Last week we looked at TRUE LOVE (The Heart of the Gospel message).

Romans 5:8 – “Loving in spite”… How people are/aren’t – what they have/haven’t done.

Which is central to the “CORE VALUES” of the Church of the Nazarene:

1. We are a CHRISTIAN PEOPLE. (Wesleyan-Holiness Heritage roots)
2. We are a HOLINESS PEOPLE. (Because that is what God saves us to be. Setting ourselves apart to grow in Christ-likeness)
3. Since Jesus was on Mission, we too are “Missional People”. John 20:21

Our mission is Matthew 28:19-20 – To make Christ-like disciples who make disciples;

1. It begins in worship
2. Ministering to the world thru evangelism & compassion (love).
3. Encourages believers to continue maturing in their faith through learning & application of God’s Word.
4. Preparing men & women for Christian service and higher education. We have at least 10 outstanding, sought after college campuses in the US. PLNU

* Through the Church of the Nazarene that we are part of globally in 2018 48,000 New believers came to faith in Jesus through the ministry of 5,126 churches world wide.
* Thousands of men & women have received their local and District preaching licenses.
* God is working through the Church of the Nazarene in many mission areas outside the US to make a positive impact in our world.

He does this by - “Loving Community”

Communication is key to successful living, love & community.

Communication, used for a common purpose plays a key role in any loving community... Marriage, friendships, church, work, school…

As a woman discovered who traveled to Paris without her husband…

She found this fabulous bracelet that she had been looking for. So she sent a telegram back home saying, “I have found this beautiful bracelet, one I’ve been looking for all my life.

It only costs $7500. Do you think I can buy it?

Her husband sent a telegram back, with a short but firm reply,

“No, (notice the comma) price too high!“ And he signed his name.

But in the transmission the comma was left out…

So the message instead read, “no price too high.“ Oh, she was thrilled!

Needless to say, one comma tested the strength of their loving community that day…

What went wrong?

They had differing agendas (hers to spend, his not to…) which becomes the source of division & conflict...

It was differing agendas (one focused on self & one focused on others) that changed things for all mankind in Genesis 11:4-9.

Did God confuse their communication and halt their construction because He’s mean and doesn’t want mankind to unite, and use their communication to build big buildings for themselves? No…

But what had God just finished doing? “Rebooting” a self-focused ungodly world thru a flood… They didn’t learn or perhaps forgot…

All of this is rooted in mankind’s fall into self-interest & disobedience to God in Genesis 3… But since God loves “in spite of”… He has been on a rescue mission ever since…

A mission to save mankind from themselves (because God has something better planned)… so that others can be found…

And even-though something very negative appeared to happen at Babel, God who is always GOOD, brought good from it…

He communicated with someone else to see if they would follow God’s agenda rather than their own…

How do we know that?

Genesis 12:1 – God called Abraham to leave his comfort-zone and follow Him. To “go where I’m sending you”…

And because of Abraham’s love & obedience to God, God made a Covenant (an unbreakable promise) with Abraham in Genesis 12:2-3).

God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit exemplify “Loving Community” by working together to make a great name for Abraham and Israel.

Israel was/is a very special & important to God, therefore it should be special to believers everywhere.

Through them, “ALL peoples on the earth will be blessed”.

That blessing came first through the birth of God’s Son, Jesus, in Bethlehem.

* His life in Nazareth (Nazarene).
* His crucifixion for the sins of the world, burial and resurrection on the 3rd day in Jerusalem.

Jesus communicated a promise similar to was what given to Abraham. John 10:10

That’s will get you all that and more!!

Followers of Jesus are promised “abundant life” (which takes a big load off of people who once thought life was all about amassing possessions and making a great name for themselves)…

But pastor, there are still a lot of people out there still doing that!!

Acts 2:11 - He poured out His Holy Spirit on all nationalities who follow Jesus and began they witnessed the miracle of hearing people of other nationalities “declaring the wonders of God in their own tongue.”

Acts 2:17-18

Galatians 3:28

In loving community, we are finally united (Genesis 1&2) in making a great name for God, and serving his plan & purpose above our own…

That’s what living a life of worship is all about… It’s not just something we do on Sunday mornings…

Communicating in context is another important to creating & maintaining Loving Community.

Luke 17:20-21 – When Jesus used the word “kingdom,” the Pharisees took His communication out of context and used it to accuse Him of trying to overthrow Rome… (to accomplish their agenda of killing Jesus).

A good reminder that we should speak with God’s agenda of reaching others for Christ as the basis of our communication.

“Tactful” communication is also something that many Christians might improve upon (myself included)…

Like the husband who’s wife again who traveled abroad… They had a schnauzer puppy that they loved dearly.

Her first day away, she made it to New York so she called to ask how things were going? The husband said, “the dog is dead!” She was devastated.

After gathering her thoughts, she asked “why do you do that? Why can’t you be more tactful? He said, “well? What do you want me to say? The dog died.”

She said you could’ve given it to me in stages. For example you could say when I call you from New York, the dog is on the roof.

And the next day when I get to London, you could tell me, “the dog fell off the roof.”

And when I get to Paris you could add, “the dog had to be taken to the vet. In fact, he’s not doing well.”

And finally when I call you from Rome, you could say, “Honey, brace yourself. Our dog died.”

I could handle that! The husband paused and said, oh, I see.

Then she asked, “by the way, how is mother?” He said, “she’s on the roof.”

1 Peter 3:8-12

“Loving Community” means “joyfully” loving God’s church (warts & all), because if you don’t have a “joy-filled” love for the church, then why would our unbelieving friends love the Lord of the church?

I know that many of you do love the church… But the church is the people… Sometimes believers can fall into the trap of loving our “memories” of the way church used to be…

Or how God worked through you with a different group, in a different place, at a different/younger time in your life…

Which can lead to discouragement…

Maybe the loss of Jesus, who had once been you’re “first love”…

Perhaps cooling off, becoming inactive & “Lukewarm”…

So how can you turn that around?

Seek God to heat up your love for Him & others…

Becoming so faithful/committed to God, that you see the open doors of church for Bible study and Sunday worship, as important as a cancer patient sees their Chemo appointment. “I must needs go…”

To become a stronger/healthier example that helps others grow, get stronger, better, heal faster, and help others…

Another key to “loving community” is “Pray more, criticize less”.

If you don’t like your pastor’s sermons, pray until the sermons become great!

Criticism is easy… prayer takes time and energy.

If you feel that you need to criticize, do it as one who faithfully attends, serves, gives and loves the church…

Make a great name for God and His church, Love Him & others better than yourself…

Use communication as a positive tool to encourage and build up the church… Criticize less, pray more…

Has the Holy Spirit spoken to your heart in anyway today?

* Have you heard a command to obey?
* An example to follow?
* A promise to claim?
* A sin to repent of/avoid?
* Is there a principle that God wants you to follow?