



Bedok Methodist Church
40 Days of Community, Week 6, 24 May 2009

We're Created To Worship Together ***"We Worship Better Together"***

Scripture Text:

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)

WE worship God as individuals in the privacy of our homes. But we are also called to worship God as a body of Christ. Some of us may perceive that worship is only about 'God and me'. However, much of worship is also about 'God with us'. In Hebrews 10:24-25, we are called to worship together for a common good.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, calls us to social holiness. There is no religion but social religion; no holiness but social holiness. Corporate worship not only promotes personal spiritual growth, but it also spurs us on and equips us for mission and service to the world.

We Worship Better Together

As we worship God corporately, there is so much to benefit from being in God's community. Here are several reasons why we worship better together.

Contribution of Gifts

Ephesians 4:11-12 points out that a key benefit of living in community is being blessed by the many spiritual gifts God has given to different members:

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

In the body of Christ, all of us are given gifts by the Lord, in order that we may guide, teach and build up one another, and be encouraged to reach out to others.

Ministry to One Another

James 5:13-16 exhorts us to come together for accountability, counsel, comfort and healing:

Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

Are we sick? Let us call on the church leaders to pray for us. Are we struggling with sin or other problems? Let us share with our brothers and sisters in Christ that they may minister to us and pray for healing for us.

John Wesley was a strong proponent of corporate ministry. His preaching was so successful that in the year 1743 alone, 1000 new members were added to his London Society. This kind of rapid growth presented a problem. Wesley felt strongly that constant, personal pastoral care was necessary for his members. But it was impossible for him to personally minister to so many people.

Soon, he found a solution. Every Methodist Society formed was broken into smaller classes of 12 persons who met weekly with a class leader for pastoral care, encouragement and exhortation. As a result, the members had closer relationships with one other. According to Wesley, "many now happily experienced that Christian fellowship of which they had not so much as an idea before." They began to 'bear one another's burdens,' and naturally 'care for each other.'

Encouragement in the Faith

When we examine our faith, we conclude that we are still work-in-progress, and disciples-in-the-making'. We have not yet 'arrived'. Thus, all the more, we need to encourage one another in our faith.



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1 John 4:20 says:

If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

Let us put faith, hope and love in practice in our community. Let us love God, who is 'unseen', and let us purposefully love our brother, whom we 'see'. One of the best ways to do this is to meet up regularly in a care group, and journey closely with one another in the faith.

Worshipping as a Community

Let us remember that we are members of this grand orchestra of God – While we are different musicians playing different instruments and notes, we are one with the orchestra. Under the direction of one conductor, our Master and Lord, we can produce a body of beautiful music.

Worship is not just about 'God and me', but about 'God and us' – the body of Christ. Let us be considerate towards one another as we come together in corporate worship. Let us seek to serve one another, and build up the worship life of our community.

Let us pray:

Heavenly Father, thank you for the body of Christ You have placed me in. We worship You better together. In our care groups, in our fellowship groups and in our church services, teach us how to serve one another as we come together to worship You. Teach us to be sensitive to the needs of someone today; and help to build up his or her worship life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

- By Rev Lim Jen Huat

Reference: Rick Warren, 40 Days of Community, Purpose Driven Publishing