

Sermon Trivia

1. How many committed members does the church envision having before planting another church?
2. In Ephesians 5, Paul gives two analogies for how the husband is to love his wife. What are they?
3. In Deuteronomy, what two attributes best define love?
4. What is dihydrogen monoxide and how does it apply to 1 John 4:1-6?

Answers are at the bottom of the page.

Devotional Reflections from the Pastor

For my own devotional time I have been intensely studying the Lord's teaching on prayer (Matt 6:5-15). One insight that has been nourishing me for a while is that there is to be nothing mindless about our praying. We are to approach God as a Person, not as a fickle deity who needs to be cajoled. Therefore, there is no need to mindlessly multiply words. Our requests should be terse and reverent. We should always pray to the Lord in all seriousness.

Take Note - new or changed contact information

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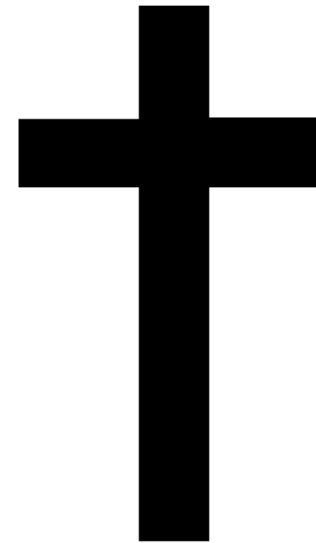
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Answers

1. 150 committed members 2. Love your wife as Christ loved the church and love your wife as your own body. 3. Obedience and loyalty. 4. It is water and it applies because it shows how we must think about what we are being taught.

Vine Street Baptist Church Branch Gram

Exists to exalt the Lord, evangelize His creation, and edify His church according to His Word.



July 2007

*I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.
John 15:5*

BRANCHGRAM JULY

“We engage to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel to all nations.”

This stipulation of the covenant has to do with monetary giving. As members we have covenanted to pool our money so that the church might be able to minister in the way in which it was called. In other words, we have agreed to put our money where our mouth is. Discipleship is a whole-person commitment. It involves our minds, our bodies, our behavior, and our money. Church membership here at Vine Street entails the same.

Our monetary giving is to be done cheerfully and regularly. As members, we should not have to be cajoled. In Deuteronomy 14 one of the reasons for tithing is to celebrate – to celebrate God’s goodness and provision. So really, giving is a celebration! (see 2 Cor 9:7) Also, giving should be done regularly. It should be the habit of every member. Over time this should become a discipline that is as routine as walking to the mailbox.

When we give we are pooling our money for express purposes. One of those is the support of the ministry. The fact of the matter is that ministry takes money. Even if we were going to start bare-bones Bible studies, we would still need to purchase Bibles, participants’ guides, coffee, etc. The Church is the body of Christ and, as such, has been called to minister in His name. This biblical purpose of the church will never get off the ground if we are not willing to live by the covenant.

Our giving goes to offset the expenses of the church. We have bills to pay and that, too, takes money. Also, staff salaries would fall under this rubric. So let’s think about this for a minute. If none of us gave, that would mean I would not get paid, and you all would not have the pleasure of reading Pastor Mike’s stimulating Branchgram articles ☺. Perish the thought!

As a church, part of our mandate is to care for the “least of these.” Our desire is to minister to the whole-person, but often people’s most pressing need is physical. In the Gospels we see that Jesus would minister to the physical needs of those around Him (healing, feeding) so our calling is not purely spiritual. And to truly give relief to the poor entails that we as Vine Street Baptist Church pool our resources so as to better serve the less fortunate.

Finally, our giving supports the spread of the gospel to all nations. Added to our weekly giving are Lottie Moon and other special offerings for missionaries. Missions, like everything else we have been discussing, takes money. We’re talking plane tickets, health insurance, ministry materials, room and board, as well as a whole host of other expenses. We need to remember, it is not just missionaries’ responsibility to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth, it is every Christian’s responsibility. We can fulfill that calling by praying, giving, and going. In this instance, we as a church have already agreed to give.

Money does not sustain this church. The Lord does. With this in mind, we have agreed to regularly give as much as we can, as cheerfully as we can, for although the Lord sustains this church, He does it through the faithfulness of His children. One way His children show their faithfulness is by giving of their money.

~Pastor Michael

July Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays:

- * Bob Cull July 21
- * Donnie Aebersold July 22
- * Maple Williamson July 22
- * Nathan Bates July 24
- * Frank List July 24

Anniversaries

- * Gary and Cathy Cook July 7
- * Denny and Lorrie Hendricks July 7
- * Michael and Elizabeth Snearly July 15
- * Earl and Melissa Claypool July 23
- * Tom and Jenny Miner July 31