***Lesson: HeartSight—Togetherness***

**February 23, 2020**

**From Mike:**

When those three thousand people, who went to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost and came away disciples of Jesus, suddenly found themselves in something new and strange—they needed help. That help came in the form of a spiritual family that met together to support each other in their new endeavor to grow in Christ. That new family was the body of Christ, the family of God, or simply—the church. They shared homes, meals, and encouragement on a daily basis. They prayed and helped one another through tough times, and they soaked up anything the apostles could teach them about Jesus. They were all about love, growing, supporting, and celebrating their God and Savior!

 Those folks that we read about in Acts 2:42-47 were a bunch of people who loved being together! There were no rules, traditions, or guidelines about what “church” was supposed to be or look like. They got together to simply help one another in any way they could. In the twenty centuries since then, we have all kinds of church baggage about rules, traditions, and guidelines about what “church” must be and what it must look like. And when it comes to what the apostles taught...we have hundreds of versions of what that is and how we ought to believe it, which is why we have hundreds of different groups doing “church” the way they think it must be done. It’s called religious division or denominationalism. Within our own fellowship, we have dozens of divisions based on doctrinal differences or preferences—in many cases there is no difference.

 In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul spends half his letter talking about the incredible love and grace of God that He would work things out for us to be His children. The second half of his letter is about how He expects us to respond to that love and grace. Is it ironic that he begins with the essential nature of unity?

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