

Title: The Closed Circle
Pastor: Fred May
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the closed circle fred may

John 13:34-35

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Islamic threat in Africa:

Challenge for authentic Christianity vs Churchianity

A] an increasingly hostile world

John 17:14

¹⁴ I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

John 15:17-19

¹⁷ These things I command you, that you love one another.¹⁸ "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹ If you were of *the* world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

- **A challenge for custodians of the "Word"**

Matthew 23:31

³¹ "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets

B] the family focus

Galatians 6:10

¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith

- the 'family circle' – healing of memories and renewal of hope
- restoration of moral bias
- 'new commandment' priorities
- kinetic harmony – synergy produces respect and favour

Acts 2:1

¹When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place

Acts 2:43-47

⁴³Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

⁴⁶So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

C] the family of the redeemed

- the impossible command

John 15:12,13,17

¹²This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. ¹⁷These things I command you, that you love one another.

Accept Divine empowerment – the fresh infilling of unconditional, inexhaustible love

Romans 5:5

⁵ Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us

- **taking up your cross**

Matthew 10:21-22

²¹ “Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. ²² And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

Matthew 10:34

³⁴ “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.

Matthew 10:36-38

³⁶ and ‘a man’s enemies *will be* those of his *own* household ³⁷ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

- **the law of paradox**

1 John 4:20

²⁰ If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

1 Timothy 5:1-2

¹ Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort *him* as a father, younger men as brothers ² older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

D] the mystery of lawlessness

2 Thessalonians 2:7

⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way.

- lawlessness and divine order

Matthew 24:12 (ESV)

¹² And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold

2 Thessalonians 2:3

³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Matthew 7:21-23 (NASB)

²¹ “ Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*. ²² Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles? ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; *depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.*’

- oil on the head and the command of blessing

Psalms 133:1-3 (NASB)

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity! ² It is like the precious oil upon the head, Coming down upon the beard, *Even* Aaron’s beard, Coming down upon the edge of his robes. ³ It is like the dew of Hermon Coming down upon the mountains of Zion; For there the Lord commanded the blessing— life forever.

- sacred accountability

Luke 22:26

²⁶ But not so *among* you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.

John 13:13-14

you also ought to wash one another’s feet.

Acts 4:35,37 (NASB)

³⁵ and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need.

³⁷ and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet

Acts 5:2 (NASB)

² and kept back *some* of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.

- the closed circle, passage to power

Acts 2:42

⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers

faith>fellowship>partnership>mission

when all get healed!>power

Acts 5:12-16

¹² And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. ¹³ Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. ¹⁴ And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, ¹⁵ so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.