

VALUES 101 #2

Living with a Counter-Culture Perspective

Introduction: Does God exist? This was the headline in a recent “Weekend Australian” Magazine.

- How do you connect with someone you cannot see, touch or prove.
- Rabbi Eli (one of those killed in the Bondi massacre) was asked that question. ○ His reply: “not everything is visible. Examples include wi-fi, Bluetooth, electricity. You cannot see them, but they are everywhere. You don’t have to see God to know He is there.”
- Christians believe:
 - Jesus came so we could see God
 - Holy Spirit is given so we can sense His power and guidance.
 - Proves God is real by:
 - His Word
 - Changed lives
 - Releasing of gifts of the Spirit
- Last week were were:
 - urged to surrender ○ to be renewed in our mind ○ this is a spiritual act of worship
- This week, it is how to live with a counter-culture perspective.

1. Humility

Romans 12:3 *for by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*

- Humility is formed:
 - By recognizing all gifts come from God

- Recognizing pattern of the world (eg individualism; selfpromotion)
- Sober – thinking straight ○ Being real with yourself

(a) What is faith?

- Natural faith – chair that holds me ○ UFO; evolution
- Belief in God

James 2:19 *You believe there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder.*

- Saving Faith:

Ephesians 2:8 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God... ○ saved by grace (gift) ○ through faith (action)*

- Fruit Faith:

2 Thessalonians 1:3 *We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing. ○ Faith that grows*

- Gift of Faith:

1 Corinthians 12:7;9-10a *Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good ...to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy...*

- True faith is based on truth.

(b) What is the Measure of Faith?

- Faith is like a seed, and when planted, has everything required to produce fruit.
- Faith can grow.

ILLUSTRATION: Jesus and the Parable of the Sower.

2. Collective Responsibility

Romans 12:4-5 *Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

(a) Is faith personal, or corporate, or both?

- As a child grows, they move from dependent to codependent to interdependent.
- Notice each member belongs to the others (v 5)
- The health of the church depends on each member recognizing their role and contributing to the community.

(b) Humility leads to unity.

- Humility not only recognises the grace-gifts on ourselves, but also that others have gifts which we need to recognise.

Philippians 2:3-4 *do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

3. Diversity of Gifts.

Romans 12:6-8 *We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

Gift	Description
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Prophecy	The ability to speak forth God's truth and to discern His will.
Serving	The gift of serving others, demonstrating humility and a willingness to help without seeking recognition.
Teaching	The ability to impart knowledge and understanding of God's word accurately
Encouragement	The gift of uplifting and motivating others to live according to God's will.
Giving	The calling to share resources generously and cheerfully.
Leadership	The responsibility to guide and direct others.
Mercy	The ability to show compassion and kindness with a cheerful heart.

Conclusion: Humility leads to unity which leads to collective responsibility and the use of spiritual gifts in all their forms, recognizing each other's contribution is valuable and necessary.

- How can a world believe in a God they cannot see? Through you and me!