

Why Church?



Why Church? 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

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12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?

18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.

19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.

21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty,

24 but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,

25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.

26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

NKJV

In this series, Why Church, we have learned that the church of Jesus Christ is the temple of the Holy Spirit, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, and the bride of Christ!

From this passage of scripture, we learn that....

1. The church is the body of Christ

Jesus was the incarnation of God in human flesh on earth. The church is the body of Jesus on earth today.

This had been made possible by the new covenant God made with mankind by the atonement of Jesus Christ and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

2. The church is one as the body of Christ

There are no divisions in the body of Christ due to race, nationality, gender, or social status.

3. The body of Christ has many members

Just like the human body has many members, the church has many members. We are one in the body of Christ, but we do not all have the same gifts. God has sovereignly chosen what member we are in the body of Christ.

4. Every member of the body of Christ is important

Each member of the body of Christ plays a vital role in the way the body functions.

5. Being a member of the body of Christ is the basis for caring for every member.

Each member of the body of Christ is much more than a family member to us or a team member to us. Each member is a part of us and we are a part of each member.

As a Pastor, there are truths in scripture that keep me awake at night. This one has cost me the most sleep, generated the most thought, and has given me the most passion for the church to become what God wants it to be on earth since the church is the body of Christ.

I want to never forget what it felt like to join the church of Jesus Christ. When I received Jesus, I was a 17-year-old spiritual infant. When I joined the church, I felt lost. The church had about 1500 people attending on a regular basis. It reminded me of what it was like the first day of school at a new school. I had no friends. I was given a set of rules about where I should be and what I should do. I was told that if I worked hard at learning, I would grow. I had no help from a parent at home.

23 days after I received Jesus, the church I joined had a week-long revival and over 500 junior high and high school students received Jesus. Can you imagine what would happen if a school suddenly had an influx of 500 new students in one week? If I felt lost before, this only compounded the problem.

I did what I was told to do to grow spiritually.

- Attend three worship services a week
- Attend Sunday School every week
- Attend Training Union every week
- Attend special training events

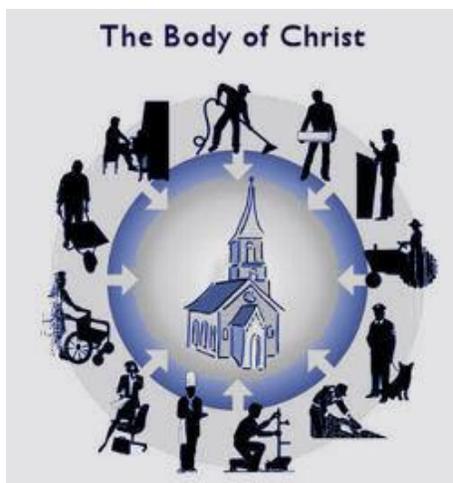
I did what I was told to do help the church grow

- Invite people to church service
- Invite people to special events

I did what I was told to do to help the church be successful

- Sing in the youth choir

Here was the image I developed of the church as the body of Christ.



The church was a building or a service in a building. At age 17, I did not see that there was a lot I could do to serve the Church.

It was frustrating because I wanted to serve the church but there were limited opportunities for someone like me to serve. I felt lost and frustrated. I was excited that God was moving in our church and loved to attend but it was one of the loneliest times in my life.

That all changed about six months later when I graduated from the Sunday School class for juniors to the Sunday School class for seniors. It changed because my Sunday School teacher and his wife connected with me outside of the class.



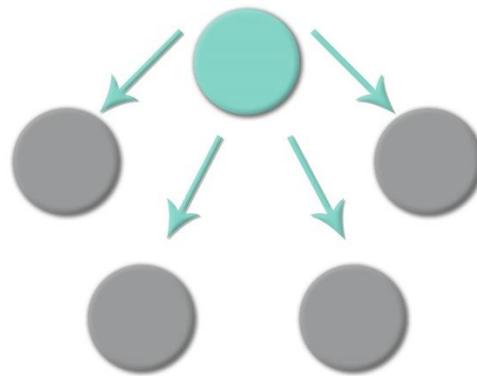
They developed a personal relationship with me. I saw them model for me the love of Christ. They answered my questions. I shared life with them, shared truth with them, and shared love with them. I took what I learned from them and began to do it with my peers at church and at school.



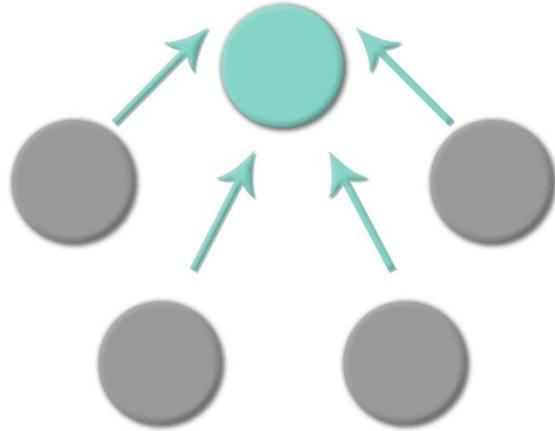
Before I ever learned from scripture what the body of Christ was and what it should be like, I began to see that the body of Christ was supposed to be more like this picture.



As a team we help one another grow spiritually. We share life, share lessons, and share love.



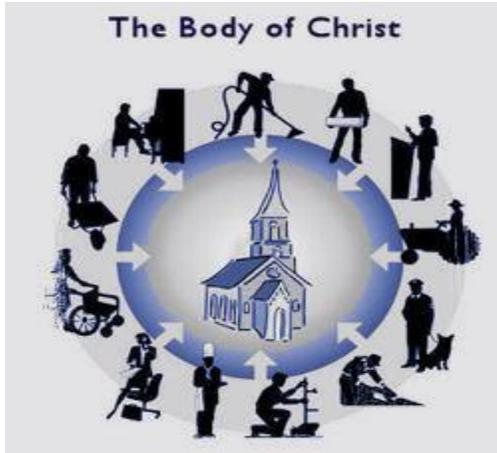
Instead of the team having one teacher that helps all the others, every member gives and receives.



When this team discipleship occurs, and new members are added, the teams reproduce.

Isn't this the way Jesus did it?





As a Pastor, what has kept me awake at night more than any other truth is how do you lead a group of people that think the body of Christ is like the picture on your left to become like the picture on your right.

One reason this truth keeps me awake at night is because I cannot be like the body of Christ on your right to everyone.



I am constantly meeting new people that are just like me when I was a 17-year-old spiritual infant. Not every member is needed on the left. But every member is needed if we do it the way Jesus did it on the right.

What must happen in a member of the body of Christ to participate in what God is doing?

1. Conviction
2. Compassion
3. Commitment

At Western Hills, we are closer right now than we have ever been to being what God intends for us to be as the body of Christ. We are close to a tipping point. When that happens, God will send revival.

Why Church?

We are the body of Christ

Are you a member of the body of Jesus Christ?

Will you commit your self to fulfill your responsibility to the other members of His body?