



Living Word Christian *Church*

AUGUST NEWSLETTER | LANGLEY, B.C.

Friendly Reminder!

Our family camp is fast approaching!

No Sunday Service at the church building and no livestream on August 15, 2021.

Please join us in person on August 15th at 10am at Camp Hope!

Talk to Joel M. for more info!

Worship Fest

We are invited to join Willoughby Church on August 22nd from 4-8pm to Worship with them!

Let's connect with our community!

For more info, talk to Graceleen C.

Get involved!

We have several opportunities for you to get involved! Check out our website for our current ministries and start getting involved in a ministry!

www.lwcchurch.ca

Pastor's Corner

Growing in Groves

By Pastor Brad

What do most young adults consider essential or most important in life today? According to research collected by Pew Research for a MacNeil/Lehrer Productions' project, 18–25-year-olds listed the following as their top life goals (note that respondents could list more than one goal):

Be rich – 81 percent
Be famous – 51 percent
Help people who need help – 30 percent
Be leaders in their community – 22 percent
Become more spiritual – 10 percent

How would you respond? I hope as a Christian you would pick becoming more spiritual, or being a more mature Christian as your top, or at least one of your top goals. If that is your goal, do you know how to attain it? Let me offer some suggestions based upon Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

In the first three chapters of Ephesians Paul says to every Christian "you are a child of God." It is a profound and exciting declaration. Then in the final three chapters he says "now act like one" and he gives details about how to grow in spiritual maturity. Specifically in Ephesians 4:1 Paul tells us that we have been called by God to a very specific and special activity. We have been called to actively live life in a way that recognizes and honors our calling. We have been called to God and we have been called to live for God. We have been called to Christian faith and we have been called to live "Christianly." Then in verses 2-3 he says we have been called to live ethical lives and lives of unity and peace. Verses 4-6 identify the basis for our unity: one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all.

Then in verses 7-11 Paul says we have been given grace and spiritual gifts to help us fulfill our calling, to live the way we ought to live. In verses 12-16 he specifically explains why four groups of gifted people – the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the shepherd-teachers – are given to the church. They are given for the purpose of equipping, training, and preparing fellow Christians to do the work of ministry, and the purpose of everyone being involved in doing the work of ministry is "for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (verses 12-13).

When Paul says in verse 13 "until we all attain" he is speaking about the church collectively. Spiritual growth and Christian maturity are not just individual pursuits. They are a corporate or church family pursuit. Yes, we must have as a personal life goal the attainment of greater Christian maturity.

But we must also have the life goal of our church, of all of us together, collectively, attaining a greater Christian maturity. When Paul says "we all" he means that we are responsible for our own growth and we are also responsible for each other's growth. The Christian's life goal is both a personal responsibility and a corporate responsibility. We must become more spiritual and we must grow in Christian maturity within the context of the local church and interpersonal interactions. How is this to be done?

The most effective way for this to be done is in the context of HOME CARE GROUPS. Over the coming weeks you will hear more about these groups. They will be the "go-to" place within our church for instruction and interaction. They will be the main hub for discipleship, fellowship, Member Care, Neighbor Care, prayer, and evangelism. They will be the ideal place where all of us can grow together in Christian maturity. I trust you will join a group if you are not yet involved.

In California there grows a tree called the giant sequoia. And the term "giant" is an understatement. Surprisingly, the giant sequoia for its huge size has a very shallow root system.



It seems impossible that such a giant tree could survive because its roots do not grow deep into the earth, and any little wind should be able to blow the tree down. But even the strongest wind does not topple the giant sequoias because sequoias grow in groves. Their roots, though shallow, intertwine under the earth's surface. Whenever a strong wind comes, the trees hold one another up. There is great strength and endurance in numbers.

Picture this growth and survival technique in relation to Christians. To become more spiritual, to grow in Christian maturity, we need to grow in groves. Standing alone we can be easily toppled by the winds of hardship, the winds of false doctrine, the winds of suffering, the winds of failure. But God has designed us to be intertwined, like a grove, with other Christians (Paul's "we all"). **HOME CARE GROUPS** are such groves. Please get connected and together let's grow.