

The Church as Transformative Community

Why should Christians go to Church?

- First time God says “not good” is when man is alone
- Humanity is made in the image of God
- We are meant to be in community
- There are over 26 “one anothers” in NT

Why do we need community?

1. For a right view of self, others, and God
2. For discernment
3. For spiritual transformation
 - Heb. 10:24-25: Let us consider how to provoke one another to love & good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another.
4. For healing
5. For worship
6. To demonstrate the Kingdom of God
 - John 13:35: everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

NT images for the church

1. The people of God.
 - 1 Pet. 2:9-10: you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people...
2. The family of God.
 - 1 John 4:19-21: We love because he first loved us. Those who say, “I love God,” and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars...The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

NT images for the church

3. The bride of Christ.

- Eph. 5:25-27: Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind — yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish.

4. A holy temple.

- Eph. 2:19-21: So then you are no longer strangers & aliens, but you are citizens... built upon the foundation of the apostles & prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together & grows into a holy temple in the Lord

NT images for the church

5. The body of Christ.

- 1 Cor. 12:27: Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.
- Rom. 12:4-8: For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

The Purpose of the church:

Eph. 4:11-16: ...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ

Disciplines that allow Christ to be formed in us:

1. Confession and accountability
 - Prov. 27:17: Iron sharpens iron, and one person sharpens the wits of another.
2. Discernment and guidance
3. Encouragement
4. Worship and celebration
 - Note that you can't do any of these alone

How is a Church transformative?

Barriers to community:

- 1. Past hurts
- 2. Fear
- 3. Pride
- 4. Individualism
- 5. Laziness

Journal:

- 1. Write the date and question at the top of journal page.
- 2. What aspects of community appeal to you? Why?
- 3. What barriers do you find in your own life to community? Or answer:
- 4. What questions do you have about Christian community?
