

YOU ARE THE CHURCH, part 2

The Church Grows Us

The church is the soil in which we grow.

The church grows us by shaping us in a loving commitment among family members.

Ephesians 4:11-16 (NLT)

¹¹ Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. ¹⁵ Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶ He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

1—The church grows us through discipleship

"Our relationship with God is never less than an intimate relationship with Christ, but it is always more than that." Tish Harrison Warren

"He can no longer have God for his father, who has not the church for his mother." Cyprian of Carthage

Hebrews 10:19-23

Hebrews 10:24-25 "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Colossians 3:15-17. "members of one body...teach and admonish one another"

2—The church grows us through membership

Each body has its members, its parts

Membership helps you grow...because you commit yourself to whatever God has for you in the soil where he puts you

1 John 4:20

3—The church grows us through fellowship

“Fellowship is a uniquely Christian relational experience. Fellowship is participating together in the life and truth made possible by the Holy Spirit through our union with Christ. Fellowship is sharing something in common at the deepest possible level of human relationships—our experience of God Himself.” John Loftness

Romans 12:10 “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.”

We are family! How do we show it?

1. Verbally affirm one another

2. Communicate care in a tangible way

Dietrich Bonhoeffer “The first service that one owes to others in the fellowship consists in listening to them. Just as love to God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for [others] is learning to listen to them...”

3. Sharing each other’s needs and problems.

Galatians 6:2 “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

James 5:16-17. “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”

The church is the powerful and necessary foundation for our growth in the Christian life.