

## The Authentic Church

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Ephesians 3:20-21  
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Although it was totally spontaneous and completely unrehearsed, those who were there would have thought it to be a well-planned, orchestrated, and choreographed chorus. “Wow! Now she certainly is a Nauman!” As Angie walked into the office for the first time with her brand spankin’ new little Landree Kay among the ooh’s and aah’s of the gathering crowd of mostly women, you could also hear the resonance of a few deeper hums of some of the staff guys who had come out to see what all the commotion was about. And in the background was Nate with a proud smile that expanded into a broad grin when they said, “Look at that nose, . . . that’s Nate’s nose.”

Consider the power and effect the DNA of parents has on their child or children. How amazing is its penetration into the human make-up as the blueprint for appearance, personality, mannerisms, thinking, and emotions. It’s the DNA that not only gives us authenticity as individuals but also is passed on to define future generations.

The implications of this impact are especially profound when placed in the context of the spiritual family called the church. It’s the spiritual DNA associated with spiritual birth that should define the authenticity and relevance of the church.

If someone were to walk into FBC, would there be the ooh’s and aah’s of a gathering crowd as they say “Wow! Now that certainly looks like Jesus!”? Would people come out of the woodwork to find out what the commotion was about? If they were to watch, interact, live with us in our homes, businesses, and engage in “friendly” conversations, would they see us as authentic as we appear to be at a scheduled time on Sunday? If they were able to enter our minds, what would they hear; if playing beside us on the playing field, what would they notice; if they were riding along side us from work, what would capture their attention?

On one occasion, Jesus pointed to the authenticity and relevance of what our DNA reveals when He flat out asked a very basic question, “You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they?”

Since the church. . .the body of Christ. . .the family. . . is composed of individuals (you and me) its identity is really a reflection of the authenticity, the DNA, we each bring. If you or I are carrying an abnormal chromosome or cell and refuse to either acknowledge it or allow God to heal it, the result will eventually surface.

Perhaps we each need to do a careful examination of who we are and what we bring in to the body of Christ.

## Life Response

1. This week MEMORIZE and MEDITATE on Ephesians 3:20-21, “*Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen*”
  - (a) How should this passage impact our thinking about the significance and purpose of the church?
  - (b) What does it suggest about each of our lives and what we bring as members of the body of Christ?
  - (c) What is it about this passage that defines not only the authentic church but also its relevance?
  
2. When we think about the dynamics of our relationship with God and His Word, how is its authenticity and relevance expressed in our lives when compared to the following standard?

|              |                  |                |              |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Hab. 3:17-19 | Ps. 18:1-4; 9-11 | Matt. 22:37-39 | Heb. 4:12-13 |
| Ps. 73:25-26 | Col. 1:18        | 2 Tim. 3:16-17 | Ps. 119      |
  
3. Suppose it’s true that our relationship with others, within this body, is litmus of our relationship with God. What conviction should this conjure up about our relationship with any other single person?
  - What are a few of the rationale we use to not take the prescribed steps toward reconciliation?
  - What impact does the refusal to “purpose peace” have on the church?

|                    |                     |                |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Rom. 12:1-2; 16-21 | Gal. 5:13-17; 22-25 | Matt. 5:21-26  |
| Heb. 12:1-3; 12-17 | Phil. 2:1-8         | 1Cor. 12:12-27 |
| Heb. 10:19-25      | 1 Thess. 5:12-17    | Col. 12:12-17  |
  
4. How would you define the heart of God for those who are separated from Him . . . for those who may like Him but not know Him personally?

|               |               |                |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| John 3:16-17  | Luke 23:39-43 | Acts 4:12-20   |
| Luke 19:41-44 | John 13:13-16 | 1 Cor. 9:16-23 |
| Matt. 9:35-38 | John 17:14-23 | 2 Cor. 5:14-21 |

*“If Jesus Christ truly is Lord in our lives, then there will be unity in the church. Division and dissension among God’s people only weakens their united testimony to a lost world.”*

**- Dr. Warren W. Wiersbe**

*Heavenly Father, Beautiful Son* (in A)

*Happy Day* (in A/Bb)

*Grace Unmeasured* (in D)

Ephesians 6:10-20 (silently on screen)

*O Church Arise* (in D)

Offering Music

*He Leadeth Me*; Celebration Choir

Ephesians 4:1-16

Communion

Bread: *Only in the Cross*; John Tyson and Matthew Goodman

Cup: *Behold the Lamb (Communion Hymn)*; Congregation

## THE MISSING LINK

Old Testament - - - - - New Testament  
Habakkuk 3:17-19 Hebrews 10:23-25

### Relevance

The Church - - Ecclesiology  
Ephesians 3:20-21

Authenticity – “in Christ”  
Relevance – “Power in us”  
Significance of “in”  
Key word for authenticity/relevance – “Relationship”

### 3 Spiritual chromosomes in her DNA produced authenticity and relevance

**Chromosome G/W** - An intimate, observable, preeminent, vital relationship with God and His Word.

|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| √ With God in Christ | John 1:1; 14      |
| Spiritual birth      | John 1:12         |
| Lordship             | Colossians 1:18   |
| √ With His Word      |                   |
| Spiritual walk       |                   |
| Authority            | 2 Timothy 3:16-17 |

**Chromosome B** An observable, unconditional, sacrificial vital relationship with other believers. Any broken relationship with another believer severely damages the genetics of the body of Christ and future generations.

- √ How do I value a brother/sister in Christ?
- √ What can I do when I sense there is a strained/broken relationship?

**Chromosome P** An irresistible passion and heart for establishing a vital relationship with those who have yet to know Christ personally.

**The most fundamental, basic imperative.**

**Matthew 22:37-39**

- What is the most significant thing that has ever happened to you?
- What is the most significant thing you can give to another?

“To share God’s heart”

Matthew 9:35-38 – Compassion  
2 Corinthians 5:14-20

A Time for Examination 1 Cor. 11:26-30

Basic tests/Examination

1. Evaluate your relationship with God/His Word.
2. What relationships are strained or damaged in need of healing?
3. What is your level of passion for those who do not know Christ?