

**Faithful to His Bride**  
**2024-08-11**

**Acts 20:28**

*Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*

**Last** week we talked about the **faithfulness** of **God** in **storms**, trials, and trouble. **Today**, we'll talk about how the Lord is **faithful** to His **church**.

- **Central** truth, and a **Core** Value at LEFC is that the **church** is **led** and **empowered** by the **Holy Spirit**.

The **root** meaning of “**church**” is **not** a **building** or organization, **but people**.

- The Greek translation, “**ekklesia**” means “**gathering, assembly, or a calling out**”.
  - **Biblically**, the church is a **community** of **all true believers** for **all time**.
    - Called the **church universal**. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Ephesians 4:4-6

**Ultimately**, we do **not go** to **church**; we **are** the **church**.

- **Here** is the **building**, here is the steeple, open the doors, the **church** is the **people**!

The **church** is **founded** by **Jesus**. He is its **Head** and **Savior**. Matthew 16:18, Colossians 1:18 Ephesians 5:23

- Jesus, the **bridegroom**, **sacrificially** and **lovingly** chose the **church** to be **His bride**
  - LEFC is **not** my church, or the **elders** church, **but Jesus’ church**. **His bride**.

**Jesus Christ** is **righteously** and **completely jealous** for His **bride**. John 17:20-23, 1 John 4:11-12

- The **overarching focus** of the High Priestly Prayer is **Jesus’ love** for His **Church** and **importance** of **unity**. **Jesus talks** about unity **seven** times in the High Priestly Prayer.
  - **It is not unanimity** or **uniformity**, **but oneness** of **heart**, faith and **purpose** through the **transforming work** of the **Holy Spirit**!

The church has **many reasons** for **disunity**: **social economic** status, **personal preference**, or **polity**.

- But the **Gospel** should **transcend** them **all**.
  - **The enemy** is **not** the lost, or your **fellow Christians**, **but the devil**. Ephesians 6:12, 1 Peter 5:8

**Unity** is **proof** that **Jesus** can **bring peace** **within** and **between** messed up people.

- **If** we are **divided** or “**devouring**”, the **lost** can **conclude** our **faith** is **not real** or **impotent**.

- Are **you** a **uniter** or a **divider** of the body of Jesus Christ in **life**, in your words, or in **social media**?

**There is no perfect church**, but every church has an **extraordinary, perfect Savior** and Bridegroom that **leads** His **imperfect bride** lovingly and **faithfully** into **His will** for her. Romans 8:14

- **Through a combination** of the **Word** and **indwelling**, the Holy Spirit **leads** and **empowers** Christians and churches in **specific ways** that the Lord **desires them to glorify His name**.
  - **Hearing God** in order to **serve Him** is a **Biblical pattern**.

God's **Spirit** lives in **our spirit**, it's no surprise that we can "**sense in our spirit**" (often in **prayer**) when **God speak** to us. Acts 13:2-3, 1 Corinthians 2:11-12, Isaiah 30:21, John 10:27

- **Today**, the **Lord** will be **sovereign, specifically** in **guiding** and **directing** His **bride** at **LEFC** that He bought with a price **through the vote** of **members in good standing**.
  - **Vote not on polity** but **simply** if **Ryan** is His **next LEFC Sr. Pastor**
- **Pastors** are overseers **appointed by the Holy Spirit**, NOT by men, to **feed and care** for the **church** that was **purchased by Jesus' blood**. Acts 20:28
  - **Jesus will decide**, not us, just as **He did 20 years ago!**

LEFC's **Core Value**: "The **church** is **led and empowered** by the **Holy Spirit**" is **wonderfully God-centered** and **proclaims Jesus' faithfulness to His bride**.

- Being "**Word & Spirit**" church **should be core values** of **every church**
- In **next hour** the Lord will **reveal** if **Ryan** is His **choice** for LEFC's **Sr. Pastor**.
- **There are two guarantees**: 1. The **Lord** will **decide**. 2. **Not the unanimity** in vote.
    - **The question** is will **ALL** joyfully submit **Lord's decision**.  
Ephesians 4:1-3

For **20 years** the **Gospel** has **overwhelmingly transcended** our **differences** at **LEFC**.

- I'm **excited** for **LEFC's future** and what the **Lord** will **do** in and through His **sweet bride** here.