

## Mostly Personal...

Loved Ones, let's continue to look at our Core Values. We've discussed **Biblical Authority, Intimacy with God, The Lord's Empowering Presence, & Pastors who are Servant Leaders**. Today we'll cover 5 & 6.

**5. Partners In Ministry - We believe there are ministry opportunities for every member of the Christian Life Family. Ministry involvement will be in accordance to the person's spiritual gifts as well as present needs within the church family.**

- A. In our American culture, when we speak of *membership*, we think in terms of rights and privileges. However, when we speak of membership in the church, we use the phrase **Partners in Ministry**, and we are speaking in terms of service, responsible living within a loving family, and kingdom responsibility.
- Speaking of life in the Kingdom of God, Jesus made it clear that the path we walk upon is one of **service**.
    - "The one who is greatest among you will become the greatest servant – a servant of all." – Jesus
    - "All of you ought to esteem each other more valuable and of greater worth than yourself." – Paul the Apostle
    - "Beloved, let's be sure to love and serve one another, because love comes from God and everyone who truly loves is born of God and knows Him. If a person doesn't walk in love and care for others, it is evident he does not know God. Therefore brothers, let us take care to love one another." – John the Apostle
  - In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul teaches us the crowning hallmark of life in the Church is to walk in **love**. The evidence of familial love is more compelling for the Gospel message than miracles and heroic deeds. Paul would further teach that we are to take every opportunity to do good to everyone, but especially those who are "members of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10).
  - Concerning **Kingdom responsibility**, Jesus taught us that essential praying includes desire for His kingdom to come, and that all of earth would live under the influence of that heavenly kingdom (Matthew 6:10).
  - Furthermore, we believe there is a place of service for every partner in ministry within the Christian Life family. Paul would teach the Corinthian Believers that we are like a body made up of various parts, each different in appearance, function, and expression. With Christ as our head, we serve together for a common purpose – to serve vital life functions for the body as a whole. It is noteworthy that some parts are more visible and some may be more essential, but all have been wonderfully crafted together for the purpose of life!
  - A few years ago I taught a series called *Finding Your Peanut*. It was based on the testimony of George Washington Carver, a great American educator and inventor who said, "When I asked God to

help me understand the world, he told me to begin with the peanut. If I could understand the lowly, insignificant peanut, I could begin to understand the whole world. As I studied the peanut, I found it to be the core of my life's work. After many inventions and uses of the peanut were discovered, I became convinced that it is the duty of every citizen to fill one's place of service. It may seem as lowly as a little peanut, but the Maker of the Peanut is the Maker of Me as well, and there are treasures to be discovered if we all find our gift, our individual place of service."

- B. When you become a Partner in Ministry, we will help identify your spiritual gifts and talents. We then do our best to plug you into a ministry spot that is made just for you! Call the office for more details on how you can become a partner in ministry at Christian Life – 803.798.4488.

**6. Authentic Community - We believe accountability, care, and a sense of belonging are critical to balance and progress in our spiritual journey. These three things are best achieved within the context of a small group of relationally connected believers.**

- A. We believe community life (church attendance and participation) is perhaps the most undervalued, underappreciated means of grace within the Christian Life. Especially within our Protestant heritage, there is a tendency to casually pop in and out of services according to our present satisfaction level with our church. We have believed a lie that tells us we can worship God anywhere, at any time, following any model we choose, and that our choice is just as valid and effective as the plan set up by our Lord. This is the same mistake made by Cain when he offered a sacrifice of his own choosing. No church is perfect; we are all flawed in some way. Nevertheless, the church is His Bride, and we ignore it at our own spiritual peril.
- B. We celebrate The LORD in many venues and various expressive styles, but within every setting we strive to achieve accountability, loving care, and a sense of belonging. In larger churches, it is easy for people to slip in and out unnoticed, and often with unmet needs. The remedy for this is to find fellowship within a small group sponsored by the church. These groups occur in church, homes and various meeting places throughout the city all week long. Contact the church office to learn more about the exciting options for small groups or visit us online at [christianlifecolumbia.com](http://christianlifecolumbia.com).

**Coming up:**

**7. Intentional Apprenticing** - We believe the key to the success of *Building Godly Generations* is intentional apprenticing. Every experienced follower of Christ is responsible for passing along to others the knowledge, skills, and opportunities for service that God, through others, entrusted to them.

**8. Relational Evangelism** - We believe all Christ-followers have the responsibility of intentionally sharing the Gospel within their network of relationships.

**9. Culturally Relevant Environment** - We believe our role is to convey eternal truth by creating a variety of environments that are relevant to every generation and conducive to the work of the Holy Spirit.

I love you all, *Pastor Stephen*

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