

Family Church, Week 2: “Jesus is Lord”

The Church is a Holy Spirit-Filled Family, United Under Jesus Our Founder and King

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Production Notes:

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Underline as the blank to fill in.

Series Overview

We’re beginning a series exploring what it means to become a *family church*. Each week, we’ll unpack a line from this creed:

Our Family Church Creed

As God’s people, we, the church, are not a product to consume or a show to watch. We are a Holy Spirit-filled family, united under Jesus our Founder and King. We, the people, are the instruments of worship, in our gathered services and our everyday lives. At Trinity, love for our neighbor welcomes all as they are; love for God means none of us can remain as we were. Our greatest witness is our Holy Spirit-empowered love for one another, our transformed lives, and the way we serve our community. Real discipleship is not just ideas to ponder but the Spirit’s miraculous work of adoption and transformation, making us sons and daughters of God. We know who we are; we are a people prepared and preparing, living in the hope of Christ’s coming Kingdom and our true home.

This week, we focus on the second line:

We are a Holy Spirit-filled family, united under Jesus our Founder and King.

Introduction:

Have you ever had one of those friends that was a natural rebel? The type of friend that seems to always take things just a bit too far. When I was in my early teens, I had a friend that was this way. This friend got me in trouble numerous times. Eventually one of the youth leaders in my youth department told me that I was to be the friend that would accept him and love him, implying that I was to be the person that could help him. Looking back, I am uncertain who was leading who. In fact, the first time I encountered drugs was with him. Like the Hebrew people of old being darkened by the sinful culture around them rather than

a light in it. I remember the feeling I had when he pulled them out. As a young teenager I remember thinking I needed to not risk pushing him away. I remember wondering what “loving him” meant. So, I simply said, “It’s cool, man.”

Here is the big question.

How much of someone do you need to accept to love them well?

Have you noticed? Our culture keeps insisting that the most loving thing we can do is be **permissive**. It tells us that to love someone well, we must affirm **everything** about them. More and more, the message sounds like this: *“If you don’t love my sin too, then you don’t really love me.”*

Let’s come back to this in a minute.

Lectio:

“There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” (Ephesians 4:4–6)

“And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.” (Colossians 1:18)

Meditatio:

Let’s focus on the **Ephesians** text. The church in Ephesus was not a quaint congregation with one language and culture. It was a socially diverse community in the heart of Roman trade and entertainment. The city was famous for its temple to Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World (Acts 19:23–41). Ephesus attracted merchants, magicians, philosophers, and travelers from across the whole Roman empire. This is exactly where the light of Jesus needed to shine. It was a central hub of fallen humans and their debauchery. A modern comparison might be Las Vegas. Both cities are (or were) centers of power, pleasure, and pilgrimage. Places where the gods of success, sex, and self-indulgence are not just tolerated but *celebrated*.

Many new Christian converts in Ephesus struggled to let their new faith displace their former preferences and beliefs. The church was a blend of Jewish believers who wanted to keep Jewish laws and Gentile (non-Jewish) converts who were tempted to keep worshipping idols.

What do I mean by worshiping idols? In Ephesus, idol worship wasn't just bowing before carved images; it showed up in how people lived and what they loved.

Here are a few examples.

Participation in and celebration of sexual sin instead of God-honoring fidelity.

“But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.” — *Ephesians 5:3*

“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!” — *1 Corinthians 6:15*

Paul confronts the Ephesian culture's normalization of temple sex and immorality, urging believers to rediscover covenantal love and holiness as true worship.

The possession of money and power as the definition of success.

“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils.” — *1 Timothy 6:10*

“For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.”
— *Ephesians 5:5*

Paul saw how Ephesus's economy thrived on idol sales and greed (Acts 19:24–27). The gospel redefined success not as possession, but participation in God's kingdom values.

Gluttony and the pleasure of indulgence over generosity.

“Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.” — *Philippians 3:19*

“Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.”
— *Ephesians 5:18*

Ancient banquets and temple feasts often centered on excess.

Seneca (c. 4 BC–AD 65) lamented Rome's gluttony, writing, “They vomit that they may eat and eat that they may vomit” (*Letters to Lucilius* 95.25).

Against such indulgence, Paul urged believers to be filled not with wine but with the Spirit—to trade self-indulgence for Spirit-filled generosity and self-control (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:22–23).

Action: Lean In

The deceiver still twists the Word of God, **persuading** our culture that to *love and welcome the stranger* means we must also **affirm** every lifestyle and belief. Yet true Christian love never confuses compassion with compromise.

Paul reminds the Ephesian church that unity is not built on cultural **accommodation** but on shared allegiance to Christ as **Lord**: “*There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*” (Ephesians 4:4–6)

Final Thoughts:

There I was a young teenager looking at an outstretched hand with drugs in it. My pseudo-friend saying, “Trust me, this is good.”

What does it look like to love him well in this moment? Do I reply with, “It’s cool, man. You do you. I support what makes you happy.”

No.

Love is not open **permission**, it is right **submission**.

Like a brilliant surgeon who loves the patient by rejecting the cancer, a parent who loves the child by limiting the candy, or a teacher who loves the student by correcting the mistake, true love refuses to celebrate what ultimately destroys.

Let me say it like this:

At Trinity, we know what it looks like when the **Church** pursues the eternal, loving kingdom of God: it looks like “...**a Holy Spirit–filled family, united under Jesus, our Founder and King.**”

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