



## **C3 Global Culture 2017 Ps Phil Pringle**

The cultural values, shared in C3 churches, are a mixture of things we simply and naturally did, as well as values we wished to embed as part of our culture.

Modus operandi - *“We recognise and facilitate.”*

The following are Kingdom values that drive and define us; it is these we encourage and nurture in our churches.

And whilst this list is not definitive it is certainly representative.

### **Praise, Worship and Prayer**

These three interrelated practises are an overarching value in C3. Thanksgiving and praise define our response to God and life. We are a people of praise, who worship, and express thankfulness.

*“If we do these we have little time for criticism of others, and cynicism.”*

Thanksgiving isn't merely a way to be a little less grumpy, according to NT Wright. And Paul mentions the giving of thanks in Colossians, not in passing but as a major theme alongside and embedded in the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a profound theological truth and essential practise to bring praises to the name of God. It should frame our conversations, our life. *“Be thankful.”*

Prayer is core to our faith, our churches. It is also easily relegated to tokenism. We need to fight to maintain this value, as it is our lifeline to God, our present and future.

*“Prayer is work.”*

God's presence is something to be both sought and taught. This requires worship leaders to know how to take God's people into His presence. We train and lead worship so that it has this end in mind. People who don't worship and pray as a lifestyle should not be leading our worship.

Spiritual health is our prime value, means and end.

### **Alive – Animated**

The Holy Spirit is our true animation. Being filled with the Spirit keeps us alive to God, alive to his Spirit. His Spirit is Life. This has a look, an outworking in our lives, our churches, and our pulpits.

We avoid being sluggish, slow to act and change.

We act as though we were alive, and not having one foot in the grave – no matter our age. *“Be filled with the Holy Spirit.”*

### **Fun**

Yes, fun is a value. This says that, *“serving God is not something to be endured, but something to be enjoyed.”* The Westminster Catechism states that the chief end of man is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever. (Not that you would know looking at some.) The capacity to laugh, and to laugh at oneself, is at the heart of who we are. It always has been. It declares health of spirit. Fun matters.

### **Boldness**

Being confident in whom and what you are is wonderful and necessary. We live with our heads lifted, confident in God and his promises. We have no need to apologize for who we are. We can be humbly proud. We have no need to be retiring, on the back foot – as though that were somehow spiritual. (Arrogance is something else, all together.) Be bold, take a risk, believe.

### **Servant Hood**

*“Serving is a major key to everyone’s destiny.”* We believe the nature of God’s Kingdom is best expressed by serving the needs and desires of others, whether naturally or supernaturally. *“Jesus did not come to be served but to serve and give his life ...”* This is Kingdom culture in action - helping others towards their best life.

Believers are better to be servants than wishing to be masters. What can we do, how can we help, what needs doing? This is how we build together.

Serving works/conspires to make the life of others better.

## **Empowering**

C3 is a releasing and empowering movement. The next generation, is our future. *“Isaiah 54 speaks of ‘letting them.’”* This requires us to be always letting go, delegating, giving, believing and taking risks, like others did with us, and like God continues to do with each of us. We are permission giving people. Take a risk, allow people to fail and grow.

Every generation has its critics. (That is easy to do.) Empowering the next generation is our call and necessity. C3 loves young people.

## **Generosity**

Generosity can be summed up with, *“Do more than expected.”*

To be generous you have to have something to give. John Wesley stated, *“Make as much as you can, give as much as you can, and save as much as you can.”* We can't do the latter without doing the former.

God's nature is always about abundance. The wine provided at the wedding by Jesus was more and better than needed; the same with the food taken up after the feeding of the 5000.

Sacrifice is part of the process of generosity. *“Be a blessing.”*

## **Hospitality**

The disconnected nature of cities and modern life means hospitality is at a premium. Connection is vital. We are known for the Big Hug – not the Big Shrug people experience at churches that have no welcoming culture. Homes that welcome are also part of this distinctive. Reaching out to the stranger, embracing new people, and showing love is hospitality.

## **Faith**

*“We are a people of faith.”* It is core to both our faith and C3 culture. We are not cynics, unbelieving, disparaging, and distrustful. We build people, which amounts to generous encouragement, showing faith in them and their future. We see a future bright with hope and fulfilment of God's promises for people. Faith works by love, and love infuses faith. We are to be light and not darkness.

We act in faith, and with faith. We take prayerful risks.

## **Wise**

We promote a sane Christianity, that doesn't encourage or allow weird, and/or embarrassing behaviour. We can laugh at ourselves, something the unwise can't do. We accept reality and don't attempt to deny or 'faith it away.' We act with wisdom and faith.

## **Contemporary**

To communicate the gospel we need to be in the world, yet not of it. This means we understand the language of the day we live in, without being defined/moulded by it. In Acts 2 the nations heard the gospel preached in their language, in their dialects, by the power of the Holy Spirit. God always talks in language people can understand. So should, so must the church.

We speak to the needs and desires of where people are – *“we don't supply answers to questions not being asked.”*

Being 20 years behind in style, language, etc, is a sure way to mismatch the message with the people we encounter and the day we live in.

## **Marketplace**

We believe that people are where God wants them (in most cases – obvious exceptions aside) so that they can influence and reach others with the gospel – by word and by witness. All believers are called by God - most work in the marketplace. We give time and energy to recognise this and train people to be effective, and to see their place and value in God's kingdom. Church is more than Sunday.

Business people, rich people, influential people need to be recognised and celebrated, and not treated with suspicion as though what they do is a distant second to paid church ministry.

## Community

We take what we have, and involve the church in the community. For example, at Presence Conference in Sydney community heroes are recognised, celebrated and blessed. Other churches have Nights of Honour to honour members of their unchurched community. C3 churches have innumerable initiatives making a difference in their communities at which the gospel is preached and people are helped. This is a growing trend and cultural value of C3.

Community is also defined as God's people. As family, in the West, loses coherence the church is family. C3 Church believes in the 'power of the party' – the home and table. This gives people vital enriching connection – community.

Dinner parties have an increasing place and value in C3, especially in new church start-ups.

## Kingdom

C3 is open to the richness and diversity of other churches and movements. We invite, welcome, bless, and include others. This doesn't dilute our distinctives – on the contrary. We don't close our doors and our hearts to the value and uniqueness of others. We know who we are, and know we are a part of the picture, and not the picture, frame and wall. God speaks to us through others – and we to them.

## Youthful

*"They shall mount up with wings and renew their youth ..."* To be youthful you don't have to be young, in as much as to be old you don't have to be old. C3 is youthful. We stay filled with the Holy Spirit, remain excited about the future of the church and ensure young people are believed in, and speaking into our future.

Every generation has its foibles, and its distinct calling.

We believe in our young people, our middle-aged people, and our older people (many of whom are still young).

**This is Your C3.**

