

LHCF Sermon Discussion Guide

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Characteristics of a Prevailing Church John 17:13-26

1. Joy is the 1st characteristic of a prevailing church

"Now I am coming to you. I told them many things while I was with them in this world so they would be filled with my joy." John 17:13 (NLT)

2. Holiness is the 2nd characteristic of a prevailing church

"I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. They do not belong to this world any more than I do. Make them holy by your truth." John 17:15-17

3. Truth is the 3rd characteristic of a prevailing church

"Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth." John 17:17

- Bible teaches that the truth of God's Word is personified in the person of Jesus: John 1:1, 14 *"In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God...the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son."*
- Jesus said of Himself... John 14:6 *"I am the way, the truth, and the life."*
- Notice in John 1:14... John gives a descriptive statement about truth personified life... *"He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness."*
- **God tells us the truth** *"Your words all add up to the sum total: Truth." Ps. 119:160 (MSG)*
- Build your life on the reliable truth of God's Word, if you do not have a philosophy of truth to build your life on – you are building on shifting sand.

- A life built on anything but God's truth will jerk you around and leave you with a life of regrets.
- Ultimately our confidence in God's truth comes, not so much by merely hearing His truth, but putting it into practice, especially in the area where He is dealing with us.
- You do well to just stop and ask the Holy Spirit to give you what you need so that the truth becomes a part of you!
- **We are to tell the truth to one another** *"Lovingly follow the truth at all times — speaking truly, dealing truly, living truly — and so become more and more in every way like Christ who is the Head of his body, the Church...Stop lying to each other; tell the truth, for we are parts of each other and when we lie to each other we are hurting ourselves." Eph 4:15, 25-26 (TLB)*
- Eph. 4: Has been used as a proof text for confronting others. While there is Biblical appropriateness for confronting, this passage is given in the context of false teaching and Paul is encouraging the young to stay committed to sound teaching and to ignore false teaching!
- All of our communication needs to come from an attitude of desiring to encourage and build each other up... living in the truth of who Jesus is.
- Three good guidelines for telling the truth to others:
 - #1 Tell the truth completely: Pro. 10:10 *"Someone who holds back the truth causes trouble."*
 - #2 Tell the truth consistently: Pro. 11:3 *"People who can't be trusted are destroyed by their dishonesty."*
 - #3 Tell the truth lovingly: Eph. 4:29 *"When you talk, do not say harmful things, but say what people need — words that will help others become stronger. Then what you say will do good to those who listen to you."*
 - ✓ Pro. 12:18 *"Thoughtless words can wound as deeply as any sword, but wisely spoken words can heal."*
 - ✓ Pro. 16:23 *"Intelligent people think before they speak."*
- These verses share the idea that we need to calm down, think about, and pray about what we want to say, especially when it comes to confronting others.