

## **Champion the Cause of the Local Church**

**“I know there are some who say, “Well, I have given myself to the Lord, but I do not intend to give myself to the church.” Now why not? I ask. “Because I can be a Christian without it” they say. Are you quite clear about that? You can be as good a Christian by disobedience to your Lord’s commands as by being obedient? What is a brick made for? To help build a house. It is of no use for that brick to tell you that it is just as good a brick while it is kicking about on the ground as it would be in the house. It is a good-for-nothing brick. So you rolling stone Christians, I do not believe that you are serving your purpose. You are living contrary to the life which Christ would have you live, and you are much to blame for the injury you do.” (Charles Spurgeon)**

### **A. Unity is the Key to Furthering the Cause of Christ**

- Unity holds the church together through the good and the bad times and shows the world that we mean business.
- Jesus said that the world will know that we are His disciples when we put aside this Christian civil war and love one another as He has loved us.
- The church is the body of Christ of which He is the head. Therefore it is important that we work together as one unit to ensure that the body heads in the right direction.
- God commands a blessing when we unite as one body, when we fix our eyes on the author and finisher of our faith and allow our focus to shift from our external problems to the inward solutions achieved by the imparting of God’s spirit.

### **B. Leading From the Front and the Back**

- Since the foundation of the early church we have been blessed with God-given leaders who have honed their leading skills through regular participation in church life.
- Whilst worldly leadership looks to oppress others in a pursuit of power, Godly leaders are appointed to release others into ministry fulfilling the purpose of the local church.
- We must take on the responsibility of standing in the gap and supporting our leaders because one day it could be us needing the encouraging.
- We are all called to lead. If we have committed our lives to Christ then we are all missionaries. God has placed before us a mission field and we must work towards thinking globally and loving locally.
- The early church were not preoccupied with the global church but they saw the planting and leading of individual local churches as fulfilment of the bigger picture. They did so without compromising everyday service and involvement with God’s people.

### **C. Without Vision the People Will Perish (Proverbs 29:18 (a))**

- It is important that we understand why we come together so that we achieve what God has set out for us to achieve in Whyalla.
- This vision is to actively and relentlessly pursue the Glory of God and the manifest presence of Jesus through worship, prayer, teaching, discipling, mission and fellowship.
- For this vision to reach its fruition it must be worked out in every facet of church life and by doing so it will connect people in their relationships and strengthen the foundations of our local church setting.
- The fact is that there is a city on our doorstep that is crying out for purpose as they watch their friends and loved ones take their own lives.
- The people want something more than what this world can offer them and has called for us to restore sight to those who have been blinded by the hopelessness of the world.

- The vision I believe God has for Bunyarra is that we don't become a dam where we just hold in the quantity of people that we already have but that we have an inlet of people being led to the Lord and an outlet by which people are sent out from this place into ministry elsewhere.

**D. Commit Your Way to the Lord and Your Plans Will Succeed**

- For our church to reach its full potential we must deepen our commitment and become those which are prepared to die to ourselves so that the cause of Christ can be outworked.
- God has assigned everyone with gifts and abilities for the purpose of serving the local church and community and if you bury them in the ground you will not see the reward God has in store for you.
- We all have passions and interests that take up a lot of our time but commitment to the local church should be our number one priority as there are many great causes to support but none give to the local church.

**Seven Steps to Commitment**

1. You \_\_\_\_\_
2. You \_\_\_\_\_
3. You \_\_\_\_\_
4. You \_\_\_\_\_
5. You \_\_\_\_\_
6. You \_\_\_\_\_
7. You \_\_\_\_\_

- Unity, Leadership, Vision and Commitment are the cornerstones of championing the local church cause and to build the church we must first have these strongholds in place.
- God's plan for Bunyarra cannot and will not fail. **Matthew 16:18**
- The world should be looking to us for the answers and not the other way round.
- This place should be rocking because Jesus has given us something to shout about!
- This Sunday as we join with the global church what really matters is the Lord we have come to worship and enjoy and that we will be together with His people with Him on His day.

**Verses for Reflection**

Matthew 16:18, Philippians 2:1-2, Ephesians 1:22-23, Psalm 133, Proverbs 14:28, Hebrews 13:17, Proverbs 29:18, Acts 2:42-47, Proverbs 16:3

**Questions for Reflection**

1. Listening to today's sermon did you feel God drawing you further into committing to the church and the possibility of leadership? Talk to Pastor Steve, Lesley or the Elders today.
2. What are some practical ways in which you can have a deeper impact on the lives of those in your circle of influence who don't know God? Brainstorm and then barnstorm the city!
3. Think of means by which you can support the leaders of this church. Make the effort to engage in encouraging and building them up rather than critiquing them.
4. What are your hobbies and interests? Do you become preoccupied by these things that God doesn't have your full attention each Sunday? How can you work at changing this?
5. Spend time in prayer and worship this week seeking that which God would have you contribute to the body of Christ locally, nationally and internationally. When He speaks make sure you act on it because a great reward lays ahead for those who put their talents to good use.