

WE ARE CHURCH

VALUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

WE ARE CHURCH: WHY OWNERSHIP MATTERS

October 31, 2021

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1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Welcome to the Doxa Church podcast. What matters in the local church? In this series, "We are Church", we'll look at a few of the core values that Doxa holds from the scriptures. Join us in this six week series as we explore the importance of an opportunity for the church in today's changing cultural landscape. For more information about Doxa or to join us for a Sunday gathering, go to Doxa-church.com.

Good morning, everyone. For those of you don't know me, my name's Eddie. I'm the lead teaching pastor here with Doxa. Man, the deacon installations get me fired up. I love those things. Those five, there's five faithful people up here that have been participating in the family of God, participating in Doxa for a long time, giving everything they have. And that just means a lot. It means a lot because the church is a family and the church, and when we get to see people succeed and be honored, we are also honored in that. And that's actually in our passage today. By the way, if you haven't joined us, we are in the third week of our six week series "We are Church", and in this series, we are examining six core values that Doxa has regarding the church. So in this series we've been looking at the scriptures and what do they say regarding these core values, and then we've also been looking sort of at the opportunity in each of these categories. Now in this week, we are talking about ownership. You heard it from, from pastor Nate, they're contributors, not consumers. And next week we'll be talking about community and finish off with prayer and mission. So I hope you'll join us in all of those. Well, why don't we just pray? Let's spend some intentional time in prayer. Let's ask God to be with us in the gathering this morning. Sometimes the routine of this just can set in and hit. And so let's ask the Holy Spirit to be present so we can honor God.

Well, Lord Jesus, may this moment of prayer not be routine, may this not be a time of transition for people to get settled, but may it be intentional towards you, Lord. We welcome your Holy Spirit here this morning, as we open up your word. We're not ignorant to the fact that some of us are coming in tired, sleepy, excited, just all over the map, Lord. And so we pray

for just this moment, our minds and our hearts can be settled on you specifically, that what we're here for is you and your son, Jesus. And that that can be the focal point of our attention just for the next few minutes, Lord. So even in our desire to wander out or to go through routine, Lord, would you call us back and make much of your son through us? Lord God, if anything comes out of me, that is not from you, Lord, would that just be discarded? Holy Spirit, would you cement the things that you want to be said. In Jesus' name, Amen.

All right. Well, happy independence day. I'm just kidding. Halloween. Same thing. We're all expressing our independence in Halloween or as you know us, we call it, we call it All Saints Day or Reformation Day. It's our, it's a way to remember the reformation, but you know, there's also some other stuff going on. You may have seen some, some of my kids rocking around in their costumes, right? Like there's some, there's a lot of holidays going on here. You know it's interesting about, about independence, and that's why I brought it up, is I think our country really loves it. It's not 4th of July, I understand that, but we really love our independence. I mean, think about it. It's in the water from the very beginning of America. Independence. It's in, it's in the water. I mean 1776, right? July 4th, we received our as a country, independence from great Britain, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Those two things exist so that we might maintain our individual freedoms and independence from the government, but also from one another. That's what it's for. And you know, America's history, it really has pointed out and proven that we can do whatever we set out to do, as long as we sort of put our minds to it, right? We can actually do that. And you know what? We train our kids that way. We tell our kids that whatever you want to do, if you work hard at it, you can eventually become it. That's sort of the ethos of America. Is it not? Has anyone not heard that message living in America. I mean your third grade teacher told you to shoot for the moon, and even if you miss you land among the stars, right? That was literally on the wall of my third grade class. And I still remember it. It's crazy. It's a fact. We believe this and you know what? We train our kids this way as well. We tell them if they want, they can be an athlete. They can be a movie star. They can be an astronaut, which is crazy to me by the way. Or they can be an entrepreneur. You can do any of these different things. And a lot of the times they actually can become what they want. That's, what's crazy about America. They actually could become what they want. And this is the sort of the beauty of the modern west. It's the beauty of the modern west and America in particular, because we take pride in our independence and we take pride in our autonomy. You know, it's interesting because those who depend on other people, you may have, maybe you have someone who's in your life, or maybe you're that person who's not quite independent yet. Maybe they've gone to college and gotten back in the home and sort of society at large has sort of taken up their noses at people who are not independent, they're dependent on other people. Maybe they're not always looked down on, but certainly we know that dependence isn't a state you want to stay in in America. Eventually you want to become independent and do whatever it is you want to do. Eventually. So if you know that you're maybe from this country or you're living in this country now, which you are, newsflash, you might be a Christian who maybe participates in the life of your church, that could be you, or you might be someone who maybe even is potentially rethinking your own faith. We've been talking about deconstruction, the deconstruction from the Christian faith over the last few weeks. You might be someone in that boat. And maybe you're in pursuit of your own

independent spiritual journey. But either way, we all have this spirit of independence, "I do what I want to do" in us. It's there. But you know, us, Westerners, Americans, whatever you want to say, we are relatively predictable in this. We think our independence driven mindset actually leads us to believe that we are, we're more rare and more unpredictable than we think. We think that we're unpredictable because we're independent. But if you can be marketed to, you're not so predictable. You ever been to Burger King? Burger King has preyed on this for years, right? Have it your way. They know that you're going to go, "Yeah, I will have it my way. That's right. No pickles." Right? You'll sort of cock your head back in your independence like "Yeah, this is my Whopper." Right? With cheese. Yes. 80 cents for cheese, right? They'll do whatever they want to make you feel like you're being independent.

I was in the movie theater about maybe five or six years ago. And just the, this commercial came on that absolutely preyed into our American independence ideology. And it is, it was so, it was so well, I'll tell you about it after, but it was so interesting that I just felt like I had to show it to you. It's only 30 seconds. So bear with me. Can we, let's put it up.

Look, here's the thing about Diet Coke. It's delicious. It makes me feel good. Life is short. If you want to live in a yurt, yurt it up. If you want to run a marathon, I mean, that sounds super hard, but okay. I mean, just do you, whatever that is. And if you're in the mood for a Diet Coke, have a Diet Coke. Diet Coke, because I can.

They think you're idiots. They think you're idiots. So they have this really cool edgy girl walk around and she's like 40 something years old, by the way. But she's, she seems young and she's walking around and she's got this cool outfit on. She goes, whatever, you know, Coca Cola. And she says a few things I want to point out to you. Life is short, so enjoy it. Do what you want. Right? She says, it makes me feel good, right? Because our independent feelings supersede reality. And then she says, you do you, because in America, you're your own highest authority and you cannot be wrong because you're you. That's why you can't be wrong because you're you. So despite, oh, by the way, they also made this commercial as a result of the fact that they were, they realized that some of their drinks were actually causing cancer. So they're like, well, if you want to drink it, do you. It's actually brilliant marketing, right? Despite our independent mindsets, and even let me speak specifically to millennials in this section, whom this commercial is clearly targeting, right? It's clearly targeting. We do sort of have a deep desire to not just be so independent, but to connect with one another. We actually do have that desire. You know, in fact, millennials are the ones who mostly pioneered social media. So there is a desire, at least at the beginning, to sort of connect with one another. It's there, right? We want it. Think apps like Tinder have come out because of millennials for better or worse. Right? I've heard it said, you know, oftentimes, you know, I want what my parents want. I want deep friendships. I want lasting relationships. I want a home in the same community. I want to connect with people on a deep level. The thing is that a lot of us have deep desire for community, but are almost never willing to make the sacrifices necessary to get it. And what do we have to sacrifice in order to have that deep level of friendship, community, and ownership in something? What do we have to give up? We have to give up independence. We

have to give up autonomy to go with deep, to go deep with others, you can't always have it your way. To go deep and build community, you can't just do you. It requires more than that. So in the passage we're going through, 1 Corinthians chapter 12, beginning of verse 12, Paul, he is going to be addressing the Corinthians life together as a community and whether or not they reflect the sort of nature of the gospel that's going to be demonstrated in this passage. And what's that? What do we receive from the gospel? What do we receive? A state of ownership. An ownership for the body of Christ. We get this. Now ownership now is a stake in how your community performs and functions. Ownership means that we care. We actively participate, helping to facilitate growth for our community. That's what we're doing. That's what ownership is. So we have to sort of answer this question. What happens when our American ideals of individualism and independence clash with the biblical call to ownership in the church? How do we handle this? It's only when we lay aside our desire for independence and enter the sort of communal and collective nature that God calls us to, that we can actually begin to own our identity as child of God. And I hope I'm going to explain that to you. So in this passage, Paul, he gives us three traits that we must model as a church to do this. Three traits. And modeling these three traits will help us discover why ownership matters in the church and why we should be contributors and not consumers. So let's open up with verse 12, shall we? Look what Paul says.

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and all were made to drink of one Spirit."

So functionally, Paul is saying the church is not just a collection of individuals, it is literally one entity. So we are not all individuals in here seeing something and looking at something, we're all actually all connected as one full and complete entity. How do I know that? Well, besides what Paul just said, the word church in its original Greek translates to ekklesia. The word ekklesia in the Greek means the gathering or the assembly. So by nature, the church is an assembled body. It isn't an event we come to. It is an assembled body. So if the church isn't just a bunch of individuals, what is it? Well, here's our first thing that Paul teaches us. The church is interdependent over individual. Interdependent over individual. We are essentially a collection of related parts in here that makes up the body of Christ together. That's what we're doing here. Which means we by nature are interdependent, meaning we all rely on one another. That's by nature who we are. It says here in verse 13, that we're all baptized by the same Holy Spirit. Now maybe that's troubling to you. Maybe you've seen some wonky people get baptized and in your sin you're like, "Oh gosh, like are we on the same team?" Right? Like how does that work? Right. Understood, but we're all part of one body, regardless of what we, how we perceive other people. It's interesting to know, understand that. All part of one body. Whether we're injured, whether we're broken, whether we're lost, whether we're accepting, and whether we're exceeding expectations at job, work, family, we're all part of the same body. This is an easy analogy to paint, but if you've ever been injured, anyone ever have a surgery, an orthopedic surgery on a body of something? You've broken a leg, broken an arm? Just me? I've had enough surgeries for all. I really have. I've had so many. I thought I was going to have like commiserate with some people. Okay. But if you've ever injured your toe, has

anyone here injured a toe? You ever get gout, turf toe? If you've ever had turf toe, you realize just how important a toe is. Like you don't even think about your toes, at least, most people don't think about their toes too often. But when you injure a toe, you realize how integral it is to every single thing you do. You want to stand at the counter, wash the dishes, good luck. Not with turf toe. Not with turf toe. If you don't have a cushy mat underneath your feet and you don't, you know, you're not wearing a walking boot, you're not washing the dishes with turf toe. You can't do anything with turf toe. Go upstairs? It's impossible. It's just a sprained toe, but it wrecks everything you do. And we all react. The whole rest of the body begins to react when your toe is injured, all of it. Everything starts to hurt. Same is true in the church, we all react to one another's strengths and weaknesses. When people in our church are successful, we get to be successful. When they're lost, we're lost. It's hard. We take, we take a brunt of that. Again, you just don't know how important a big toe is when you can't use it. And when you are not present as a part of a body, you're missed, it's like you're injured. And we miss you when you aren't present. We notice. And we miss you. When you're not present, we notice, and we miss you. Because it, God, God uniquely brought you into the church family to give something specific. It might've been opening the door for someone. It might've been smiling at them. It might've been something more, like praying over somebody or taking care of someone's child in the kid's ministry or playing worship, drums something. But when you're not here, the opportunity for people to experience you is gone. And that's hard. Look at verse 14. "For the body does not consist of one member but of many."

What is a member exactly? Like what does that word "member" mean? When I say the word member, what do you think of? I'll tell you what I think of... Costco. I think of Costco, like a Costco membership, right? Am I alone in that? I think of like membership stuff. Here's what the definition is: "A body part or organ or an integral part of a body having distinct function." But when did this term start meaning a person belonging to a group, because that's what I thought of, right? Costco. Like if you go to Costco, you're a Costco card member. If you go to Fred Meyer, you're a Fred Meyer member. If you go to Gold's Gym, you're a Gold's Gym member. When did it start meaning that? Probably not when Safeway came out with their Safeway Club Card Membership, right? This has been around a little bit longer. The word member and the idea of membership as meaning to it, as it pertains to a body, begins right here in 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, right here in this passage. The origination of the idea of membership begins in this passage. So anytime you check in to the gym for your membership, understand that this is a biblical idea that they are stealing. Okay. Membership is part of the framework and fabric of scripture. But you know what's interesting, when we think about being a member of a church, we often think of what the church can offer me because our mind goes to the sort of American idea of membership. That's why I thought of Costco first. So when we think about membership, we go, "Oh, what can the church give me? Like, will I get a, you know, five, how much cash back will I get from the church? Or will I get a dollar off of green beans or something." Like, that's what we're thinking about when we think about membership. But being a member of God's church actually means what the definition says it means, which is being an integral part, having distinct function. So to be a member of church or to be a participatory in the church, that's what it means. Membership then is not what the church can offer you, it's what you offer the church. That's functionally what a membership is. So if it

wasn't clear enough, let me be extra clear. You are needed here. Here. We're very thankful for your attendance, but we love it when you participate because you're needed and we're dependent on you. And here's the weird thing. You're dependent on Doxa or a church because we're all interdependent people who need one another and can't live life alone. Even though the American ideology has taught us we should, which brings us to our next point. What else was Paul teaching here? Verse 15.

"If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell?"

Paul is saying, there are probably people that think because of whatever reason, maybe it's their gifting, their schedule, their background, maybe it's their history, their personal history or something else, that they may not have an ability to play a role in the body of Christ, the Church. Like I can't do that. I mean, I'm too far gone. I've messed up so much in my life or you know what, I'm just so busy. There's probably no way I can do that. Wherever we are, we're thinking that there's probably a reason why we can't participate. But this text here says everybody counts because all of us are distinct, which leads me to say, and here's our second point, everyone in the church is essential over insignificant. Essential over insignificant. You matter to the church. Two things happen when you're born. Everyone is born with two core needs. Two core needs that everyone absolutely has, doesn't matter who you are and that's to matter and to belong. You matter. Belong. This is what we need as a baby, because what happens to a baby that doesn't matter or belong to someone? Right. I don't have to say it. If the baby doesn't matter or belong to someone, it goes away, it dies. It passes away. It's sad. And we all have those core needs. And guess what? Even as adults, we still have them. You notice that our kids are so shameless when they come up and talk to us, right? My four year old, doesn't matter what time of day it is. Doesn't matter if it's two o'clock in the morning, she'll kick the door open and go, Hey, I need something." No shame. She's like, because I know that I matter and belong to my mom and dad and they're going to help me. She knows that. But somewhere along the way, we're taught, we are trained to sort of suppress our desires, to tell people that we matter and belong. But guess what? You still feel like you need to matter and belong to someone and you live it out anyway. We live it out through climbing the corporate ladder, trying to make more money, trying to build the best family you possibly can. Nicest car, midlife crisis, something like that. Trying to figure out. I mean, it's not like, I mean, Tesla is like the Honda civic of the eastside, so getting a Tesla is probably not enough. You're gonna have to upgrade, right? We're trying to live out this desire in some way or another. Maybe you're saying, if I can just find that guy or that girl to marry, then my life will be finished. Then I will be complete. We're all sort of looking to try to manifest these two ideas that we matter and belong. But here's the problem, apart from God, and apart from the church, there is always going to be a pressure to make yourself matter. The way you fulfill the need to matter is to make yourself matter. But when you're part of a church, you already matter. When you're, when you're one of God's children, you already matter. You already belong. There's already a

unique calling for you. And you're absolutely unequivocally needed in that role and the church's job, one of the church's primary functions is to help find where you fit in, where you need, so you can actually fulfill the purpose and meaning that God's called you to instead of trying to accomplish it elsewhere. So you're going to feel pressure to make yourself matter, but in Jesus, you already matter. And the church helps you sort of line that in, by taking more ownership in the church. Look at verse 18.

"But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose." I'll say it again. "But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be?" That's a good question. "As it is, there are many parts, yet one body."

So who chooses what role we play? God chooses. Who chooses our gifting? God chooses. I can't sing like Donald, Pastor Donald. I can't do that. God gave him that. And he worked for it, of course he worked for it, but I there's no, I could not work my entire life to sound like that. It's impossible. God specifically granted you something unique to bring to the table, but here's the problem, that's the problem with the sort of digital age we live in social media because social media shows us other people doing awesome stuff and what do we immediately want? I want to be like that person. We start to compare ourselves to others. We can do this at school. We can do this at work. We can look at the leaderboard. You go into your Salesforce and you see the top salesman. Man, I want to be where that guy is. Or you compare, you get competitive. That's the problem with comparison, comparison produces sameness. It makes everyone the same, but God made us for uniqueness. We all have complimentary, unique, essential roles to play, not all be the same. If all the whole body were eyes then where would be the sense of hearing? Good question. So what's your gifting? Have you thought about that? Where can I most serve the church? How can I contribute to the bigger vision of what God's trying to do of making people disciples of Jesus Christ in Washington? How do I do that? What do you want to grow in? You can choose a number of different things. Pastor Ken put together a hospitality guide. It's awesome. It's on the app that pastor Donald brought up. You can actually go in and learn about what it means to be more hospitable. That's a great way to participate in the body of Christ. You want to learn how to lead a Missional Community Group or lead a Missional Community Group. You can do that. You want to serve in kids ministry. Do you want to learn what it means to grow in the evangelism gift? All of these things are part of God's greater body because you are essential. You're needed, what your role is, what God's called you to. Verse 21.

"The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable," oh, that's comforting. Isn't it? I mean, some, there are moments where I feel so weak. Like I just, what is my gifting? Like I think I'm gifted in something and I show up and I try and I suck. I'm not good enough. I get downtrodden and sad and maybe people are being critical of me. I don't know. But I feel like I'm just insignificant. It's not what Jesus says. Jesus says that the parts that seem to be weaker are indispensable because we don't boast in our strengths as believers, we boast in our weaknesses, because when we're weak, we're come to the end of ourselves, and that's when Jesus begins to shine. It's glorious. It's called the upside

down kingdom. God behaves the exact opposite way of our world. It's fantastic. Let me finish the verse 13. "And on those parts of the body that we think less honorable, we bestow the greater honor, and our unrepresentable parts are treated with greater modesty."

So I told you I had a lot of surgeries. One of my main, many of you, well, I guess I had two surgeries on my back. I had two back surgeries. If you've ever had back surgery, it's not fun, because there's lots of issues with muscles going away and nerves and all sorts of stuff connected to it. And it's really not great. And one of the things that happens during a back surgery is that the muscles around like where you, where you got injured, begin to shut down and they no longer fire or function, like they stop working, which then sends your body off on a sort of like a giant chain reaction where everything else kind of shuts down too. It's actually quite, quite painful. It's not fun if you've ever been there. And I know some of you have. So that these muscles that no longer function, the goal of rehab is to essentially attempt to strengthen these muscles around the injury, to speed up recovery. That's the point, right? Why? Because the body malfunctions when the parts around the injury become inactive and there's actually a word for this, they call it activation. They're trying to activate specific muscles. So you've got to activate those muscles around your back or else your spine will take on an inordinate amount of pressure and become injured again. You see what Paul is doing here with the body analogy. What he's doing in this text and what we're doing here today is attempting to activate us individually. Paul's trying to activate you. You may feel like you're unimportant. Maybe you're just a tiny muscle around a spinal cord or something like that. But your activation is crucial to the flourishing of God's church family. God has, God has other people he would love to bring into the body, but cannot because some of us are inactive as muscles. Unless we become active, those people will have to spend more time outside of the body of Christ until we're getting active. And then they will have to then look for meaning and purpose outside of Jesus and his church, and for those of us that believe Jesus, we've learned that that's a fool's errand. So unless you're active in your community, growing and learning, unless you're active in your gym, your workplace, your favorite restaurant, your dinner table, looking for ways to share the good news of Jesus, unless you are active, praying for your church, your children and your own soul, unless you are active giving your time and your gifting and your treasure back, there will be people that will not be able to join you in the body of Christ. So I'll say it again. You are essential to the flourishing of God's church. Do you think it's an accident that you're here this morning? God's far bigger than that. What I'm getting at here is that we're all created for participation. We're all created for our participation in the body of Christ. And hopefully by now it's clear that you're absolutely needed. All of you, wherever you find yourself out in your faith. Look at verse 25.

"That there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it."

Paul's saying that our participation means that we actively live life on life with one another. Which means, when it says here, when we, when one member is honored, we give them honor. We want to be able to do that. Your success is our success, right? Your failure is our failure if

we're connected. We celebrate one another, but only if we participate together. What does it mean to participate after all in a church? I think we're, we've been hammering this, but what does it actually mean? Does it mean listen to a sermon? Is that what church is? Come to a sermon, listen to a preacher preach God's word. Is that what a church does? Come and listen to music. Worship through song. Is that, is that the essence of a church? Is that it? Go to a small group or what we call Missional Communities? Is that the essence of a church, is that it? Attending. If you've ever had a father who was at home, he was present, he was there physically, but he wasn't present with you. If you've ever experienced that. That's why we need you to engage over attend. That's what Paul is saying. Engage over attend. Participating over spectating, contribute over consume. All of these ways are saying the same thing. I played a lot of sports, and some of you've played some sports, church is not a spectator sport. It requires participation from all of us. We all have to participate. You know, from all the criticism there is from within the church sort of pointed at those who are deconstructing or rethinking their own faith, an equal share could be pointed at us in the church who sort of spectate and don't participate. An equal share who attend and think that's all there is to being church. Hey, this may be new information for you. It was new information for me at one point. I hope you don't feel like a sense of guilt and shame. That's not what I'm trying to accomplish with this. My hope is that the point of the church will provide an environment for you, that you can flourish finding your purpose and meaning under Jesus. That's what we're trying to do. So this isn't about getting Doxa more help on serve teams. That's not it at all. That's a fool's errand. That's not, that's a corporation, that's enterprise. We are family. I was having this conversation with my wife and we were having this conversation about sort of performance and what it means to sort of perform for church on a Sunday. Is that a real thing? And we came up with this idea that, well, if a dad stands up at Thanksgiving dinner and prays to a big group of 60 people, is that a performance? It doesn't feel, it's not a performance, right? Why is it not a performance? Maybe, maybe your father's performing, but most fathers. Because it's his family. And he's praying for his family. And he deeply earnestly loves his family and wants to just bless the meal. The church isn't, shouldn't be a performance in here either because this is a family and we're trying to help each other follow Jesus better. And I'm sorry if that's been the way we've experienced church for most of us. So please don't feel guilt. Again, you might find yourself in this boat, I want to say it, I don't know if it's all your fault. I don't know if it is, maybe it is, maybe some of it is and you have to own that with Jesus, but because we're a church and this is a church, we have to ask, what role does this sort of capital C Church play in developing this sort of mindset that we would attend and not engage. Our churches in America really have facilitated to sort of come and see philosophy. We've even created a method of church called the attractional model. Maybe you've heard that idea. It's literally a method where the church tries to attract people with better performance. Shows, smoke, you know, white suits. I don't know. You're just, you're trying to get people in here with a show, like Cirque de Solei or something. And then boom, hit them with the gospel. Perfectly executed sermons, lights out worship, robust programming. People will come and see. So the church then if we, that's how, what we present, should not be surprised if this is what we receive in return. This is Doxa's Yelp page. Yeah. Now I took the liberty of reading through some of these, and I don't know who is who, so maybe you're still in here. So I won't quote any of this, but I will say if we present a performance as a church on Sunday to congregation, then it's not surprising that we should

expect a review back, but the church isn't a performance. It's not a performance at all. Success in the American church has been measured by attendance, not engagement. When we attend, but not engage, we reduce church down to performance and I'll tell you what I am not a good, very good bear dancing on a ball, you know, juggling at the same, like that would be a better Yelp review, right? Then tell people to repent of their sins. Okay? It's not good. Sadly, I think our American Church sometimes is countered into playing this by making this more of a performance, more of a performance, more of a performance, and maybe, maybe there in you say, man, you know what? This works for me though. I don't have time to engage. I don't have time to do this. This is what I got. This is my hour a week I have. And then I'll say, like I said, last week, we can't follow Jesus to a way he hasn't gone. Jesus doesn't call us to attend. So you can't follow him there. He calls us to engage. Engage. The best example of this is Jesus himself. Jesus didn't come to attend, but to engage. Mark 10:45, "Even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." What was his goal? Engagement. Imagine if Jesus had come to earth and instead of engaging, he attended. And he looked around, kicked a few rocks, looked around and went, Hmm, ate a fig off of a fig tree. Two stars. Not good enough. Right? But what if he just reviewed Earth and then left? He didn't though. He engaged. And what's the result of his engagement? We are more known. We are more loved. We are given a purpose with passion to live for it. We give it a mission. We are saved from our own sin, given salvation. I'm sorry that some of our church experience has taught us that being a part of a church means attending then reviewing, but that's not what Jesus does. There is no power in this. We are, we, it lacks our created purpose, and if your faith has lacked power, then consider that as the cause.

So if you're feeling that you're going, man, what do I do? I will, I will say that there's a number of things you can do. The first thing you do is get involved in the church, get involved in community. If you're not from this church, get involved in your church. If you're not part of any church, get involved. You can go right to the help, you can go right to the Connect Desk and get into a Missional Community. Start living life on life with people, be known to others, not just yourself. You can text DOXASERVE to 24587. You're like I'm at the point where I want to do something, I want, I want help. I want to figure out what I'm gifted in. Do that. Text DOXASERVE to 24587. Find someone with a lanyard on and ask them, I don't know what I'm supposed to be doing here. I feel frustrated by the sermon today. I'm a little bit worn out, but I feel like there is something in me that knows I do want to do something. I want to participate. Not spectate. If that's you this morning, find someone with a lanyard, we'll connect with you. So you're created for unique purpose, but that purpose is really tied to you owning church or earning, learning, being a part of this community together. Oftentimes I think we, we do hear how sort of finding your individual purpose, it leads to life, right? If I just find my purpose, like I will be amazing. And then that's the sort of, a lot of the reasons why deconstruction has taken place, where we started piecing together different ideas and thoughts and faiths and trying to sort of have it our way. Has it been going for a lot of us though? Let's be honest. How has it been a habit your way? What's it been like to do you? Where have you felt? What's been the result? I'll say this, a life following the path of the individual by yourself is one long continuous unending loop. It's not a path at all. And you're just on this hamster wheel of trying to make yourself madder, trying to make yourself belong, trying to figure out where you fit in in this

world. And you're changing personas and changing your Instagram bio and trying to figure out where you might fit in. Maybe switching, changing jobs, moving across the country. Maybe one of those things will sort of help me find my place. What's the opportunity though, in regards to ownership for the church in this sort of new reality in this post pandemic world? Here's the opportunity. The transcendent purpose people seek is found in their future identity as a follower of Jesus, plain and simple. If you want to find your purpose, you've got to first find your Jesus because he's the grantor of purposes. If people find Jesus, they find their identity and they find something to own, which gives them what they're looking for, and then they can step off this continuous loop. Doxa again is not here to get you to sort of work for Doxa and expand its empire on the eastside. That is not at all interesting to this church. At all. What we are saying is that we're, we're not also saying rather, that we're at the end of this path and we have all the answers, and if you get on the path, and you could get to where we are, and then you'll be happy. We're not saying that either. That's damaging. We're not saying that we make the best disciples. We're the best Christians. We've read the most theology. We sit at the end of the path and all you need to do is find out how to get on the path and then work your way to us. Not saying that. What I am saying is that we are all the church, a fundamentally is a set of sinful, imperfect people who are saved by grace, who by God's grace, get to link arms with one another on the path and venture to not where we are, but to where Jesus is. And here's the point. And here's the biggest purpose of it all. Even if we linked arms and use as much elbow grease as we could wander up that path, guess what? We're not going to make it. So Jesus being who he is wanders back down the path the other direction and meets us where we are. And he anoints us with the power of the Holy Spirit, and then he walks us to where we need to go. As the church, we get to recognize the beautiful wonders and power of the Holy Spirit together. That's the purpose of us coming together. The problem with these words individual independent, they all start with I's. There's no I in church, we do this together. I am not the church. We are the church, but we can only be the church together under Jesus. Let's pray.

Lord God, such a hard message sometimes to hear. But Lord, God, we know that once we live in your will, everything seems to fall into place. For those of us here this morning, Lord, we, some of us, most of us, we just need to step back in to your will, Lord. We need to step into that will that you're calling us towards. We've been going at it alone for a long time. And we've convinced ourselves that it's working. It's working, it's working, it's working, but we are fundamentally built to be interdependent on one another and we need each other. So Lord, I pray for a spirit of, of community here this morning that we might find one another, connecting with one another, do life with one another, share our burdens with one another and Lord would your Holy Spirit be present? And when we ultimately fail Jesus, would you meet us on that path and walk us forward? Because it's a long way. It is a long way to where you're calling us to, but with your power, we've already won. Thank you Jesus. In his name. Amen.

