

TOGETHER

Evan Doyle

Together we could make Jesus the easiest thing to see through our lives and church?

TOGETHER is a powerful word

Together = at the same time¹

WE can become so focused on what we think is wrong, that we forget about doing what is right!

One of our great allies at present is the Church itself. Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean the Church as we see her spread out through all time and space and rooted in eternity, terrible as an army with banners. That, I confess, is a spectacle which makes our boldest tempters uneasy. But fortunately it is quite invisible to these humans. All your patient sees is the half-finished, sham Gothic erection on the new building estate. When he goes inside, he sees the local grocer with rather an oily expression on his face bustling up to offer him one shiny little book containing a liturgy which neither of them understands, and one shabby little book containing corrupt texts of a number of religious lyrics, mostly bad, and in very small print. When he gets to his pew and looks round him he sees just that selection of his neighbours whom he has hitherto avoided. You want to lean pretty heavily on those neighbours. Make his mind flit to and fro between an expression like "the body of Christ" and the actual faces in the next pew. It matters very little, of course, what kind of people that next pew really contains. You may know one of them to be a great warrior on the Enemy's side. No matter. Your patient, thanks to Our Father below, is a fool. Provided that any of those neighbours sing out of tune, or have boots that squeak, or double chins, or odd clothes, the patient will quite easily believe that their religion must therefore be somehow ridiculous.²

CHRISTIANS: If we're not careful, our attitude can become a greater ally to the devil than to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

1. The Church Comes Together

Church is an assembly, the called-out ones, it's a body

Church is a place to heal, to recover, to grow, to be encouraged...

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/together>

² Screwtape Letters, Lewis, C.S., http://www.samizdat.qc.ca/arts/lit/PDFs/ScrewtapeLetters_CSL.pdf

Ephesians 4:11-12 (NIV)

11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,
12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

2. The Church Grows Together

The Bible describes what the church should be like:

We are a Body
We are a Family

Church is not an event you attend; it is a family you belong to.

JENGA: if I don't like this I can slip out, no one will notice, it doesn't matter how others are impacted

LEGOS: its stable, I'm tied in, I'm connected, I realize if I am removed it affects the whole structure

We try to live like Jenga when God wants us to live like Legos.

3. The Church Unifies Together

John 17:20-23 (NIV)

20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me— so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Unity is about what it conveys to the outsiders.

True Unity Is In Place When Those On The Outside Understand Without Being On The Inside.