Let's Go!

(Discovering God's Will Together; #20)
Hebrews 10:24-25

"Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another..." (Hebrews 10:24-25)

A. Some years ago a few people came together to be Claypot Church
(www.claypot.co.za)

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." (2 Corinthians 4:7)

B. They didn't come to build a big church, they came to be the church

Reality

A. We live in a consumer culture (i.e., constantly treated like customers)

B. Churches focus on catering to members and potential members

1. **Churches have lowered their expectations and de-emphasized discipleship**
2. **Many Christians today are comfortable, but so few are Christ-like**

Revelation

A. We need a new (biblical) paradigm

The community exists to shape and guide my soul. The community has the right to expect certain behavior from me, and must provide the encouragement and accountability I need. (James Bryan Smith)

1. **Luke describes this soul-shaping as coming through worship, fellowship, teaching, prayer and holding each other accountable (cf. Acts 2:42)**
2. **Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us to "*be transformed into the image of Christ*"**
3. **All this focus on soul-shaping is designed to propel us into God's mission**
4. **We're not suppose to build a church as much as be the church**

B. How can we embrace everyone and still set the bar high?

1. **First: We need to know who we are...and remind each other regularly**
   a. **We are fallen, broken, and prone to wander (cf. Romans 3:23)**
   b. **We are reassembled so Christ can still shine through (cf. 2 Cor.12:9)**
   c. **Only a Christ-centered community has the Truth we need to hear**
2. **Second: We need to know who we must become...and become like**
   a. **We are called to become like Jesus. That demands high expectations**
   b. **Everyone needs to be engaged in shaping their soul**

"I myself feel confident about you, brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another." (Romans 15:14)

3. **Third: We need to hold each other accountable...and submit to accountability**
   a. **Encouragement is necessary to stay energized in the battle**

"There they strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith...[they] said much to encourage and strengthen the believers." (Acts 14:22, 15:32)

   b. **Admonishment is necessary guidance for course correction**

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom." (Colossians 3:16)

"We urge you to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them" (1 Thessalonians 5:14)

4. **Fourth: We need to walk together**

Responsibility

A. There are three things I know from experience

1. **First, people rise to the level of expectation**
2. **Second, people intuitively know that when things are made easy there is little chance that any good will come from it**
3. **Third, while not everyone in a church is ready to commit to transformation, many need to be challenged to grow and use their gifts or they'll leave**

B. Dallas Willard believes only 10% of members are ready for discipleship

1. **He laments the church ignores those who long to be transformed**
2. **Most churches don't ask enough of their members**
3. **What kind of a faith community do you want to be a part of - one that takes Jesus and his mission seriously or one that's comfortable?**

C. Brandon Hatmaker's book is entitled, Barefoot Church

1. **He's not working on building a church as much as being the church**
2. **Are we ready to walk where-ever, however God calls us? Then let's go...**