

Learning Together
Being the Church | Selected Scriptures
Southern Hills Baptist Church
April 30, 2017

Introduction: With the many changes headed our way as a church it seemed appropriate to stop and remember what it means to be the church. As we discussed last week, the church is not a building or a service, but rather a people united around a shared love for Jesus. Few would disagree with this, but how does this flesh itself out? What does it look like to BE the church? Tonight our focus will be on learning God's Word together.

Where is the Call for us to Learn God's Word Together?

- **Jesus Building His Church (Matt 16:13-18):** Jesus asked the Disciples who they believed Him to be. Peter said Jesus was the Messiah, God-incarnate. Jesus responded by saying that it was upon this truth, proclaimed by faithful men (like Peter), that He would build His church. Thus, the church is a people founded on truth and to rightly worship God we must rightly know God, which means we must learn who He is.
- **Teach the Church All of Jesus' Teachings (Matt 18:16-20):** Jesus' final command to His followers is to take those who have believed in Him and teach them all He has commanded. The other side of that command would be for all who have believed (the church) to learn all that Jesus has commanded. The church is called to learn God's Word.

Why is Learning God's Word Important? (2 Tim 3:16-17)

- **God's Word is here to Show You God:** The Bible is God-Breathed, meaning that it finds its origin in God. Know this, you were made by and for God (Rom 11:36), thus the Bible is where you can find your greatest joy and meaning in life b/c it is where you can find God.
- **God's Word is here for You:** God is the source of the truth of the Scriptures, yet God chose to use humanity to deliver the Bible (2 Peter 1:19-21). He used human authors, language we can read, and historical settings we can identify with all so you could engage Him and begin to understand Him. God is reaching out to you!
- **God's Word is here to Teach You:** We live in a world that is divided over the most basic moral issues. Truth is thought to be subjective. The Bible however delivers God's timeless, objective truth, teaching us what is right (teaching), what is wrong (reproof), how to get right (correction), and how to stay right (training in righteousness). You would be lost without God's revelation.

- **God's Word is here to Grow/Change You:** God's purpose for His Word moves beyond filling your head with knowledge, He wants to grow you into the image of Christ for His glory. This was the purpose you were created for (Isa 43:7; 1 Cor 10:31), thus the Bible is central to you being who you were created to be.
- **Application: How central is the Bible to your life?** You need God's Word to be who you were created to be and to find true and lasting joy and purpose. Make engaging with God's Word a primary goal each day!

Why is Learning God's Word Together Important?

- **We are called to Encourage One Another (1 Thess 4:18, 5:11):** When life overwhelms you it is easy to want to take the path of least resistance, but this is not always what God calls you to. In those moments we need other Believers who will encourage us to faithfully live out God's Word. We are called to do the same for others.
- **We are called to Build Up One Another (Rom 14:19):** Sometimes encouragement isn't enough and we need people to help us understand God's calling on our life or how we might apply it.
- **We are called to Admonish One Another (Rom 15:14; 1 Thess 5:14):** At times we will stray, so God has given us the church to lovingly confront one another that we may stay near God. This is not an easy task, but the environment of learning together provides a healthy foundation for this to take place as we sit shoulder to shoulder under God's Word with people we love and care for.
- **Summary:** How could we ever hope to live out these "one another" commands if we are not learning God's Word together? The church is to be a community of Believers who actively seek to learn and live out God's Word with one another.
- **Application:**
 - **Be Here:** When we study God's Word together on Sundays, when we discuss application on Wednesday, be here. You need God's Word. You need other believers to encourage, build up, and admonish you. Don't forget, we need you too. We depend on you to be that for us as well. We are stronger together, with you.
 - **Engage in God's Word Together:** Look to make the Bible central in your conversations with one another. After Sunday's sermon ask each other what you thought about the passage we studied, or what truth impacted them the most.
 - **Invest in One Another:** The call to encourage, build up, and admonish assumes shared life. Invest in one another that you may have the chance to encourage others and be encouraged by others from God's Word.

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