

**Chapter 1 : How to Give Your Testimony if You Grew Up in the Church – Having Two Legs**

*I had two homes growing up, and Willow Creek Community Church was one of them. It was large but I knew it well and felt for it the kind of affection that grow in time and youth.*

Transcript This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form. Sunday marked the 50th anniversary of the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, a watershed moment in the civil rights movement. On September 15, , a dynamite blast planted by the Ku Klux Klan killed four little girls in the church. Denise McNair was 11 years old. Twenty other people were injured. No one was arrested for the bombings for 14 years. We turn now to world-renowned author, activist, scholar, Angela Davis, professor emerita at University of California, Santa Cruz. And remembering and paying tribute to this tragic event, let us not pretend that we are simultaneously celebrating the end of racist violence and the triumph of democracy. Let us also not labor under the illusion that this church bombing was an anomaly. We know that Robert Chambliss, who was eventually convicted of carrying out the bombing, along with three others—we know that he had been responsible for bombing black homes and churches over so many years. As a matter of fact, during the eight years prior to the church bombing, there had been 21 bombings in Birmingham. And I want to emphasize the importance of understanding how much terrorism, racist terrorism, has shaped the history of this country. And there are lessons we need to learn from that. Homes across the street from where I grew up were bombed when they were purchased by black people who were moving into a neighborhood that had been zoned for whites. And that house was right down the street from our house. Johnny Robinson and Virgil Ware. Bombings continued to plague black communities in Birmingham after September 15th, and everyone, including the FBI, knew who was behind them. Edgar Hoover refused to reveal the evidence that the FBI had gathered against the perpetrators, so that there was no trial during that period. But true justice is about transformation. Justice is about changing the relations that link us together. A broader way of thinking about justice in the case of the Birmingham bombing would require, first of all, a fuller understanding of the event and its historical context, and would require us to ask questions about the way our lives today bear the historical imprint of that era. What I fear is that many of the 50th anniversary observances—and there are many, as Margaret pointed out, many that have taken place, many to come—that many of them are just to close the book on the racist violence of the civil rights era so that we can embalm that violence and transform it into something to be gazed at through the conventional lens of the museum. And if any of you have ever visited the Civil Rights Institute, you know that it is an absolutely incredible museum with amazing exhibits. But for the church bombing, there is simply a window. There is a window through which one can see the church, meditate on its history, and see it as it changes and transforms, remembering that this was the site of one of the most vicious terror attacks this country has witnessed. And how many of us remember that it was young children—11, 12, 13, 14 years old, some as young as nine or 10—who faced police dogs and faced high-power water hoses and went to jail for our sake? It was children who were urging us to imagine a future that would be a future of equality and justice. Of course it did. Resisting the temptation of historical abstraction requires us to realize that this was not an extraordinary event that erupted one Sunday morning 50 years ago in an otherwise peaceful city. And of course his notoriety is linked to the way in which he used those high-power water hoses and dogs against the children, and because of the KKK violence against the Freedom Riders in Birmingham, in which the police whom Bull Connor controlled did not intervene. But I remember growing up hearing—when I was growing up, I remember hearing that when black people moved into previously white neighborhoods, Bull Connor would announce that there would be bloodshed. And then, indeed, there would be a bombing, or a house would be burned. As much talk as there has been about terrorism over the last decade, I have not heard one official acknowledgment of the terrorism that prevailed in places like Birmingham. Terrorism is a part of our history. It is not something that is alien. And, by the way, no one ever suggested that we plant dynamite in white communities as a response to that terrorism. So I guess I would say, why do we need to respond with devastating violence in Iraq and Afghanistan and Syria? It is also not widely known that black people arm themselves. This is a story that has been excised from the official

record of the freedom movement. And interestingly, Condoleezza Rice has described her minister fatherâ€”this was recently in an interview with Al Sharptonâ€”she described her minister father as being a leader of an armed patrol of black men in her neighborhood. And as she pointed out, no one was ever shot. Guns may have been fired to scare the Klu Klux Klan away. They may have beenâ€”she says they may have been fired in the air, but no one was ever shot. No one was ever hurt. And I should say I was happy to see that this morning Melissa Harris-Perry called her out on this after showing clips of her interview with Al Sharpton. But my father was also a member of an armed patrol in our neighborhood. Black people had guns, but only because we had no other choice. Black people had to arm themselves after the Hayes-Tilden compromise in which the Republican Rutherford Hayes was handed the presidency under the conditionâ€”remember, the Republicans were supposed to be the good guys in those days, OKâ€”under the condition that he withdraw all federal troops from the South. And so, black people were effectively informed that they were on their own from then on, from on. This is the period that witnessed the emergence of official structures of white supremacy that did not begin to come down until the resistance of the midth century freedom movement. We know the names of young black and brown people who have been killed by the police or by vigilantes. We know the names of Trayvon Martin in Florida, of Hadiya Pendleton in Chicago, who was killed shortly after having participated in the second Obama inauguration. An eye for an eye will not do it. Author, activist, scholar, Angela Davis. She grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, knew two of the girls killed in the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing 50 years ago Sunday. Special thanks to John Hamilton. Please attribute legal copies of this work to democracynow. Some of the work s that this program incorporates, however, may be separately licensed. For further information or additional permissions, contact us.

Chapter 2 : Amish Way of Life - Wikipedia

*If You Go. Bernie Bowman will present a program entitled "Mennonite and Amish: Growing up Mennonite," at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 6 at Maryville Friends Church, Sequoyah Ave., Maryville.*

Family and personal life[ edit ] Amish man working in southeast Ohio. Amish children playing baseball, Lyndonville, New York. Having children, raising them, and socialization with neighbors and relatives are the greatest functions of the Amish family. Amish believe large families are a blessing from God. The family has authority over the individual throughout life. Loyalties to parents, grandparents, and other relatives may change over time but they will never cease. A church district is measured by the number of families households , rather than by the number of baptized persons. Parents stress their responsibilities and obligations for the correct nurture of their children. They consider themselves accountable to the Lord for the spiritual welfare of their children. The family provide the member with a status within the home and within the community. A person is more a member of the family, rather than an individual. Each member has a job, a position, a responsibility, and a status. Females have different chores from the males, with chores within the home normally divided by gender. The Amish traditional family provides much of the education for the child. Although the formal education ends after they finish eighth grade , the boy or girl is trained for their adult tasks. The boys will work with the father in the fields, in the barn, and around the buildings. The girls work inside the home and garden, alongside the mother. The home and family become the school for "on the job" training. Amish youth, by and large, see their parents working hard, and they want to help. They want to learn and to be a productive part of the family. One of the greatest needs of our time is men who will assume the responsibility that God has placed on their shoulders. There are church outings and family meetings where activities are entered into and shared by all. Amish school in Pike Township, Bradford County, Pennsylvania The Amish stress strict obedience in their children, and this is taught and enforced by parents and preachers. Several passages in the Bible are used to support this view. However, things such as tantrums, making faces, calling other bad names, and general disobedience are rare because the children are raised to comply with strict social codes. Any youthful dissatisfactions are usually verbally expressed, but profanity is never allowed because the guilty child can expect swift punishment. As in non-Amish families, it is understood that there will likely be a certain amount of misbehavior, but it is neither encouraged nor overlooked. At the end of this period, Amish young adults are baptized into the church and usually marry, with marriage permitted only among church members. A small percentage of the young people choose not to join the church, deciding to live the rest of their lives in wider society and marry someone outside the community. The most common event for the boy-girl association is the fortnightly Sunday evening sing; however, the youth use sewing bees, frolics, and weddings for other opportunities. The sing is often in the same house or barn as the Sunday morning service. Teens may arrive from several close-by districts, thus providing socialization on a wider scale than from a single church. At the sing, boys are on one side of a long table, the girls on the other side. Each person is able to announce his or her choice of a hymn, and only the faster ones are chosen. A conversation takes place between songs. The boys who do not have a girlfriend may pair up with a Maidel girl. Marrying a first cousin is not allowed among the Amish, and second-cousin relationships are frowned upon, though they may occur. Marriage to a "Schwartz" cousin the first cousin once removed is not permitted in Lancaster County. Excessive teasing by siblings or friends at the wrong time is considered invasive. Respecting privacy, or at least pretending not to know, is a prevailing mode of behavior, even among parents. She wears no makeup and will not receive an engagement or wedding ring because the Ordnung prohibits personal jewelry. The marriage ceremony itself may take several hours, followed by a community reception that includes a banquet, singing, and storytelling. Celery is one of the symbolic foods served at Amish weddings. Celery is also placed in vases and used to decorate the house instead of flowers. Retirement[ edit ] When the Amish choose to retire is neither a set nor fixed time. The elderly do not go to a retirement facility; they remain at home. If the family house is large enough they continue living with everyone else. Often there is an adjacent dwelling, called the Grossdaadi Haus, where grandparents take up residence. Retired people

continue to help with work on the farm and within the home, working at their own pace as they are able. This allows them independence but does not strip them of family involvement. The Amish method of retirement ensures that the elderly maintain contact with family and relatives. Loneliness is not a problem because they keep meaningful social contacts through various community events, such as frolics, auctions, weddings, holiday, and other community activities. Lifestyle and culture[ edit ] Wikinews has related news: Pennsylvania Amish farmer jailed for outhouse violations Amish lifestyle is dictated by the Ordnung German, meaning: What is acceptable in one community may not be acceptable in another. No summary of Amish lifestyle and culture can be totally adequate because there are few generalities that are true for all Amish. Groups may separate over matters such as the width of a hat-brim, the color of buggies, or various other issues. The use of tobacco excluding cigarettes, which are considered "worldly" [9] and moderate use of alcohol [10] [ not in citation given ] are generally permitted, particularly among older and more conservative groups. Pennsylvania German is related to the Palatinate German of the 18th century. It has also been strongly influenced by American English. Now spoken primarily by the Old Order Amish and Old Order Mennonites , Pennsylvania German was originally spoken by many German-American immigrants in Pennsylvania and surrounding areas, especially those who came prior to The Beachy Amish , especially those who were born roughly after , tend to speak predominantly in English at home. All other Amish groups use either Pennsylvania German or a variety of Swiss German as their in-group language of discourse. There are small dialectal variations between communities, such as Lancaster County and Indiana speech varieties. The Amish are aware of regional variation, and occasionally experience difficulty in understanding speakers from outside their own area. Amish girls in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The common theme among all Amish clothing is plainness; clothing should not call attention to the wearer by cut, color, or any other feature. Hook-and-eye closures or straight pins are used as fasteners on dress clothing rather than buttons, zippers, or velcro. Snaps are used on everyday clothes, and plain buttons for work shirts and trousers. The historic restriction on buttons is attributed to tradition and their potential for ostentation. Some groups tend to limit color to black trousers, dresses and white shirts , while others allow muted colors. Dark blue denim work clothing is common within some groups as well. The Old Order Amish often sew their own clothing, and work clothing can become quite worn and patched with use. Women wear calf-length plain-cut dresses in a solid color. Aprons are often worn at home, usually, in white typically for the unmarried or purple or black for the married , and are always worn when attending church. A cape, which consists of a triangular piece of cloth, is usually worn, beginning around the teenage years, and pinned into the apron. In the colder months, a long woolen cloak may be worn. Heavy bonnets are worn over the prayer coverings when Amish women are out and about in cold weather, with the exception of the Nebraska Amish, who do not wear bonnets. Girls in some areas may wear colored bonnets until age nine; older girls and women wear black bonnets. Single women wear a white cape to church until about the age of thirty. Everyday capes are colored, matching the dress, until about age forty when only black is used. Mustaches are forbidden because they are associated with European military officers and militarism in general. Amish furniture Amish furniture is furniture marketed as being made by the Amish, primarily of Ohio and Shipshewana, Indiana. Amish furniture making is often a skill passed through many generations. Because Amish beliefs prevent the use of electricity, many woodworking tools in Amish shops are powered by a hydraulic and pneumatic power that is run on diesel generators. No piece of furniture is ever identical to another because of the care taken to select the wood. The grain is different on every piece of wood, and the craftsmen often try to highlight the features of each individual piece. Music[ edit ] Amish music is primarily German in origin, including ancient singing styles not found anywhere in Europe. Sacred music originates from modern hymns derived from the Pennsylvania German culture. Singing is a major part of Amish churches and some songs take over fifteen minutes to sing. It is always the second song sung at an Amish church service and is often sung at Amish weddings. Older Amish hymns are monophonic, without meter, and feature drawn-out tones with slowly articulated ornamentation. Usually, there is no harmony in the music. Pennsylvania spirituals are more contemporary and include a wide variety of influences. Although a few Amish learn to play traditional instruments such as the harmonica or the accordion, instruments are not played in public. Thus, singing is usually unaccompanied. They are usually held in barns on a Sunday evening after a

worship service and are an essential element in Amish courting practices as the young participants are encouraged to engage in social discourse between songs. While singing in church is in German, singing outside of the church is more often in English than in Pennsylvania German, even though the Amish know many traditional worldly Pennsylvania German songs. The most popular performer of worldly Pennsylvania German songs is John Schmid , who is also very popular among the Amish.

Chapter 3 : Growing up in a Hippie Commune: Part One | HuffPost

*Growing Up by Friendswood Community Church. We all have hopes and dreams for our children, but as this video soberly reminds us, those dreams can often be derailed.*

A Bible Study in Ephesians 4 by Rev. You may download this resource at no cost, for personal use or for use in a Christian ministry, as long as you are not publishing it for sale. All I ask is that you give credit where credit is due. For all other uses, please contact me at mark markdroberts. If you would like to read my original PFR address in its entirety, without the pictures or the daily blog breaks, you can download a PDF version here. This was a special privilege because I have such high regard for PFR and its ministries. But it was also a challenging opportunity because many signs at are our General Assembly are foreboding. San Jose, California, with the convention center in the foreground, the location of the General Assembly. Such matters still have to be approved by the whole church through its governing bodies [presbyteries], and the presbyteries have a history of upholding biblical truth in the wake of non-biblical General Assembly actions. My message to the PFR breakfast, was, on the one hand, a word of encouragement related to the General Assembly. Many at the breakfast were voting members of the Assembly, and may be called upon to speak up for biblical truth in the next few days. They need our prayers! On the other hand, my message was meant to challenge us with respect to our larger mission. Nothing that happens at the General Assembly will change our basic calling as Christians, though it might complicate the ways we Presbyterians act out that calling. In my next few posts I will share with you the text of my message at the PFR breakfast. But the main themes and most details are the same. But I believe the main points in this series talk, which are not my own, but come from Ephesians 4, will speak to you no matter your denominational affiliation. We all need to grapple afresh with the challenging and inspiring insights found in the fourth chapter of one of my favorite books of the Bible. We may be in for a rocky road ahead, which is not to say the past thirty years have been smooth ones. But, just to be clear, I am not worried about the health and future of the church of Jesus Christ. Though the church might take a battering, in the end, the gates of Hell will not prevail against it. Thanks be to God! Part 1 Part 1 of series: Preface First of all, I want to thank you for coming out this morning. Now you know why the PFR folk invite speakers from Texas. For you this breakfast began at 6: For me it felt like 8: I know some of you are familiar with this wonderful ministry. We share a common vision of multi-layered renewal, and a passion for helping the people of God live as ministers of Jesus Christ. Throughout the past twenty years, PFR has been an outstanding source of wisdom and encouragement for me and thousands of others like me. I am grateful for this ministry and for all that PFR is doing to bring renewal to our churches and to our denomination. When I consider some of those you have had address you in recent years, Tom Gillespie, Richard Mouw, and my mentor, Lloyd Ogilvie, I am humbled by the opportunity you have given me. I hope to live up to your trust in asking me to speak this morning. This is a bit of a tricky assignment, actually. But I learned that if I kept moving, always with one child in immediate proximity, I could keep both kids in view. So, today, I have two purposes in view. On the one hand, I want to offer a close-up word of encouragement relative to this General Assembly, especially for those who are delegates. On the other hand, I want to speak to the larger issues of our life and mission as a church. No matter what happens in these next few days, all of the basics of our life in Christ will be unchanged. Though the actions of this Assembly might make our work easier, or might make it harder, our calling to the mission of Jesus Christ will remain the same. So I hope also to offer some words of encouragement as we go out into the world as the people of God, sent to make disciples of all nations. Introduction to Ephesians 4 In our short time this morning, I want to do a Bible study. I plan to focus our attention on the first half of Ephesians 4, pointing to some of the highlights in this watershed passage. Before I get to Ephesians 4, however, let me give a brief overview of its context in this letter. By bringing everything together under the headship of Christ, God will mend this broken world. Out of his great love for us, God has lavished his grace upon us, adopting us as his children, so that we might "live for the praise of his glory" 1: Our whole life becomes a means to glorify the Lord as we participate in his mission through the power of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 2 begins with the bad news of our condition outside of Christ: But God, who is rich in

mercy, love, and grace, has made us alive in Christ. We do not earn our salvation with good works. But, when we are saved by grace, we are also newly created in Christ for a life of good works. The second half of Ephesians 2 reveals that the saving work of Christ touches more than individuals. It also brings reconciliation among people, represented in the breaking down of the wall of hostility between Jews and Gentiles. Human divisions will be mended as God brings all things together in Christ. Through the church, God makes known his renewal strategy. The church is the means by which God announces his mission to the cosmos and demonstrates the ultimate success of this mission. Our wholeness and unity as formerly broken and scattered people will tell the world that the Gospel is true. If you want to know if the Gospel is true, Ephesians tells us, just look at the church. That, my friends, can be a scary thought! If the church is to exhibit the truth of the Gospel, then we will have to live out this truth in our daily life in the world. The final three chapters of Ephesians focus on the practical implications of the theological vision found in the first three chapters. Thus Ephesians 4 begins: Paul, writing from a prison, urges us to walk the talk, to take our calling, spelled out in Ephesians , and embody it. We must also live it, each and every day. Part 2 Part 2 of series: Now, on to Part 2. Where Should We Begin? The answer of Ephesians 4 begins in a most surprising way. The verb translated here as "making every effort" conveys a sense of urgency, of eagerness. Exhaustion has a way of depleting our zeal. Now I realize that some would say we have no more unity to preserve, that our theological divisions run so deep as to destroy our denominational unity. There are times when persistent sin or theological error can break our spiritual connectionalism and lead to necessary separation. But, even in such sad situations, may we still yearn for restoration, for genuine unity that reflects the Gospel. Pastors as Teachers My limited time this morning requires me to skip some marvelous material in verses of Ephesians 4. The gifts [Christ] gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. Notice that, in this passage, gifts are not abilities for ministry, but the people who provide leadership in the church, including pastor-teachers. The Greek original links these two roles essentially, by the way. Here is a reminder for those of us who are pastors that teaching is essential to our leadership. We are not just community organizers, counselors, dialogue-starters, and program directors. Too often in our day, churches expect pastors to do a myriad of other things besides teaching, thus diluting pastoral effectiveness and, ultimately, impoverishing churches. Even preachers can sometimes minimize the importance of teaching. Lay leaders, be sure your pastors are your "pastor-teachers. They are "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" 4: And according to Ephesians 4: Scripture is abundantly clear, in this passage most of all, that every single Christian is a minister of Christ. Pastors are not the only ministers. Rather, they are given the special task of training ministers, the people of God, for their ministry. During that worship service, Dr. Ogilvie began in his sonorous voice: After all, we knew the ministers of the church. The ministers were those men who sat up front in the black robes. We were ministers of Jesus Christ! How was this possible? I did as Dr. Ogilvie said, even though it was pretty awkward to tell my dad that he was a minister of Jesus Christ. But I will never, ever forget the surprise of that moment, the first time I ever thought that I, a mere lay person, was a minister. What a delight it was to hear of how a manager began to treat her employees differently because of Christ, or how a father started to teach the Bible to his children, rather than delegating their discipleship to the Sunday School. Part 3 Part 3 of series: The second part examined the call to seek unity, the role of pastors as teachers, and the calling of all Christians to be ministers of Christ.

**Chapter 4 : These Are The 10 Fastest Growing Cities In Tennessee For - HomeSnacks**

*Growing up in a very religious based household was always something I was so used to. Sunday morning church, Wednesday night Bible studies, Thursday night worship and Friday night Bible study. Yes, my week, rather my life, revolved around church literally all the time.*

If the local church is to truly develop the spiritual gifts of its members, and mobilize the terrific power of the Holy Spirit to work through a trained and experienced laity, if it is to facilitate true relationship-based community, it will need to organize smaller groups where these can be fostered. Using this focus, Xenos has grown from a handful in to well over today. Their small group ministry has also resulted in good morale on the part of the lay home fellowship leaders, all graduates of the 2 year graded training course for leaders. Through these consultations, we have discovered that small group ministries are not a novel idea at all. In fact, most evangelical churches seem to have tried to establish a network of small groups at one time or another. At the same time, most of these efforts are disappointing to some degree; Leaders often ask us, "What have we been doing wrong? Sometimes a small minority of the church struggles along, unwilling to admit failure in the program, and developing a "faithful remnant" theology which justifies, on theological grounds, the lack of growth and lack of participation by the other members. Church division is also a possibility, although we have not seen very many cases where this occurred. They are often not based on New Testament theory Both New Testament example and principle argue for small home-sized groups as a key feature of the local church. In the area of biblical example, Acts 2: Thus, in Jerusalem, they held both large and small group meetings. Clearly, they did not feel the large meetings were enough by themselves. It should be obvious that an impersonal atmosphere will result if we only hold only very large meetings. The local church should encourage a network of close relationships in its congregation because real community must be based on close relationships. Smaller group meeting formats such as those described in this passage would be ideal for fostering such relationships. In another case, Paul reminded the Ephesian elders that he had exhorted them both "publicly and from house to house. But Paul did not limit his speaking ministry to the large meeting place, even though one was available. It seems clear from these and other references that operating a cluster of home churches in each city was common practice. These home groups continued to work together under the same elders. It is probably significant that no church buildings have been found from the earliest period of the church 33â€” AD. At Xenos, we have refused to build or to expand our building until we see a high degree of involvement in home groups. Otherwise, by expanding the building we would only worsen the problem of superficial involvement in the local church. New Testament principles surrounding the issues of body life, spiritual gifts, and the fact that real spiritual ministry is the business of every member in the local church can not be effectively brought into practice in a large group setting. Only then will they be able to meet those needs on an individual level. Unfortunately, when churches attempt to initiate a small group ministry, they sometimes fail to teach and persuade their people that the purpose of the meeting is to practice these biblical principles. The result is sometimes a wrong impression on the part of most participants. The goal would be to establish an understanding and a vision of the New Testament model and the spiritual goals associated with lay mobilization in the minds of the participants. The wrong criteria are sometimes followed for the selection of leaders The Bible teaches that spiritual criteria must be used to select leaders. Too often, however, the church will designate men and women for leadership on the basis of secular abilities, job status, levels of financial giving, or seniority in the church. The result is usually a meeting that is not very spiritually edifying or appealing. After leaders have been selected on the basis of character and knowledge, they should also be evaluated on the basis of actual function, or role. In many of our churches, it may be very difficult to determine who our authentic leaders are. This is because they have not had ample opportunity to try their hand at leadership. In these cases, we will have to pick leaders on the basis of the best criteria possible. Later, when lay-led groups are in place, it should be possible to evaluate the effectiveness of the work done by the more committed members of the group. Other things being equal, the more effective workers should be the first to be moved forward. Frequently, insufficient authority is given to the leaders If the home fellowship is to be

fashioned after the Biblical examples of house churches, then the leaders of the groups should be allowed to run their groups the way the leaders of the New Testament house churches ran theirs. Since the New Testament instructs readers to respect their leaders and to follow their lead in the running of the home church, we can assume those leaders had many decisions delegated to them. This structure may include a pre-planned curriculum for study, and a long list of policy restrictions. The effect is usually to stifle initiative and sap motivation. The leaders realize very quickly that they are functioning as agents for the existing leadership of the church, but that they themselves are leaders in name only. When the church requires the home group leaders to check in on virtually all decisions, it clearly suggests that they are incompetent to make their own decisions. Sometimes they are incompetent, but the church must see the challenge in this, rather than accepting the status quo. Similarly, pre-planned curriculum often actually scripts the meeting and requires little creativity or expertise on the part of group leaders. Indeed, the main reason for scripting the meeting is usually the feeling that group leaders have no expertise of their own. Such lack of expertise points in turn to a weak equipping ministry in the church. Failure to train leaders to a sophisticated level results in leaders who must be led by the hand at all times. When this happens, leaders often highly competent and educated at their secular jobs realize that anyone could follow the simple script, and consequently, they are not challenged. They lose interest in leading, and begin to call on the leadership to be passed around the group. They fail to take possession of the role of home group leader as a worthwhile life goal. We believe churches are often too impatient when trying to move from a program-based model to a home group model of church life, and therefore they grossly underestimate the level of training and equipping needed to develop effective leaders. Therefore, it is necessary to carefully weigh which areas are left to the discretion of the home leaders, and which areas need to be cleared with the higher authority of the church. The point in making this decision is to arrive at a balance that will prevent serious errors from occurring even though we never have a guarantee that all problems can be prevented, while delegating real decision-making authority to the home fellowship leaders. While quality fellowship and support is one of the rewards of small group ministry, it is an inadequate basis. If we have only fellowship as our goal, the group is corporately self-centered, or self-focused. This is because outreach and mission are the natural context within which fellowship should occur. When a group of people occupy themselves with each other to the exclusion of the outside world, discontent is sure to follow. We should be unwilling to consider the option of handling outreach at the large meeting and limiting small groups to a fellowship role. The group may not engage in outreach at its weekly meeting, but they have to work together and pray together on some shared mission. However, this is a moot point, since the passage does not mention where evangelism did occur. On the other hand, in I Corinthians There is often no provision for church discipline within the small group. In cases where home fellowships are set up with no provision for church discipline, a very distressing and familiar pattern emerges. Some people are attracted to small groups for the wrong reasons. There are those who come to exploit others, or simply to use the group to become the center of attention. The impact of such people is greater in a small group than it would be in a large meeting. As a result, the whole character of the group can be altered to such an extent that it becomes difficult to attract new people, or even to hold the interest and loyalty of the productive members. The New Testament provides a solution to this kind of situation. If they are not responsive, a legitimate amount of pressure can be applied—even to the point of removing them from the group. The application of discipline should be gracious and suited to the needs of the individual as well as the group. In order to prevent abuses or legalism, the eldership should be consulted in cases where an ultimatum may be issued. Churches worry about angering people if they practice discipline. This concern is legitimate. But while we will anger some by exercising discipline, we endanger all by failing to exercise it. Worst of all, those being disciplined miss out on one of the important provisions for growth in the New Testament. Small group attendance is a privilege in the church. Participation should have conditions attached, such as no anti-social or disruptive behavior. Otherwise, the small groups become soft, unruly, and unappealing. All groups may be the same, rather than diversified and matched to their members. For some reason, churches generally devise and execute a plan for small groups that features only one kind of group. We did this too. But not any more! Now we see that family aged people need a different type of group than students or singles, etc. Why should a large church or even a small one have

only one type of group? Every church should be different. There may be no adequate equipping offered to would-be leaders. The Bible does not allow the local church the option of telling its people to go away for their training. According to Ephesians 4: When the leadership of a church decides not to have a small group ministry because its "laymen" are too ignorant, this is not an excuse - it is an admission of guilt! We find that most churches try to get by with a five or ten week training series which is inadequate for sophisticated leadership responsibilities. People will take longer training courses if they can break up the training into modules, and if they view taking these classes as fun. This is why we need to put our best communicators and leaders in as teachers in this training. If a church already has an adequate supply of leaders who have some biblical knowledge, it would be preferable to hold this training while small groups are in progress, so they can immediately use the knowledge they learn. This prevents the accumulation of "dead knowledge" and also avoids creating the impression that Christian work is more difficult than it really is. At the same time, we should be clear that completing the training course will not necessarily result in an assignment as a home group leader. That decision will have to also depend on other considerations such as character development, and a record of self-sacrificing service to others. The classes should be viewed as supplemental to the grass-roots discipleship practiced at the home group level. As mentioned earlier, this lack of mission-mindedness has a negative effect on the group. In order for groups to be spiritually healthy, they need a purpose greater than themselves. On the other hand, good small groups tend not to stay small. Thus, when a house fills up with people, much of the interactive character of the group is lost. In addition, outreach tends to dwindle because there is no room for new people.

## Chapter 5 : Valley Heights | Sermons

*The Maronite Church is one of 21 Eastern Rite Catholic Churches united with Rome. While most Catholics in the United States belong to the Western or Latin Catholic Church, these 21 rites are also fully Catholic and can be found in certain countries and immigrant communities.*

Ben Alexander March 13 Toby- This was great. This is a needed area for shepherding. Thanks for addressing an important area for us. Ben Shari March 13 Great article! But the Christian walk is about being saved again and again and again. But in the process of sanctification I need Jesus to rescue me daily. I was VERY tempted to be irritated and give big sighs of despair. But I ran to Jesus and He saved me. He gave me a new perspective that my time was in HIS hands. He gave me HIS joy and forgiveness for the one who caused the confusion. Perhaps we need to be telling one another everyday how and from what Jesus saves us. I think our testimonies would encourage one another to walk in the Spirit. Rita Joiner March 14 As someone who was blessed growing up in a faithful Christian home and who is now bringing up little ones in the church, I loved this. Cle Callihan March 19 Good article. The church denomination in which one grows up or if one grows up in a home of non-believers, as I did, makes no difference unless one has a personal, intimate, relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and is guided daily, moment by moment, by His Spirit. We share all the time of how we came to know Jesus Christ as our saviour but never do we give a true day to day or other accounts of how Jesus has been working in our lives daily. Tammy March 4 I so needed this. I was one of those kids who grew up knowing GOD. Then I seen the times he corrected me and when he really worked on my heart to get back in church and the time he truly spoke to me about rededicating my life to him. Kcostner March 4 Chris and I were just discussing thisâ€sometimes it seems as though we are just sniffing out sin all day long. I smell sin here, and some there, and there it is a big glob of it on my wall! So pointing out the dragon without pointing to the cross is futile and even destructive. Man are those baptist roots hard to pull up! Marshall March 4 Good stuff! The normal outline we teach folks to go by when sharing their testimony is: Rose March 4 I want to like this, and I agree with most of it. But I really dislike the labeling and stereotyping. Baptists have the same problems as Catholics with people thinking their souls are safe when they in fact are not- they just rely on different standards of measurement. Can we have these conversations as Christians without feeling the need to put other groups into our stereotypically neatly wrapped packages? Thanks for this reminder. Ben Rossell March 6 Toby â€ Fantastic! Thank you for this, dear brother. As one of the children you describe who grew up knowing and loving Jesus, I have never had any difficulty speaking to the grace of God in my life. The hard part is knowing how to describe having no memory of life without Jesus.

**Chapter 6 : Meet Haley | Haley Stevens for Congress**

*Many people fondly remember growing up in a house with a front porch. I was raised in rural Michigan, just north of the "big city" of Grand Rapids, amidst the glistening lakes and rowed pines of Newaygo County.*

Part One The hippie movement had been in full swing for some time and both my parents identified strongly with the desire to shake off the traditional societal structures of the previous generations. My father believed he had found the solace he sought in the Love Israel Family community. At its peak the Love Israel Family owned several properties in Seattle, a homestead in Alaska, a house in Hawaii, a cannery in Yakima, Washington and a acre ranch in Arlington, Washington. We primarily lived on the ranch in Arlington. My parents joined the community in with an infant girl and a toddler boy in tow -my older sister and brother. There were many reasons why people joined and at its peak there were some people in the Love Israel Family. He longed for something better. He was hopeful that joining the Love Israel Family would be a much sought escape from the modern American culture that he was raised in, but no longer felt that he belonged to. He came back from the war like so many others, embittered. The hippie movement had been in full swing for some time and both my parents identified strongly with the desire to shake off the traditional societal structures of the previous generations. My mother was not convinced that this community would be the spiritual haven that my father hoped for. Having grown up in the Seattle area she was wary of the Love Israel Family because of an article she had read in the Seattle Times about a member who died from inhaling toluene, a toxic solvent. She saw the Family as a group of people taking advantage of the hippie movement for self-gratification. For her, joining the Love Israel Family did not feel like a joint decision made by two reasonable adults but more a proclamation of intention made by my father. Joining went against her better judgment. With help from her parents, she tried to convince my father to give up this dream of living in a spiritual utopia and concentrate on the responsibility of his new family. They were unsuccessful and my father, a very stubborn man, had his way. My mother, with an infant and toddler and few other options, followed. So my parents gave away what little they had to the greater good of the community. They renounced their old lives and were given the new identities of Certain and Goodness Israel and set out to raise their children in what must have seemed like a new world. My father and I 2 years old.

Chapter 7 : Growing Up in Grace | Grace Community Church | Grace Community Church

*What happens when a man discovers he's gay but the culture he is raised in doesn't address sexuality, much less homosexuality? James Schwartz, an LGBT poet and writer who grew up in an Amish community in Michigan, gives *Sensa Nostra* an inside look at what it's like to grow up gay in a world where gender roles are strict and marriage between a man and woman is seen as an imperative.*

While most Catholics in the United States belong to the Western or Latin Catholic Church, these 21 rites are also fully Catholic and can be found in certain countries and immigrant communities. Many of the Eastern Catholic churches split from Rome at some point in history and have since resumed union with Rome, but the Maronites are one of two that have never broken from the Roman Catholic Church. The origins of these Eastern rites can be traced geographically to a specific country or region, although all have ties to one of four major locations: Alexandria, Armenia, Constantinople now Istanbul, or Antioch. Many of the countries where these churches were founded are also home to an Orthodox branch of Christianity that never resumed union with Rome. Since the Maronites never split from Rome, they are the only Eastern Rite church without an Orthodox counterpart. The Maronite Church was founded in the late fourth century by a Syrian hermit, St. Maron, and was later strengthened by the leadership of St. John Maron, the patriarch of Antioch from to AD. The Maronites endured a long history of conflict with various empires until when Lebanon became fully independent. The percentage of Maronites in Lebanon used to be much higher; there was a mass exodus of Christians from the country during the Lebanese Civil War, during which many Maronites immigrated to the United States. There are now more than three million Maronites in the world, and more of them reside outside of Lebanon than within its borders. There are two eparchies dioceses in the United States, comprising around 60 parishes. Why does it matter that there are 21 other kinds of Catholic churches? Well, in, St. These differences in tradition are not differences in doctrine or theology, but simply evidence that the customs of Christianity have evolved in unique ways around the world. To give a few examples, my favorite part of the Maronite Mass is the consecration, because it is recited by the priest in the language of Aramaic, rather than in English. Aramaic was the language that Jesus and his disciples would have spoken to each other, and the language in which Jesus would have said those words at the Last Supper. Communion is also given by intinction, where it is dipped by the priest into the wine and then placed on the tongue, rather than in the hands, to further signify its sanctity. The music and prayers during the Mass are rooted in the Eastern tradition, and certain practices like the sign of peace are slightly different. There are a few other notable differences in the Maronite Church, as seen in the liturgical calendar and the sacraments. Lent begins on Ash Monday rather than Wednesday and includes all Sundays, encompassing fifty days instead of forty. Advent is replaced by the six weeks of the Season of Announcements during which various events leading up to the birth of Christ are commemorated. Additionally, the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, called Chrismation, are often given to a baby at the same time. While the outward appearance of these traditions is markedly different from the Latin Rite Catholic Church many of us are used to, the principles remain the same. And it is by educating ourselves about the Eastern lung of our Church that we may better understand the diversity that lies in the unity of Rome. Pope John Paul II.

**Chapter 8 : About : The Front Porch**

*Stand Up For The Truth. Stand Up For The Truth is a one-hour live radio program to share the news of the day that affects the Christian faith. Listen weekdays from 9 - 10 a.m. CST on the radio, or streamed live via our free device app.*

Between and , the number of Bronx residents increased from , to 1., Hence, the Migration played an important role in the formation and expansion of African-American neighborhoods in these cities. There are various races and ethnic groups in this huge expanse such as Whites, Latinos, Asians, and Arabs, but it is predominantly Black. While the Great Migration helped educated African Americans obtain jobs, while enabling a measure of class mobility, the migrants encountered significant forms of discrimination in the North through a large migration during such a short of period of time. The African-American migrants were often resented by working classes in the North, who feared that their ability to negotiate rates of pay, or even to secure employment at all, was threatened by the influx of new labor competition. Populations increased very rapidly with the addition of African-American migrants and new European immigrants, which caused widespread housing shortages in many cities. African Americans competed for work and housing with first or second generation immigrants in many major cities. Ethnic groups created territories which they defended against change. More established populations with more capital moved away to newer housing that was being developed on the outskirts of the cities, to get away from the pressure of new groups of residents. The migrants also discovered that the open discrimination of the South was only more subtly manifested in the North. In , the Supreme Court declared municipal resident segregation ordinances unconstitutional. In response, some white groups resorted to the restrictive covenant , a formal deed restriction binding property owners in a given neighborhood not to sell to blacks. Whites who broke these agreements could be sued by "damaged" neighbors. Not until did the Supreme Court strike down restrictive covenants. Second Great Migration African American From , another five million people left the South for industrial jobs in cities in the North and West. Sometimes violence was the outcome of some of the pressure of this migration. In response to the influx of Blacks from the South, banks, insurance companies, and businesses began redlining â€”denying or increasing the cost of services, such as banking , insurance , access to jobs, [10] access to health care, [11] or even supermarkets [12] to residents in certain, often racially determined, [13] areas. The most common use of the term refers to mortgage discrimination. Data on house prices and attitudes toward integration suggest that in the midth century, segregation was a product of collective actions taken by whites to exclude blacks from their neighborhoods. The process began an intense phase in the late s and continues in some places to the present day. It has had a major impact on the urban landscape. Urban renewal was extremely controversial because it involved the destruction of businesses, the relocation of people, and the use of eminent domain to reclaim private property for city-initiated development projects. The justifications often used for urban renewal include the "renewal" of residential slums and blighted commercial and industrial areas. In the second half of the 20th century, renewal often resulted in the creation of urban sprawl and vast areas of cities being demolished and replaced by freeways and expressways , housing projects , and vacant lots, some of which still remain vacant at the beginning of the 21st century. In the s James Baldwin famously dubbed urban renewal "Negro Removal". The construction of interstate highways through black neighborhoods in the city led to significant population loss in those neighborhoods. It was also associated with an increase in neighborhood racial segregation. This enabled middle-class African Americans to move to better housing, in some cases in the suburbs, and to desegregated residential neighborhoods. In some areas, however, real estate agents continued to steer African Americans to particular areas although that was now illegal. Late 20th century[ edit ] By , the legal barriers enforcing segregation had been replaced by decentralized racism, where whites pay more to live in predominantly white areas. In the New Great Migration , black college graduates are returning to the South for jobs, where they generally settle in middle-class , suburban areas. This includes states such as Texas, Georgia, and Maryland, three of the biggest gaining states of college graduates. But rarely have they been so isolated and impoverished as the African-American districts found in U. This has helped produce majority black populations with significant middle to upper class black

neighborhoods. Many of these communities are found in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D. Such communities have also developed in many of the larger cities of the United States. Even some of those that traditionally have high poverty and unemployment have also had neighborhoods with middle class and affluent blacks. Although people of different races may work together, they are still unlikely to live in largely integrated neighborhoods. This pattern differs only by degree in different metropolitan areas. The black ghettos did not always contain dilapidated houses and deteriorating projects, nor were all of its residents poverty-stricken. For many African Americans, the ghetto was "home", a place representing authentic blackness and a feeling, passion, or emotion derived from the rising above the struggle and suffering of being black in America. Institutions within black neighborhoods[ edit ] Although some black neighborhoods may suffer from civic disinvestment , [29] with schools assumed to be of lower quality due to some schools showing lower test scores, less effective policing [30] and fire protection, there are institutions that help to improve the physical and social capital of black neighborhoods. And with the social mobility of many African Americans, there has been the rise of many communities with better schools and safe neighborhoods. But these issues may be more due to economics than race since middle class blacks with middle-class neighborhoods tend to live in better neighborhoods and children attend better schools than those from lower income neighborhoods or schools districts. Black church In black neighborhoods the churches have been important sources of social cohesion and activism. Churches in Harlem have undertaken real estate ventures and renovated burnt-out and abandoned brownstones to create new housing for residents.

**Chapter 9 : Growing Up - Heartland Community Church**

*How Neighborhoods Affect Children's Well-Being. 85 On average, growing up in an Community services should be near families who need them.*

What is The Front Porch? Many people fondly remember growing up in a house with a front porch. It was a few steps from the front porch of our small but warm home. It welcomed them to our lives. It was the portal to conversation for all things family and community. You will experience conversations about faith, family, fellowship, and food, just like the front porches when we were growing up. Not everyone has a front porch. I bet almost everyone has places where friends, family, and even foes gather for conversation and debate. Such places serve a similar unifying and comforting purpose. We hope you experience those same kinds of conversations here. The Front Porch aims to be a place for conversations on biblical faithfulness in African-American churches and beyond. Faith Driving the conversation is what matters most to us, namely, our Triune God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the necessity of faith in him. We hope to discuss the essentials of the Christian faith, reformed theology, and how these intersect with the African-American Christian experience. We pray these conversations build faith and lead to faithfulness. The church local and universal, militant and triumphant, is beloved by our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, it must be loved by those who love him. We love the church in all its multifaceted, multi-colored, and multi-ethnic expressions that God has ordained. All we say about her we say in love as those within her doors, as part of the family, praying the church will be all that Christ calls her to be. The Front Porch allows you to just sit down, listen, and enjoy the conversation without adding anything. Yet your presence is welcomed. Please add your two cents to any discussion. But prepare to also be challenged. Many issues are taken up and settled on neighborhood front porches. And even those that are not should not destroy the fellowship of brothers and sisters. Food The Front Porch is a great place to exchange old and new recipes. How does the faith of the saints who have gone before us help us understand and persevere in the faith we profess today? Are there recipes of faithfulness we can glean from past generations that we can mix with our contemporary, contextualized understandings? Can we come away with a fresh yet faithful recipe for Christian living that our parents and God would be proud of? We believe we can.