

****Bumper Video – Sean & Wahl**

Title

Greeting

Living in this technological age we are no longer amazed by the copier machine. Scanners and duplicators are now old technology... but I must admit this technology still amazes me. The idea that you can replicate an object has now gone steps further with 3d printers. You can actually make a 3 dimensional object with a computer, one of these printers, and a cartridge filled with plastic, epoxy, nylon or powder...

Wow! Is it too early to put that on our Christmas want list?

When making a copy of something you always want to use the original... You don't want to use a copy of a copy.

The movie Multiplicity showed us what happens when you make a copy of a copy. Steve, played by Michael Keaton, clones himself to help get some work done around the house. But watch what happens when his Copies make copies of themselves.

****Multiplicity**

What kind of Church is this?

We've been trying to answer this question over the last 2 weeks.

I feel safe in telling you that as a Church we aren't meant to be a copy of a copy.

This has become “a thing” in Christianity. Many Churches are simply copying other churches.

“Well that popular church on the hill tried this... so let’s do it that way.”

“I wish this Church was more like grandma’s church growing up...”

Redemption Church! **We aren’t meant to be a copy of a copy of the Church! We are meant to be the Original Church. The Church that Jesus built.**

Matthew 16:18 ...on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

2 terms you need to know...

Orthodoxy means correct belief

Orthopraxy means correct action

It’s important to point Orthodoxy doesn’t mean Our Belief. It means Correct Belief... Likewise Orthopraxy doesn’t mean Our Action, but the Correct Action.

Just because we believe or hold a particular practice... it doesn’t mean that it is correct.

Just because it is a widely held belief, doesn’t make it the correct belief.

There are a lot of fuzzy copies in Christianity. We shouldn’t look for a copy... but the Original

Look to the Original

Our Original is the Word of God.

Our Original is the Person of Jesus.

Our Original is the original church that Holy Spirit brought life to in the book of Acts

In order to look to the Original you will need to look past the copies.... **Look Past the copies**

You will need to look past... religious traditions.

Look past denominations

Look past theologians

Look past Creeds and councils

At their best... they are merely copies... They are not the Original.

No let me be clear... I'm not saying there aren't good things we can get from religious traditions... I remember growing up in a tradition of prayer and studying the Word of God.

Or the councils... We have our Bible today largely in part to a series of councils in the early centuries that solidified what books would be in the Bible. That really helped us...

You can get some good things from them, but at their best... these are just copies... They aren't quite as clear as the original. They are a little fuzzy. They are a mixed bag... some good and some bad.

To find the Correct Belief you have to look past the copies and find the original.

I'm saying you shouldn't define your belief on the words of a theologian or denomination but by the Word of God. The councils and creeds provided some tools, but they also provided some confusion... They aren't meant to what defines your belief.

Look back to the Original! God's Word, Jesus the Savior, and Church found in the book of Acts.

Orthodoxy Attack

In a moment I'm going to talk about what we believe... but first... I want to talk about Christians behaving badly...

Christianity has often attacked others who worship the same God. We still do this to a certain extent. We look at the Church across the street and brand them Heretic... Heresy is an accusation that someone has unorthodox beliefs.

This can get real ugly really quick. Even on small, seemingly insignificant issues the Church has attacked itself in harsh ways. Orthodoxy Attack

In the 1500s a Spanish physician and part time theologian named Michael Servetus started a letter correspondence with noted theologian John Calvin. They had a disagreement over the Godhead and wrote many letters to each other. The debate obviously grew heated...

Calvin used his political sway & power to mark Servetus as a Heretic... Orders for Servetus' arrest came and he ran for His life and was trying to leave Italy.... But before he would leave the Nation he stopped in Geneva where Calvin Pastored. Michael Servetus attended a service and listened to Calvin preach a sermon.

After the service Servetus was arrested, imprisoned, and later burned at the stake.

Here is their disagreement in a nutshell.

Servetus believed in 1 God who reveals himself in 3 distinct modes or manifestations, Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

John Calvin believed in 1 God who is 3 distinct persons, Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

This was the great disagreement. Are you kidding me?

Even more... If you look up Michael Servetus online he is still branded a Heretic and the doctrine of Modalism is strongly demonized... But let's get real here... Much of this is semantics and seems silly... but it wasn't silly in the fact they burnt a man at the stake for having a different view.

Who here was really the Heretic? Was it the guy who described God differently or the one with the Blood Lust and hatred. What is orthodox about blood lust, hatred, and pride.

On John Calvin's death bed he repented of his actions toward Michael Servetus.

John Calvin is not the original you need to base your life on. For that matter... no man or woman is...

Romans 3:4 Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge."

Orthodoxy Attack

There are differences between what we hold to be correct belief and practice at Redemption and what other churches hold to be correct belief and practice. We differ on some issues we feel are important and some that aren't... but regardless of severity... IT IS NOT ORTHODOXY TO ATTACK.

You want an Orthodox response? Love them, pray for them, reach out to them, share whatever we have in common with them... NOW THAT'S ORTHODOXY & ORTHOPRAXY!

Remember to **Look to the Original**

The Original is the Word of God, the person of Jesus, and the Church found in the book of Acts.

We take this very seriously. **When we define Redemption Church's Mission and Vision... we don't make a copy of a copy. We look to the Original...**

Our Mission is the same original mission that Jesus gave to His disciples.

Here is our **Mission – To declare the Good News of Jesus and see others become followers of Christ.**

This is the Great Commission that Christ originally gave His followers. Everything we do, every decision we make must flow out of this Original Mission!

How will we fulfill this Mission? The Mission is the WHAT... The Vision is the How... How will we fulfill this Mission?

Here is our **Vision – To be a 1st Century Church in a 21st Century world.**

We think the best way to fulfill the original mission is to be like the original church.

We don't want to be a copy of a copy. There are some really great church communities out there... Churches that have accomplished some great things and are well known... But our goal isn't to be a copy of them... Our vision is to be the original 1st century church of Jesus!

The book of Acts is the only History book in the New Testament. It is the book that best gives us a picture of what the original church was. When we look into the Book of Acts we find **6 Values** that we want to apply to this community of faith in the 21st Century. I want to quickly talk to you about all 6!

#1 Jesus Centered.

The Church in the Book of Acts constantly preached Jesus, worshipped Jesus, remembered Jesus, Baptized in Jesus name, prayed for the sick in Jesus name, cast demons out in Jesus name, were willing to be persecuted because of the name of Jesus, and was looking for the return of Jesus.

In Acts 1 a resurrected Jesus speaks to His disciples about the Mission

In acts 2 after the “these people are drunk” criticism... Peter gets up and starts talking about Jesus... 3000 people are added to the church.

In Acts 4 heal a man in Jesus name... the Pharisees haul Peter and John in a back room and threaten them and beat them TELLING THEM TO STOP SPEAKING THE NAME OF JESUS... Peter says **ACTS 4:12**

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."(NIV)

In Acts 7 the first Martyr sees Jesus as he passes into eternity.

In Acts 8 Phillip, while running for His life, preaches Jesus to the city of Samaria and the whole city turns to God.

Acts 9 Saul the Christian killer is knocked to the Ground by Jesus! That same Jesus also lifts Saul up to a new life where he would be known as the Apostle Paul.

Acts 10 Peter preaches Jesus to Gentiles and for the first time Gentiles are redeemed and filled with the Holy Spirit!

That's just the 1st 10 Chapters.... I don't have time to go over all the 28 Chapters in the Book of Acts but let me sum it up this way. It was all about Jesus! Jesus is in every chapter, every sermon, every story, every healing, every deliverance, every salvation.

Redemption Church! If we want to be the Original Church of the book of Acts then we must be **JESUS CENETERED**.

We need him in every service, in every connect group, in our homes, in our hearts, in our lives!

#2 Spiritual Transformation

Spiritual Transformation showed up everywhere in the Book of Acts.

In Acts 2 it showed up in the upper room and flowed into the streets.

In Acts 5 the Spirit exploded at the Temple

In Acts 6 it caused some young men to take up ministry to widows who were hungry.

In Acts 11 it changed the heart of Jewish men who had never believed that Gentiles could be saved like Jews.

In Acts 12 it the Spirit opened Prison doors and set Peter free.

In Acts 13 the Holy Ghost arrived in Antioch and kept spreading to other cities

Acts 14 it arrived in Iconium, Lystra, and Debre. Paul is stoned to death and thrown out of the city of Lystra but the Same Spirit that raised Christ from the Dead raised Paul from the dead and he walked back into the city!

Speed up to the last chapter... Acts 28 the Spirit is with Paul as he is in Jail sentenced to die... But Paul is still sharing the Gospel and making converts

and writing the Epistles that complete the New Testament Bible. And at the end of the Chapter 28... there is no Amen!

All your New Testament books end with the word AMEN... meaning that the book has concluded. But the Book of Acts has never concluded. God is still wanting to move in His church the way He did in the book of Acts.

God wants Spiritual Transformation just like what we read in the pages of Acts!

This is why we challenge you to worship, receive the Word of God, and talk to God in this altar! That is the Orthopraxy of the Book of Acts and the same Spirit will come and transform your life just like it did in Acts. That is why we challenge you to repent and be baptized and be filled with the Holy Spirit! That is the Orthodoxy of the Original Church and we know it will change your life.

#3 Community

The Original Church lived life together. They didn't just see each other a few days every month. They met together daily, they prayed together, they studied the word together, they served together, they wept together and celebrated together... very rarely was a Christian alone! A first century Christian was always connected to other believers.

This is why we are always in your face telling you to join a Connect Group. This is why we ask you to serve each other and with each other. This is why we come together in worship, communion, receiving the Word, and talking to God.

We need more Community!

#4 Mission

The book of Acts was about the Mission that Jesus gave them!

They were always preaching Jesus. They were always seeing people come to repentance. They were always baptizing people in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins. They were always carrying the Gospel to new people.

They were about the mission, even when it was difficult. Even when they might not be accepted. Even when it could cost them.

It wasn't just Peter's mission. It was everyone's mission. It wasn't just Paul's mission. It was everyone's mission.

It's not just my mission it your mission also. Your school is a mission field. Your apartment community is a mission field. Your work is a mission field. Your trip to the grocery store is a mission field.

This is why we feel so strongly connected to Maykop Russia! It's not just Vitaly Kissel's mission – It is our mission also. We try to stay involved with missions that take the Gospel to new places. We try to challenge you to invite your friends to church or connect group, but to also go further and find a way to share Jesus with them! That is our mission.

Being committed to mission takes prayer, takes time, takes money... It takes a heart committed to the Mission!

#5 Connecting with Culture

The 1st Century Church worked in different nations and cultures. It worked when talking to peasants as well as kings. Whatever culture they were in they found a way to present Christ within the culture.

In Acts 17 Paul stood on Mars Hill in Athens. Mars Hill was a place of idol worship. They had statues to every pagan God... Jupiter, Zues, Mercury/Hermes... They had them all... they had more than all of them... They created an extra statue in case they missed a god... They had a statue to worship the “unknown god.”

Can the Gospel work inside a culture founded on polytheism? Can it work in a culture where people reject the Word of God? Can salvation come in a culture that is scientifically and philosophically driven?

Paul thought it could. He stood right in front of the statue of the unknown god and said... let me introduce Him to you and started to preach Jesus... Even more... instead of quoting a Jewish prophet to them to God... Paul quoted one of their own poets to teach them the Truth of God.

The Gospel still works! It can work within the culture you are living in. You don't have to quote a scripture to present the Truth and lead others to Christ..

That is why we do different things here at Redemption. We look into this culture and ask how can we connect this culture to Christ. That's why we make big deal over Halloween and in the month of October might preach about zombies. That's why we don't play 15th century hymns for worship but try to worship music that reflects the current Culture.

We want To be a 1st Century Church that connects with culture.

We want to do more in this area. We need help. Are you good at art? We need some graphic artists? Can you write or act? Help us present Christ in that way? Can you design a website or perform music?

Far too often, going to Church is like stepping into a time machine. Far too often the Church doesn't speak the language of the people it is called to reach.

#6 Willing

The Original Church was willing. When God asked them to leave their home and go preach the Gospel – They were willing. When they knew their brothers or sisters needed help – They were willing. They would sell their land and give the money to help others. No one went hungry or uncared for... There was always someone willing to help.

I don't see where the church of Acts ever said No. They always said Yes.

If we want to be like the original church we need to be willing to say yes.

If you need help today you are in a good place. Because we are willing to help. We are willing to pray with you, feed you, cry with you, celebrate with you, to open our wallets... We are willing.

We might not be able to help you as much as you need, but we are willing to do something.

Musician

These are the Values we see in the Original Church

Value List

We don't want to be a copy of a copy.

Nor do we want to be a copy of the original 1st century Church.

God has something better for us than that. Even though nearly 2000 years have passed, we can still be that Original Church... not just a copy.

Romans 8:11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.(NIV)

That same original Spirit that raised Christ from the dead... that filled the 120 in the Upper-room... that moved in the lives of the First New Testament believers... That Same Spirit is still available today!

You don't have to settle for a Copy – The Original is available right now.