

## **Summer Study Series on the Nature of the Church**

**Interaction Based discussions/Scripture Translation: NRSV**

**Leader - Pastor Ragland, Knox Presbyterian**

**(All participants are asked to read the scriptures and reflect on the questions before each of the lessons)**

**Simply click on this link to join the NBPC Summer Bible Study series:**

**<https://zoom.us/j/2118393146?pwd=aDBBMUU3K2NwSU1ITHZhQ2gyaDIPUT09>**

**You may also join via telephone. Dial 1-669-900-6833,  
meeting ID: 2118393146#. Password: 238009**

## **Study 1 – June 3, 2020**

### **The Heart & Soul of the Church?**

#### **A. Thinking about the early Church:**

- a. Consider for a few moments what the early New Testament Church might have been like. List several characteristics that you think may have distinguished it from the Synagogue or other religious or social groups mentioned in the Bible.
- b. What were some of their challenges, fears, hopes and organizational problems?
- c. What did they believe their mission was?
- d. Where did people worship?
- e. What was the relationship between the early Church and the Jewish Temple?
- f. What makes a Church a church?
- g. Where can the primary activity of a church take place?
- h. How essential is a “place” for Church activity to occur?

#### **B. Read I John 1:1-4 (Background)**

1. What types of evidence were presented to the disciples that convinced them about the nature and message of the Lord Jesus? (vs.1,2)
2. What was the basic message that John and the other Disciples received from the Lord? (vs.2b)
3. John had a strong emotional/spiritual response to the message of Jesus (vs.4). How do you think this emotion revealed itself in John's life, that is, what outward things might we have seen in him?

#### **C. Read Romans 14:13-19 (background)**

1. In verse 17, Paul makes the Kingdom of God sound like it is very much at the heart of the Church. What is the Kingdom of God like according to this passage?
2. According to this passage (vs.18,19), what do the Christian “do” in response to the fact that they are part of the Kingdom of God?
3. Briefly describe what you think would be the sacrifice involved and the benefits given by God if the members of a church were wholly committed to see this passage (vs. 17-19) become a reality:
4. Identify the rewards/benefits?

#### **NOTES:**

## **Study 2 – June 10, 2020**

### **The Spirit and the Church**

#### **A. The Holy Spirit and its role in the Church**

In the following passages, what are some of the ways in which the Holy Spirit ministers to believers? How does the Spirit help them and what does the Spirit help them to do?

1. Ezekiel 36:27 (a prophecy concerning the work of the coming Holy Spirit)
2. Acts 1:8
3. I John 3:24
4. John 14:16,26
5. II Timothy 1:14

#### **B. When the members of the New Testament Church wanted to get the full effects of the Holy Spirit's ministry in their life, what did they believe God for?**

1. Ephesians 5:18
2. Galatians 5:13-17

F. Summarize in your own words what we must do to appropriate the Holy Spirit's full effect in your life:

G. Let's pray for the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our life, that it may come in all its fullness...

#### **NOTES:**

## **Study 3 – June 17, 2020**

### **Everyone Counts In The Church!**

A. Describe some of the feelings that occur when a person in a family or a Church feels like they do not have a meaningful place among the members:

B. Do such feelings usually result in division?

C. Read I Corinthians 12:12-17, 24b-27

1. What is the picture or analogy used by Paul to show us what the Church is like?:

2. According to this passage, how important is each person in the Church?:

3. How prominent or skilled must a person be in order to have a legitimately meaningful place in the Church?

D. Read Matthew 18:19,20

1. According to Jesus, what advantage is there to praying with someone--especially in a Church discipline situation (which is the context of this passage)?

2. What do you think: does God listen to the prayers of an individual more than a group, or a group more than an individual?     \_\_\_Yes     \_\_\_No

3. Offer your suggestions: Can you think of occasions when God would be seeking the prayer of each of the members of a group instead of the prayer of any one particular individual?

E. Read Romans 15:1-7, 13

1. According to this passage, what resources are available to the Christian to help do the work of ministering to others?

a) vs. 1

b) vs. 3

c) vs. 4

d) vs. 5

e) vs. 7

f) vs. 13

2. What are some of the things God has already equipped us to do in the Church, particularly for our neighbor?

3. According to verses 5-7, what are some of the things that God is looking for from the Church as a whole?

4. Does everyone in the Body need to participate in order for these commands to become a reality?

F. Is harmony in the Body of Christ something that is automatic? If not, what must be done by each of us to preserve it?

1. Ephesians 4:3

2. Philippians 1:27, 2:2

G. In light of our study, list some of the reasons the Lord needs each of us to function as part of the Church today:

H. Let's pray concerning one thing you could do this week that would help you to feel more a part of the Body of Christ...

**NOTES:**