

Pastor's Sharing — A Community of Love Rev. Almon Li (7/6/2015)

Today is the day of HCAC's AGM. The AGM reminds us that the Church is our home to which we have the duty to care, to love and to build.



“Church” is the group of people who are called by God (1 Peter 2:9) and saved by the Christ. We gather together to worship God, spread the Gospel, obey God’s command to love one another, and let the Holy Spirit hover freely among us and lead us. Therefore, the “church”, saved by the Christ with His precious blood, should be a community full of love.

We have to realise that each of us is a “church”, a member of this family. We should work hard to reignite the fire of love so that the church becomes a community completely filled with love. It is God’s wish that we can be a church ignited by love; it is also the new command that Jesus gave us.

What should we do so that the church can reignite the fire of love? God has called us, a group of Christians, to live together in love. The Bible has clearly set out that the Christian love is built upon three solid foundations:

1. God’s nature is love

The Trinity is special in that God exists in three personalities, each of them has a kind of relationship or fellowship of love. Augustinus, an early Christian theologian, described this relationship as follows: The Father loves the Son and vice versa, and the Holy Spirit is the “love” bonding the Father and the Son. Moltmann, a major figure in modern theology, said that the “being” of the Holy Spirit is “fellowship”. Not only does He bond the Father and the Son, but also He helps the human being build up a relationship with the Father and the Son.

As God’s “being” is the fellowship of love, He encourages the believers not only to pay attention to His grace, but also to live out this relationship of love. The fellowship is not built up through controlling others, but by attracting and respecting others as well as opening and sharing ourselves. God would like to see that His believers react to one another in His love. If so, the church will live out God’s nature because this is what a community of God should behave.

2. Jesus’ command to love

Jesus has given us an important command: “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35) According to this command, we know that God expects the believers to not only seek and enjoy His grace, but also be a community of love, as their response to God’s love. This community shall fulfil the duty of love, get along with others peacefully and love others as yourself, so as to show the church’s “sign of love”.

3. The Holy Spirit's communication

Schleiermacher, often called as the “Father of Modern Liberal Theology”, is the first theologian during the post-Enlightenment to explore the “Ecclesiology”. In his book entitled “The Christian Faith”, Schleiermacher emphasized that a true religion must pay attention to the nature of society and community. He regarded church as a “fellowship of believers”. The most outstanding characteristic of this fellowship is that it is fully filled with the love of Christ's salvation and willing to share this love with people.

Schleiermacher further explained that the church can become a fellowship of love through the Holy Spirit's work in the church. Through the “Communication of the Holy Spirit”, the church, as a fellowship, will be full of love, co-work and live in peace, and show the love of Christ, so that people will know that the Christian community is full of Christ's love.

The pillar of church's community relationship is the communication of the Holy Spirit, which does not rely on individual's temperament and intelligence, but the Holy Spirit's power and guidance. Through this we are irrigated by God's love and through us His love is flown to others.

It is the human nature that Christians are self-centred and ignoring others' needs. We place emphasis on our own needs more than others'. We must realise that we have to rely on the Holy Spirit in order that we can be filled with God's love, practice the command on love in our lives, and build a fellowship of love. Therefore, we are willing to pay the cost, as Jesus did, even if we may be hurt without any caring comfort.

The Holy Spirit will help us to reignite the fire of love and to love others, only if we trust in the Holy Spirit. Let us pray, “O Lord, I am longing for the power of the Holy Spirit to irrigate my heart with His love.” We pray in this way because sanctification cannot be achieved by a believer alone but in a community through loving one another. Amen!