

# Understanding the Role of the Church

July 27, 2025

- 1) Our mission @ FBC: Out of a desire to glorify God as a spiritual community, the mission of Fellowship Bible Church is to prepare and deploy dependent disciples of Jesus Christ who change their world for Him as they are being changed by Him.
  - a) What does it mean to be a spiritual community?
  - b) Consider Ephesians 4:1-16 or Hebrews 10:19-25
- 2) A look at some different elements of a spiritual community
  - a) **Growing into Christlikeness**
    - i) How do we grow as believers?
    - ii) Read and consider 2 Peter 3:17-18, 1:5-8, and Hebrews 5:11-14
    - iii) Consider the imperative of holding fast to the truth and coming together as believers in Hebrews 10:19-25. How does this impact your view of the church body? How does this impact your view of participating in a community group?
    - iv) Our hope is not in our disciplines, but in growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we grow, He continues to transform us and we grow all the more.
    - v) If we're setting our eyes on the things of this world – we're going to conform to worldly knowledge. Consider Colossians 3:1-11 or Romans 12:1-2
  - b) **Worshipping Together**
    - i) Review: John 4:19-24; Hebrews 13:15-16; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Psalm 95
    - ii) Mike Woodruff's paraphrase of C.S. Lewis' thoughts on worship: "God doesn't need our praise any more than we need our pet's approval for our work. We're instructed to worship God because: 1) it's the only sane response to who He is; 2) if we do not worship Him, we will worship something lesser (and be the less for it); and 3) because worshipping God is a necessary step in rightly ordering our life."
    - iii) It's not about fads or nostalgia, and it's not even about music. Worship is about a heart that is being transformed and praising Him because of Who He is and What He's done! We love because He first loved us.
    - iv) Is this something for just Sunday? Or every day?

c) **Enlarging the Family** – Evangelism/Missional Living

- i) Review: 1 Peter 2:11-17; John 15:18-21; Matthew 5:13-16; John 17: 1, 13-19; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; John 3:16-17
- ii) A few weeks ago, Micah was recounting the story of sharing the good news about finding out that he was going to have twins right after the ultrasound! He was telling everyone he encountered. What if we had a car that ran on air and didn't require fuel or a charge? Would we not be a living and walking testimonial to everyone we encountered?
  - (1) How much greater is the Gospel than such a car?
  - (2) What might be barriers in our thinking to sharing the Gospel with others?
- iii) How are we able to interact with those around us with whom we live, work, and play?
- iv) Do we think ahead or even practice how to engage people in a way that leads to spiritual conversations?

d) **Loving One Another – Body Life**

Table discussion case study:

Frank and Jane have been attending the same church for about ten years. They have always enjoyed the teaching and worship aspects of church life. Recently however, they have been going through some personal struggles that have caused them to question if anyone at their church really cares about them.

The first setback occurred about two years ago when Frank lost his job. Things got really tight financially, and they ended up selling their house because they could no longer afford to meet the mortgage payments. After being out of work for six months, things got so bad that they needed support from the local food bank. Through all of this, only one or two people from the church expressed concern for them, and no one offered any sort of meaningful help.

The second setback occurred last month when Jane became confined to a wheelchair after a car accident. She suffered multiple fractures to both legs that required her to be off her feet for at least six months. At the same time, Frank was trying to cope with taking care & feeding three young children as well as his wife. During this difficult period, the pastor visited them only once, offering his condolences and praying with them.

What would you tell Jane and Frank if they confided in you? Should they be concerned about the fact the church has provided so little support in their time of obvious need? Are they expecting too much from the church?

(a) Read the following passages together: John 13:34-35; Ephesians 4:1-6; and 1 Corinthians 12:14-27.

(b) What would you say to or ask Frank and Jane?

(c) If given an opportunity, what would you share with the people in their church?

(d) In what ways have you been ministered to by the church body either here or elsewhere?

(e) In what ways have you been able to minister to the church body?

e) **Encouraging One Another**

i) Review: Ephesians 4:29 – 5:2; Hebrews 3:12-13; Hebrews 10:19-25

ii) How are you able to be an encouragement to those around you?

(1) Write a note, make a call, arrange a visit, or meet up for coffee/meal.

(2) Note how this ties in with sharing the gospel to those outside the church and loving one another.

(3) Pray for those opportunities

f) **Serving One Another**

i) Review: Ephesians 2:10; Jeremiah 1:4-10; 1 Peter 4:10-11

ii) What would a church look like that is characterized by serving one another?

iii) Now contrast that with a church that is filled with consumerism?

iv) What leads to a transformation in our thinking to have a heart for serving others first?

g) **Praying for One Another**

i) Review: Colossians 4:2-6; Ephesians 3:14-21

ii) What's the purpose of prayer?

iii) What's the value of praying with others as well as praying individually?

iv) Do you take time to pray together in your community group with just others of the same gender?

v) Can you think of an example of transformation that was brought about through your time in prayer?

## h) **Sharing with One Another**

### i) Table discussion case study:

Cathy is a full-time student with a part-time job to get through college. After paying her bills, she has very little left over for any "extras." When the offering is taken at church on Sunday morning, she puts in whatever spare change she has. While she is normally careful to always give an offering, the amount usually depends on her other expenses.

This past Sunday, Cathy's pastor spoke about giving, and challenged the congregation to honor God with their finances. He explained that believers should be generously giving to the Lord on a regular basis in proportion to their income. Cathy felt convicted by the message, but is unsure of how to apply it in her life. It's not like she spends her money on luxuries; she's simply trying to get by. Nevertheless, she feels uncertain about her giving to the Lord. Cathy comes to you to ask you for advice in how much she should give and how to think through this.

(a) Read the following passages together: 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Acts 4:32-37

(b) Cathy asks you how much she should give. What if giving more to the church means she can't pay her bills?

(c) How would you respond to Cathy's situation and disciple her?

(d) Is there a story you would consider sharing about how God has been at work in your life in the context of giving?

(e) Can you think of a situation where someone has inspired you by their generosity?

### ii) Consider the Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25:14-30

(1) What is our stewardship calling not just over financial needs but what is it that God has blessed us with (physically or not)?

(2) Is time, talent, and treasure ours or God's?

(3) How does understanding God as our provider and all that we have is His impact our daily life?

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