** excludes parts of the Body of Christ.
- **culture** is shaped by its worldly environment.
- **growth** is measured by nickels and noses.



27



The way we **respond** to life in and outside the faith community is a spiritual sign of health and witness.

28

Decision making

Next week
James
3:17-18

Peace
makers

29