

Intro:

In our men's meeting, we are working our way through a document put out by Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Greenville, SC. The document is called the "The Non-Negotiables of the Ministry of Mount Calvary Baptist Church" – they represent the distinctive features that Mount Calvary Baptist Church desires to be known for. [We used this in our Bible Study time in the past.]

This summer, when I took my trip to Alberta to see my parents and participate in a conference in Calgary, I listened to over thirty recorded messages on the way out and back.

One of the messages was very practical, from the founder of a Christian camp ministry known as *The Wilds*, a man named Ken Hay. He voiced a concern that churches often make mistakes when bringing in a new pastor because they don't clearly understand what they are about – they don't have an understanding of the philosophy and emphasis their church has had and therefore have made mistakes in selecting a new pastor when a pastor moves on or dies.

- Let me hasten to say I have no plans of moving on. Only the Lord knows if I have plans of dying!

As I began thinking about this, I was loathe to begin trying to define our ministry from scratch! I asked our men to talk about what things made our church distinct. We came up with a list that was very similar to most things on the Mount Calvary document, so I decided to use that document and work through some of those ideas.

You can call these things 'our philosophy' or 'our core values' [though I dislike 'corporate-speak' type terms].

As we were discussing these items, the men said, "the whole congregation needs to hear this." So here we are.

We won't be looking at this every week, I don't want to get ahead of our men's discussion, but we will address these topics from time to time intermittently.

This week I am giving you the subject, "*The Head of Our Church*".

We will be in several passages, but why don't we read Ephesians 4.14-16.

Proposition: The local church is to be entirely subjected to loving and knowing Christ, growing into such close identity with him as to provide full spiritual stability.

I. The Head of the Church is Christ¹

We believe that the Head of the church is Christ (Mt. 16:18; Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15), and that the purpose of our meeting together is to know Him (Phil. 3:8-10; Acts 2:42-47). Seven New Testament passages refer to Jesus Christ as Head. The passages can be summarized to teach that Jesus Christ is the Head:

A. Of every man 1 Corinthians 11:3

MYNOTE: Some mystery here, and we will not tarry long

1. MYNOTE: As the God is the head of Christ
2. MYNOTE: So Christ is the head of every Man
3. MYNOTE: So the Man is the head of a Woman
 - a. Father-daughter
 - b. Husband-wife

B. Of all things Ephesians 1:21, Col 2.10

1. For the advantage of the church, the world's highest things are put under Jesus' lowest parts (His feet).

C. Of the church Ephesians 5:23

1. As the head is elevated on the body and all issues and determinations issue from it for the rest of the body's members, so is Christ to His own body, the church.
2. Eph 4.15, 5.23, Col 1.18, 2.18-19

II. The ways in which the Church manifests Christ's headship

A. Love

1. Displayed in genuine love for one another as the members grow closer to Christ (Eph 4.14-16)
2. Motivated by a genuine love for Christ because of his sacrifice for us (Eph 5.23-24)

If you don't love being around your fellow church members, you have a headship problem.

¹ This point taken entirely from "The Non-Negotiables of the Ministry of Mount Calvary Baptist Church" — additions to the Mount Calvary statement designated 'MYNOTE:'

B. Submission

1. Displayed by subjection to Christ (subjection = to place or arrange under, to submit to one's control; to yield to one's admonition or advice)
 - a. Order my life according to his word (values, choices, obedience — yielding my will)
 - b. Order my life around his word (church attendance, fellowship, promotion of Christian work, activities, interests)
 - c. Order my life for his word (witness, evangelism, giving)
2. Motivated by love for Christ (Jn 14.15 "If ye love me, keep my commandments.")

If you resent the authority of the church over your life (in keeping with biblical mandates), you have a headship problem.

C. Growth

1. Growth involves an upward development into conformity with the perfect humanity of Christ (Eph 4.14-16)
2. Growth always involves a spirit of awe-struck submission to the supreme deity of Christ (Col 1.18-22)

When we are displaying the works of the flesh we are not exhibiting the headship of Christ in our lives – we are usurping his headship.

- Selfishness
- Anger
- Lust
- Strife

As opposed to:

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Longsuffering, etc...

If there is little to no growth in Christian virtues in your life, you have a headship problem.

D. Stability

1. Stability is the goal of headship (Col 1.23)
2. Stability is the product of a church who holds the Head as Head (Col 2.16-19)

People who are truly committed to the headship of Jesus Christ in his body, the church, find themselves faithfully serving long years together.

- In spite of personality differences
- In spite of 'social standing'
- In spite of age differences

I once knew a fellow who was constantly coming to me with news. First it was the news of a new job, then it was the news of a divorce, then it was the news of a new business, then it was the news of a bankruptcy, then it was the news of another new job, then it was the news of a new marriage...

I told him, "The only thing constant about you is change."

If your life is marked by instability, you have a headship problem.

Conclusion:

Do you have a headship problem?

Our goal is to build a church submitted to and in love with Jesus Christ, our head.

Jesus said, "For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light." (Mt 11.30)

I've found it so. How about you?