

# Beyond 20/20 Vision 7

## FAMILY

God sets us in a FAMILY called the CHURCH (Eph 1:4-5, 2:19, Psalm 68:4-6).

→ *When you think of the church as a family, what jumps to mind? Do you think of your church as a family?*

New Testament makes it very clear we NEED ONE ANOTHER (John 13:34, Rom 12:16, Gal 5:13, 1 Pet 4:9, Eph 4:32, Col 3:16, Heb 10:24-25).

→ *As you read through that list of scriptures, does your church family serve those functions? Any places it's stronger or weaker? Any places you personally are stronger or weaker?*

Every metaphor is LIMITED and that's why Jesus also call us His BODY, ARMY, BRIDE, TEMPLE, VINE, FLOCK.

→ *Which of those other metaphors are especially poignant to you? Why is it important we look at all the metaphors when drawing up our picture of what church could, indeed should be?*

### THREE CAUTIONS / LIMITATIONS of the FAMILY METAPHOR

a) There's a danger that if we think of church as family, we start thinking TOO SMALL

- \* There are great benefits to LARGE, MEDIUM & SMALL ... It's a case of BOTH/AND not EITHER/OR.

b) ... we start becoming EXCLUSIVE

- \* A major part of the mandate for NATURAL families is to REPRODUCE; it's the same for a SPIRITUAL family.

c) ... we think it's OK TO FIGHT

- \* Your PICTURE of a model family might not be exactly what God had in mind FOR HIS CHURCH.

→ *Do we ever fall into any of those potential traps? Are there any ways you'd prefer your spiritual family to differ from your natural family?!*

→ *Do you think your church could be considered at all 'cliquey'? Why is that bad news and how do we avoid it?*

### 4 THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY

#### 1. Let's make everyone feel WELCOME

- \* Everyone wants to be INCLUDED & ACCEPTED; most of our 'damage' has been the result of REJECTION.
- \* Welcome is about making people feel VALUED.
- \* To whom can you give a SMILE?

- \* Can you help people CONNECT?

- \* Could you INTRODUCE yourself to someone NEW every week?

- \* Could you TALK to the people in your immediate RADIUS?

→ *How did your behaviour in respect to welcoming guests and including others differ during Covid times? Are there any areas in which we, as a church family, should be looking to sharpen up on again?*

#### 2. Let's recognise we all have a PART to PLAY

- \* Both NATURAL and SPIRITUAL families have brothers, sisters, parents, grandparents, cousins, etc.

- \* Parents PROVIDE, PROTECT, MODEL, TEACH, CORRECT & DISCIPLINE.

- \* Siblings DO LIFE with you, over the LONG HAUL.

- \* Grandparents are WISE & EXPERIENCED.

→ *Who at our church do you think of as your brothers, sisters, parents, cousins, uncles, aunts, grandparents? Any you feel you're lacking right now? Which of those roles do you think you play in your various interactions with others?*

#### 3. Let's CARE for ONE ANOTHER

The church is an intricate, interwoven ORGANISM designed to

- \* WALK together in a COORDINATED fashion.

- \* SERVE together in an EFFECTIVE fashion.

- \* CARE for one another in a HEALTHY fashion.

God PUTS you into His FAMILY and you GROW by:

a) Cultivating STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

b) Developing CHARACTER

c) Exercising the GIFTS He's given you (Romans 12:6-8)

→ *Which of those Romans 12 Motivational Gifts are you? You may have a major and a couple of minors. Which of those gifts are you particularly grateful for in the church? Anyone in your connect group you'd particularly like to commend?*

→ *"Pastoral care is a team sport!" Discuss!*

#### 4. Please be in a CONNECT GROUP

- \* We need to grow LARGER and SMALLER at the same time.

- \* We need the COMMUNITY, PURPOSE & SUPPORT of groups & teams (the MEDIUM-sized).

→ *Does your church involvement include large, medium and small? Which do you prefer, and why? Which do you need more of, and why?*