

The Church as Creature of the Word, Part 4

Session 3 – Matt Chandler

God saves people, and it's not always the same circumstances around conversion. The beauty of conversion is to see people saved in Sunday School or saved out of a strip club.

1. He calls us to be worshippers.

But what happens next? Worship in spirit and truth. Worship that is above the shoulders (informed by who God is, what He does, information about the living God that fuels worship). Worship is also below the shoulders (with passion, fervency, a glad heart).

If we've got any hope at all of being teams that lead in a way that is healthy, vibrant, and life-transforming, we'd better be worshippers in spirit and truth. Your people will be drawn to what you are most passionate about. Are you a worshipper? Does Jesus excite you? Or has ministry gotten rote and routine for you?

No matter how much you talk about leading teams and strategies, if you don't have in your heart a love for Jesus and the desire to make much of Him, you'll go off the rails quickly.

You can do everything we're doing at our church and learn best practices and see *nothing* happen somewhere else. The Holy Spirit trusts people who just love Jesus. Massive growth is not always success. Do you have affections for the Lord, enjoying getting to know Him? Or are you in the text just because you have to be in the text?

The undershepherd must love the Good Shepherd.

2. He calls us to one another.

Let love be genuine, without hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy is pretending to be more than you are, or pointing out the flaws of others so you feel better about yourself.

Abhor what is evil. Love is willing to engage an erring brother or sister. Genuine love says, "I think you are in danger." It is not cruel to point out danger in the lives of others. You're not a bad parent to not let your kid play in the street. It means you're a loving parent.

Love one another with a brotherly affection...

The reason Paul is writing this text is because the church in Rome is not living this way. Be encouraged! The kinds of things your church is dealing with are the things Paul dealt with.

Your staff's interaction with each other goes a long way in cultivating the culture of your church.

Questions for your team:

- How are you organizationally doing this (outdoing one another in love and good deeds)?
- Lead pastor, how open are you with other staff members? Are you isolated? To remove yourself from the trenches and retreat to books and study will take away the sharp edge of leading your people well.
- Does your staff do things together as friends after hours? Are there organic gatherings of people on your team? Life, not complaining. Celebrating what God is doing in your church. Foster that. Encourage that.

3. God calls us as servants.

The gospel is not only the foundation for our service; it also radically purifies our motivation for service. We serve because Jesus has served us.

Pastors, are you modeling for your people a heart of servanthood? Kingdom hands are dirty hands.

If you walk in entitlement, you will simply create a sense of entitlement beneath you that leads to an entitled staff, and an entitled leadership, an entitled congregation that leads to the death of the church.

A healthy church, a healthy culture reproduces. The creature of the Word multiplies. Church planting, missions, etc. The more clingy you are about what's yours the more you show your own culture and the desire to feel good about yourself.

There will be a day when no one cares about a big church name or your pastor heroes. How eagerly do you celebrate the success of other churches in your area? How easy is it for you to critique those churches?

Do you celebrate the kingdom? Or do you celebrate your kingdom?

Do you acknowledge that God is working in streams other than your own?

The more you think the ministry is about you, the more exhausted and weary you will become. The more you recognize the ministry is about Jesus, the more freeing you will feel.

The downward turn of our culture will shrink and purify the church, as people who are into church but not into Jesus will leave. Out of that, there is hope that God will do spectacular things. We will work for genuine gospel community to shine, as we serve one another in a way that confuses and attracts the world around us.

Read the prior posts in this series here: [Part 1](#); [Part 2](#); [Part 3](#).

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