

HiStory

6 – Establishing A Healthy, Productive Identity

(Reflections from the sermon on February 7, 2016)

*“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have **no other gods** before me. You **shall not make** for yourself **an image** in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; ...You **shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God**, ...**Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy**. ...**Honor your father and your mother**... You **shall not murder**. You **shall not commit adultery**. You **shall not steal**. You **shall not give false testimony against your neighbor**. You **shall not covet your neighbor’s** house... wife... or his ...servants, his ox or donkey, or **anything** else”*

Exodus 20:1-17

God brought His people out of 400 years of inhumane treatment – mistreated as slaves. He witnessed a cultural ignorance in this battered and isolated people as well. Having freed them, He also humbled them to be a people of submission to His will and way – to be a Holy Nation, an example to the world of God’s love and provision. So, He gave them, for the first time, a set of rules to establish a discipline and within His guidelines.

God has called people today out of the bondage of sin into a time of humble submission to His care and provision through Jesus, His Son. He has written and new law on our hearts through the indwelling Holy Spirit – to be a “royal priesthood”, “shining stars in a dark world”, a people of faith believing and trusting in His will and way for our life. But, like the Israelites, He needs us to be a healthy, productive people so He can make a difference in this world through us, His Body – the Body of Christ.

1. Using **Ephesians 3:10-11**, how did God plan to use the church?

2. How does Peter describe the church in **1 Peter 2:5-6; 9-10**?

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3. From what authority does the church function? (Reference **Ephesians 1:22-23**.) And what makes the church healthy in this way?

4. Read these two verses and make a list of attributes that a healthy church today would have – **Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:11-13**.
A healthy church is:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
 - h.
 - i.

5. In **Matthew 25:31-36** what characterizes a generous church?

6. Use **Matthew 7:16-20** as a lesson on how churches become fruitful and what good fruit-bearing churches are able to accomplish.

What makes our church so attractive? What areas do we need to focus on?