

HHBC Value Statements – Week 6

Doing Life Together as a Christ-Centered Community

Our last week of our six-week church wide study over the renewed values of our church focuses our hearts and minds on the value Henderson Hills puts on community within the church and doing life together as a church body. Henderson Hills defines doing life together as a Christ-centered community in this way: ***We value that God uniquely uses personal relationships to sanctify and sharpen believers.***

I. Description: Our church believes this value is best displayed in 10 distinct ways:

<i>Loving</i>	<i>Discipling</i>
<i>Promoting Accountability</i>	<i>Developing purposeful and intentional friendships</i>
<i>Practicing hospitality</i>	<i>Mentoring</i>
<i>Caring intentionally for the souls of the congregation</i>	<i>Encouraging unity</i>
<i>Exemplifying humility</i>	<i>Strengthening families</i>

II. Introductory Questions:

As we begin discussing this final value, let's begin our conversation with two questions to discuss:

Why do you think that all human beings desire relationships, shared experiences, and community with other human beings?

Why is a church the perfect vehicle to fulfill this desire within people? Do you think Christians take this opportunity to impact people through relating to them on a spiritual level seriously enough? Why or why not?

The idea of doing life together as a Christ-centered community is at the heart of everything we believe about God; for He desires a relationship with us, He calls us into relationship with Him, and He has given us the perfect place to develop our relationships with other people as He has given us the Church. With that in mind, let's discuss this value together.

III. Discussion and Application:

1. Loving (READ •1 John 4:7-12)

As a church body we ought to reflect the call God has given us to love, and we should be known in our community as people who boldly love God and love others. For if we believe in a God of love, we should be people who reflect that love.

Why does John so decisively connect knowing God with loving others? What is the connection between those to actions?

- *What does this passage say about where our motivation to love others must come from? What is the danger if we fail to keep that in mind as we pursue relationships with people who may be very different from us in a variety of ways?*

2. Discipling (READ •1 Thessalonians 2:7-12)

Our church yearns to be a congregation of believers that consistently uses relationships to pour our lives into others – both for God to call the lost to be saved and also for the purpose of God calling the saved to grow in their salvation.

- *In reading this passage from Paul, what stands out to you about how he describes his motivation to minister to the church at Thessalonica and how he feels about these people? How would you describe Paul's relationship with them?*

Yet Paul calls his ministry to them labor and toil – why do we know that loving and teaching and walking alongside of others is often laborious and difficult work? And yet why is it utterly important as well?

3. Promoting accountability (READ •Proverbs 27:17)

Our church yearns to be a body where believers hold each other accountable, lift each other up in prayer, and who support each other through strong personal relationships.

- *What can this simple proverb teach us about how personal relationships can be used effectively to help others grow in their faith?*

In our day and age, why is accountability such an important and necessary tool for groups of believers?

4. Developing purposeful and intentional relationships (READ •Colossians 4:2-9)

Our relationships must be purposeful and intentional as believers. Whether we are pursuing God together in a small group setting or ministering to the needs of an unbelieving friend, we must seek God and follow Him as He leads our relationships.

In this passage, why is Paul sending his friends to the church at Colossae, and how can they help this church?

- *Why would it be wise, and important, for the Colossian church to embrace these men and develop a relationship with them?*

5. Practicing hospitality (READ • 1 Peter 4:7-11)

As a body of believers, our church is called to be filled with hospitable people who will open up their homes, share their lives, and give abundantly of our time, resources, and love. When we are hospitable, we are truly building community. The instruction is to show hospitality without grumbling.

Why is hospitality often very difficult and stressful?

- *Why is hospitality an important aspect of Christianity? What does our hospitality reflect about our Father in heaven?*

6. Mentoring (READ • Titus 2:1-8)

Those who are more mature in the faith have the opportunity at Henderson Hills to spend time with a younger generation for the purpose of mentoring. There is much to gain from these relationships, and we praise God for them.

- *How are the older men and women called to minister to the younger men and women? Why should this be a normal occurrence within a church body?*

What are the benefits to the entire church when these mentoring relationships are happening within a church body?

7. Caring intentionally for the souls of the congregation (READ • 1 Corinthians 12:18-26)

God has called a group of faithful people to lead, care for, and protect the church. But as they cannot care for every member, we have a responsibility to care for each other, and we ought to welcome this opportunity.

As God has equipped us all with spiritual gifts for the purpose of building up His church, why is it important that every church member faithfully use our gifts no matter what they are? How does this translate into caring for each other?

- *In our small groups especially, what does it look like to suffer with each other but also rejoice with each other as well?*

8. Encouraging unity (READ • Ephesians 4:11-16)

God yearns Christ's bride – the Church – to be unified in its purpose, its vision, and its desire to see God glorified in all things. Our church puts a premium on unity, and we believe unity is best pursued when every member works together.

- *How is a church body helped when all of its members are pursuing unity together? Why must unity be an effort of every member of a church?*

Why is the lack of unity so dangerous for all churches, and how can we be more serious in the pursuit of unity within our church?

9. Exemplifying humility (READ • Philippians 2:1-8)

Just as Christ is the ultimate example of humility, we yearn for our church to have humility at its core in all that we do. If we truly are a church that glorifies God with all that we do, God must become greater, and we must become less.

- *Why is it utterly important for the church to display and exemplify the type of humility that Paul describes Christ with in this passage? What will happen to our church if we fail in this?*

Why should we take encouragement, then, in the fact that the same Christ that gave up His life for His church yearns to lead His church as well? How can we as a church be better in following Him as a body?

10. Strengthening families (READ • Ephesians 5:25-6:4)

Our church yearns to be a place where the family is strengthened and we act as a secondary avenue for ministry as parents minister to their children at home and spouses pursue Christ together. A strong church is made up of strong families, and we desire nothing more than to see families grow in the Lord at Henderson Hills.

- *Why must Christ be at the center of our familial relationships if they are to grow and glorify Him? How does this passage address that necessity?*

Why is it so important that ministry first take place in the home rather than in the church? What role does the church body play in that pursuit?

1. Loving (1 John 4:7-12)

7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

2. Discipling (1 Thessalonians 2:7-12)

7 Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, 8 so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. 9 Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. 10 You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. 11 For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, 12 encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

3. Promoting accountability (Proverbs 27:17)

17 As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

4. Developing purposeful and intentional relationships (Colossians 4:2-9)

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. 5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. 6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. 7 Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. 8 I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. 9 He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

5. Practicing hospitality (1 Peter 4:7-11)

7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. 8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. 10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

6. Mentoring (Titus 2:1-8)

1 You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine. 2 Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. 3 Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. 4 Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. 6 Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. 7 In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness 8 and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

7. Caring intentionally for the souls of the congregation (1 Corinthians 12:18-26)

18 But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" 22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it,

25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

8. Encouraging unity (Ephesians 4:11-16)

11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

9. Exemplifying humility (Philippians 2:1-8)

1 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. 5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

10. Strengthening families (Ephesians 5:25-6:4)

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body. 31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” 32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— 3 “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” 4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord