



I grew up going to church. It's always been a part of my life. When I say that, I know how it is received or interpreted. I know most think it means going to church on Sunday has always been a part of my life, and while that is true, that is not what I mean. I mean that my church has supported me through difficult times, celebrated with me in good times, and helped shape me into who I am today.

I haven't been here that long. Tuesday is my one-year anniversary with the Chapel. But I've already experienced this church's being the church. When we were moving here, we had originally arranged for movers to help us move in along with our moving truck. Our moving truck was cancelled on us the week before we were set to move, and I was lucky to find another one that same night. I got the movers to change the day they were available, but they couldn't do the day we were moving. We would have had to wait three days for them. I called Anthony, who sent a text to the TCL team while I was in the moving truck driving here. When I got here, TCL people were there. They moved all of our stuff in in 45 minutes. We had a practical need and no way of solving the problem on our own. We didn't know many people. We were moving hours away from almost everyone we knew. The church stepped in and cared for us in that moment.

We are starting a short series on the church today. Over the next two weeks, I hope you will see that church isn't something we attend; it's who we are. The local church we do attend can and should become more than just a place to go; it should be a family that we are a part of. We should celebrate with each other, we should hurt for each other, and in those times of hurting, we should care for each other. We are all important in the church. We all have a part to play, but we need each other.

God used Paul to write a lot of the New Testament. With God's direction, he laid out an essential understanding and function for the church, for Christians living and worshipping in community together. I want to look at 1 Corinthians 12 together and see how we should be viewing ourselves as a church.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14 (NIV)

12 Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 14 Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

We are all different. Right? We are one group, but we are several individuals. We are one body formed by several parts. How did we go from being several to being one? We were all baptized by the same Holy Spirit, the only Holy Spirit, when we placed our faith in Jesus. It's important to understand that as the church, we should be united. We should be one. I don't just mean here in this room, either. Yes, as a group, we should be unified. Also, out there, in the bigger body of our own church, we should be unified. But we should also be unified with other churches that believe the same about Jesus as we do. We aren't competing with them. We are them. We have become one body, because God has formed us into one body.

1 Corinthians 12:15-21 (NIV)

15 Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"

Have you ever looked at what God does through someone else and wished it could be you? I'll be honest, I'm jealous of the musically gifted. I can't sing. I can't keep rhythm. I have never been successful in learning to play an instrument. But I love music. I think it's cool. I think people who play music are cool. You know what I wish I could do? I wish I could play the bass guitar and sing. I would love to have those abilities and use them. I know the bass guitar is hardly any non-bass player's favorite instrument, but it's mine. I love it. I can't do it, though. That's not how I'm wired. I've tried. But I can do other things, and I'm glad I get to do them.



1. Who is someone influential in the culture who is also pretty young?
What makes them influential?
2. Share about a time when you were given a good idea by someone younger than you, or you gave someone older a good idea.
3. Why is it so difficult to lead people who are older than you?
4. Read 1 Timothy 4:12. How can you be an example in speech?
Conduct? Love? Faith? Purity?

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