



Dear Crossroads Family,

This week our Crossroads family was impacted by two happenings. On Monday we learned that one of our most beloved deacons, Ron Purcell, had gone home to be with the Lord. The impact of his departure to heaven on his family and his church family is significant. Ron was one of the finest and most dedicated servants I have ever seen in any church. We will celebrate his life this coming Saturday with a special worship service at 2:00 pm.

Then, on Wednesday morning we woke to the news that Mauricio and Olivia (our Youth Pastor and his wife) had received into their home and into our church family their brand new baby boy: James Oliver Fernandez. We rejoice with them in their joy and we look forward to seeing what little James will become as a part of their family, our church family, and in the kingdom of God.

Two events. One a source of sorrow (though by faith we rejoice knowing that Ron, absent from the body, is present with the Lord) and one a source of extreme joy.

This is the nature of church, isn't it. We experience the ups and downs of life together. We rejoice with those who rejoice, and we weep with those who weep. Through the ups and downs of our members and of our congregation as a whole, God shapes our church, our family, into the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the Temple of the Living God. Or as Peter said,

"As you come to him, the living Stone-- rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:4-5 NIV).

Then, as we do church together, God works in our midst, gently encouraging, strengthening, correcting, and guiding us toward His perfect will—to be formed into the image of Christ. (Sermon Notes for Sunday are provided below.)

On this voyage toward maturity, the lows can feel crushing. The highs can be exhilarating. Times in between these can seem like, well, the doldrums. But rest assured, God is at work. His love is ever present. His purposes are perfect. His church is the means by which He demonstrates His love, guides us toward His purposes, and completes His work on earth in us.

Praise God for this family, this church of the Living God—for Crossroads.

See you Sunday!

Love,
Bro. Doug

Formed for the Voyage to Maturity
Ephesians 4:11-16

The church is the one sure God-designed vessel to carry believers to a mature faith formed in the _____ of _____. Paul insisted that despite its imperfections, the church was _____ means of accomplishing His plan and purpose for believers' lives.

To offset the temptation to abandon the church or minimize its importance, we must recognize and respect the _____ of the church whom Christ _____ purposefully and intentionally selected to grow and equip believers. If Christians choose not to faithfully place themselves under the ministry and guidance of their local church and its pastor-teacher, they _____ of Jesus' plan for their own maturity in faith.

Next, the text affirms that within and only within this structured community of believers will the two essential components of Christian maturity be achieved: (1) unity or oneness in regard to _____ and (2) the _____ of the Son of God. When the Bible uses the expression, "the faith," it is referring to the objective _____ of Christian truth. The church is the sphere in which accurate communication of "the faith" happens. The word "knowledge" isn't simply knowing information but _____, _____ knowledge. Again, it is in the church _____ that we experience the personal presence of Christ like no place else.

Head knowledge of the truth without experiential knowledge of Jesus produces a _____, stale, _____ religion. Experiencing the presence of Jesus without the knowledge of the truth produces an unanchored _____ and misguided _____. Active, faithful participation in the church is the one _____ to both extremes. It is the one way both to unity of the faith and to the knowledge of the Son of God.

How can we be certain that the church, with all _____, can be _____ to carry us on to maturity? As Dallas Willard answered, "Because Christ is the head of His church, and He _____ what _____."

A Few Reminders:

Crossroads Monthly Food & Diaper Drive is this Sunday, October 4. Bring your donations and place them in the red bins. You can find a shopping wish list on the website cbcsa.net. Please check expiration dates and do not donate expired items.

Crossroads Annual Harvest Fest is scheduled for Saturday, October 31, from 4:00-7:00 pm. Donated candy can be placed in the collection bins provided. Sign-ups for Trunk-or-Treat participants and other volunteer needs for Harvest Fest will begin on Sunday. Look for sign up sheets in the foyer Sunday morning. Registration is now open on the website.

Join us on Thursday, October 8, at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Hall for **Young at Heart**. Bring your favorite dish and/or dessert. Our very own Larry & Lynette, with Sue on the piano, will bring some of their favorite songs to enjoy and sing along to! All are invited!

The **Women on Mission** meeting is scheduled for this Tuesday, October 6, at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. All women interested in missions are invited to attend.

Dr. Doug Diehl
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