

This week Pastor Andy presents Part 4 of the six-part series “Values That Make Us Vineyard.” Andy begins by pointing out that real values come at a cost, but they provide strategic guidance in good decision-making. These values are the things that are important and that hold like-minded people together.

Andy stresses that it is not enough merely to express good values in your mission statement. Enron, for example, listed its core values as “communication,” “integrity,” “respect,” and “excellence.” Great values and shallow application result in failure.

Andy cites Patrick Lencioni, an international consultant to Fortune 500 companies, who has highlighted four important categories of values. Using these four categories, Andy explains how our Vineyard values can be grouped together.

The first type is “core” values. Core values are deeply ingrained principals that guide all our actions. These must not be compromised. Two of our core values at Vineyard are “God deserves our very best (doing the best we can with what we have), and “faith oriented problem solving” (rather than complaining, we look to God to show us how to be an active part of the solution to a problem). God deserves our best in every situation. In the Bible, complaining about difficulties always caused more problems for the complainers. Trusting in the goodness of God for help always brings an answer.

The second type is “aspirational” values. Aspirational values are those values we need for future success. These values need to be carefully managed to prevent diluting our core values. Aspirational values at Vineyard include “risk taking” and “diversity.” Taking risks is necessary for growth, but not at the cost of losing sight of core values. Ignoring the diversity of the community in which we live would be turning our backs on the very people Christ sends us to serve.

The third type is “permission to play” values. These values help define the minimum behavior of members of the “team.” Vineyard membership virtues include commitment to protect the unity of the church family, support for the testimony of the church, support for the ministry of the church, and sharing the responsibility of outreach. Another crucial “permission to play” value is “come as you are.” It is more important to be with us and to grow in the Lord than it is to wear certain types of clothing, have a certain income, look a certain way, be a certain ethnicity, have a certain level of education, or anything else.

The fourth type is “accidental” values. These arise spontaneously over time without being cultivated by leadership. They are an outgrowth of the life of the church. One “accidental” value is the value we place on facing situations with “humor.” History at Vineyard has taught us to look for the humor in awkward situations. Doom and gloom are not fun. Another type of “accidental” value at Vineyard is “flexibility.” Many times in the past, as our church grew from the living room of a home into today’s sanctuary, Vineyard wouldn’t have grown without the ability to be flexible. Still another type of “accidental” value is the value we place on “love, acceptance, and forgiveness.” We have learned that these are crucial to reaching out to those who are seeking a relationship with Jesus.

For a more in-depth understanding of the values that make us Vineyard, download and listen to the podcast. Andy provides many real life illustrations and examples. Our Vineyard membership class addresses these in detail and provides an opportunity to ask specific questions.