
Introduction

This class is designed to give new members a more in-depth understanding of CBC and its ministries as well as to help them integrate into the life of the church. We'll be discussing things like our ministries, financial procedures, security measures, and how you can be a part of all of this. In the last meeting we'll discuss the Community Service ministry, and we'll give you some very practical steps to complete if you haven't already in order to serve at CBC.

The Priority of the Church

Since you've joined CBC, you obviously have the desire to make the church a priority. One cannot read the pages of the New Testament and miss the primacy of the local church. Here are just a few Scripture references that demonstrate the clear priority of the Church as the focal point of what God is doing in the world today.

1 Timothy 3:15 *...God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.*

Matthew 16:18 *I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.*

Ephesians 3:10-11 ¹⁰ *His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,* ¹¹ *according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

As these three passages demonstrate, the Church has pride of place in God's plan. Christianity is not meant to be individualistic. The Christian life is a decision to live life in community with other believers. That means the church should be a priority to us, not an option or an afterthought. But it also means that we should take care to make the biblical priorities of the church our priorities.

The Mission of CBC

The mission of CBC is to help people *learn* about God, *love* Him and others, and *live* for His purpose. The following sections will explore ways we endeavor to fulfill each aspect of our mission statement.

What we have listed here is not an exhaustive list of the ways we can accomplish our mission as a church. It's certainly not the extent of the ways we can do these things (learn, love, live) as individuals. However, these are things that we have strategically built into the structure and weekly calendar of our church in order to make sure we do them as a minimum in pursuit of our mission.

Learn About God

Community Institute

Part of the mission of CBC is to *learn* about God. We have an established learning path which seeks to lead all members through a set of classes that fill out a basic understanding of biblical doctrine, the Christian life, the purpose of the church, and how to study the Bible. The core classes take 4 years to complete after which electives are available.

- How To Get the Most Out of Your Bible
- How We Got Our Bible
- Master Plan for Life
- Electives

Growth Partners

Growth Partners is a great opportunity for one-on-one discipleship. Each of the five GP options has a book that the partners read together and Scripture verses to memorize. For those who are interested in either having a partner or being a partner to someone else, there are plenty of opportunities.

- Growth Partners for New Believers
- Growth Partners for Men
- Growth Partners for Young Men
- Growth Partners for Women
- Growth Partners for Young Women

Love Him

Sunday Worship

Being a part of a church is much more than gathering together once a week on a Sunday morning. But it is certainly not less. We want all members of CBC to prioritize gathering together on Sunday mornings to have a time of passionate worship – we give, fellowship, pray, sing, and receive God’s Word together as we show our **love** for God.

Love Others

Community Groups

One of the ways in which we demonstrate a New Testament priority of the church is the way we **love** its members.

John 13:34-35 ³⁴*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.* ³⁵*By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.*

Community Groups provide a context in which we may be obedient to the command that Jesus gives to his disciples in these verses. It has been said that Christian people are often educated far above their level of obedience. In fact, many people have an educational model of church that views its purpose as primarily about teaching. Interestingly Hebrews 10:25, which encourages believers “not to give up meeting together,” highlights the reason for meeting in terms of mutual edification rather than primarily teaching.

That’s not to say that teaching isn’t important! Paul exhorts Timothy to preach the Word. But the ministry we have to each other is the reason that meeting together is so important, according to Hebrews 10. Verse 24 says we’re to “consider how we may spur one another on to love and good deeds,” and verse 25 says we’re to “encourage one another.” Community Groups are CBC’s way of making relationships a high priority.

Format

- 6:00-6:30 – Snacks
- 6:30-7:00 – Discussion
- 7:00-7:30 – Prayer

Goals

- The Community Group ministry encourages loving relationships through:
 - A refreshment time that initiates and cultivates relationships with each other.
 - Discussion of biblical truth that allows us to share our experience and insights and thereby further the practical application of those truths
 - Intercessory prayer that allows us to share our burdens and praises
- CGs provide another venue for “one another” ministry
- CGs provide an opportunity for diverse age groups to be together

Titus 2 teaches that older men are to be “worthy of respect” (v. 2) and older women are to “teach what is good” (v. 3). The clear implication is that church is to be a place where the younger are able to engage with those who are more mature in the Lord and who have more life experience. Whenever possible we try to ensure that our Community Groups contain a diversity of age and life stage.

Live For His Purpose

The Privilege of Serving

One of the most profound realities of church life is the privilege of service. God blesses churches with leaders, but these leaders cannot and should not carry out the mission of the church on their own. As has already been noted, pastors are to equip the people for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:12).

1 Peter 4:10-11 ¹⁰ *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

These verses can be summarized by this sentence:

Use the gifts you’ve been given for the good of others with a holy confidence and for the glory of God.

“Use the gifts you’ve been given”

1 Peter 4:10a *“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received...”*

- Gifts defined – 1 Corinthians 12
 - “Spirituals” (*pneumatikos*, v. 1) – occurs 26 times in Scripture, 25 of which refer to something being characterized or controlled by the Spirit.
 - “Gifts” (*charisma*, v. 4) – gifts, received by grace and cannot be earned.
 - “Service” (*diakonia*, v. 5) – service, they are meant to be used for that purpose
 - “Working” (*energeo*, v. 6) – working, the gifts are energized by God
 - “Manifestation” (*phanerosis*, v. 7) – manifestation, given to everyone

Definition: Spiritual gifts are God-given, Spirit-enabled abilities given to every believer for the purpose of serving the church.

- Types of gifts – speaking and serving (1 Peter 4:11 “*If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides.*”)

There are lists of spiritual gifts in 3 places in the Bible: Romans 12, Ephesians 4, and 1 Corinthians 12. These lists are *representative* rather than *exhaustive*.

- Everyone has gifts
- God expects those gifts to be used

“For the good of others”

1 Peter 4:10b “*...to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.*”

- Serving

Luke 22:24-27 ²⁴ *A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. ²⁵ Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. ²⁶ But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. ²⁷ For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.*

- Administering grace

One of the ways in which God has chosen to dispense, distribute, or administer grace (unmerited favor) to his people is through his people. That fact will revolutionize our mindset when it comes to our role with God’s people.

- "One another" ministry

There are at least 55 references in the New Testament regarding "one another." They include things like "love one another" (Jn 13:24), "accept one another (Rom 15:7), "serve one another" (Gal 5:13), "be kind to one another" (Eph 4:32), "forgive one another" (Col 3:13), and "encourage one another" (1 Thess 5:11).

"With a holy confidence"

1 Peter 4:11a *"If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides ..."*

This verse explains that whether we speak or serve, we can do so with a holy confidence, not in ourselves, but in the God who has enabled those gifts. If we open our mouths, it is God's words that we speak. If we lift a hand to work, it is God's strength that enables.

Ephesians 2:10 *For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

- God has prepared "works" for each of us to do
- We are uniquely designed for ministry

1 Corinthians 12:18 *But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.*

- We have a mutual need for one another

"And For the glory of God"

1 Peter 4:11b *"...so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."*

Lasting motivation for service happens when we are caught up in the person and work of Christ. When we are captivated by his glory we want to see his name magnified, and that motivates our service. In other words, serving is a matter of worship! And we worship what we value. Ministry doesn't motivate worship; worship motivates ministry. The people who are the most heavenly minded do the most earthly good.

Practically Speaking...

- Informal Ministry vs. Formal Ministry
- Use your resources
- Attend
- Weekly and rotational ministry
- Take the long view of joy

Community Service Overview

Community Service Coordinator

At CBC, we believe so strongly in every member ministry that we have a person whose sole ministry is to help other people get involved in ministry. What are the benefits of having a Community Service Coordinator?

- Centralized ministry placement
 - Ministry Coordinators have one place to go for volunteers
 - Members have one place to go to explore volunteer opportunities
- Avoid getting pulled in multiple directions – prevents members from burnout by saying “yes” to too many ministry opportunities and also prevents the discomfort of members being afraid to say “no” to certain opportunities.

Your Fit

- Identify your passions and skills
- Find a ministry that is a good fit and have a ready reference of the right people for the right ministry when openings occur
- Avoid “warm body” syndrome – We want to avoid just grabbing the nearest person to fill ministry needs. We believe that people will most flourish and ministries will be most successful when there is a ministry “fit.”

Pairing volunteers with ministry opportunities

- Skills, abilities, and passions from assessments are kept on file, and we also want to talk to you and get a feel for the kinds of things that interest you.
- When volunteers are needed, a search is made for those with the desired skill or passion, either through the Your Fit Form or informal conversations with you.
- The Community Service Coordinator will contact you to see if you are interested and available.
- If you are willing and able, the Ministry Coordinator will then contact you to review the Ministry Description and you can make a final decision.

One and One Ministry

Our desire for our members is that they participate in one rotational service ministry and one ministry that fits their interests or skills. Volunteers are needed to help with various tasks, many of which require little to no outside preparation. These tasks include things like nursery work, the security team, welcome/greeters, Café, prayer team, or ushers. We also want our members to participate in a ministry that fits a particular interests or skill such as our music ministry, discipleship, or working with children.

Making Your Life Count

Think Different

It is a common misunderstanding to think that the kind of commitment and acts of service we see moving the mission of the church forward must be carried out by a special class of Christian, perhaps professional ministers or perhaps even volunteers, but volunteers with special “super-saint” qualifications. That is simply not the case. In fact, the bible tells us that it’s a mistake to think that God is looking for special people to represent him.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31 ²⁶*Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹so that no one may boast before him. ³⁰It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. ³¹Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”*

God is not looking for special people with innate qualifications to represent Him. He delights in choosing ordinary, unimpressive people to carry out the work. He does this so that the wonderful things that He enables us to do point back to Him rather than to us. He is to be praised for what is done, not us. As the verses above indicate, this is not the way of the world. We will not accomplish great things for God by thinking like the world around us. We must think different.

How do we do that? After spending 11 chapters teaching theology to the Christians in Rome, the Apostle Paul begins chapter 12 of his letter to them with the point of all the theology he’s taken such pains to explain. Here’s the point: *a changed life offered in true worship to God that is the result of a transformed mind.*

Romans 12:1-2 ¹*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Making your life count by being an active part of what God is doing in His world through His church begins with *a change in the way we think*. If we simply absorb our values and paradigm of life from the culture around us, our lives will conform to the pattern of this world. But if we consciously adopt our values and paradigm of life from what God says is important, then that renewed thinking enables us to live a transformed life that breaks out of the world’s mold.

If this transformed life begins with a change in our thinking, and you find yourself saying amen and in pursuit of this renewed mind, then you may be wondering why you still struggle with living a transformed life. A transformed life requires thinking different, but it also requires living intentionally.

Live Intentionally

These verses tell us that, until we set aside the model of life handed to us by the culture in exchange for our Creator's perfect model of what life is supposed to be like, we will never be able to live transformed lives. If we persist in using the world's model of life, we will be like people who are trying to get to a destination by following an inaccurate map. Trying to find your destination using a flawed map can be a very frustrating and disheartening experience.

However, having adopted the Creator's model of life (God's map), we still must intentionally choose to live in concert with that renewed vision of what human life is supposed to be about. You have to follow the map. That is what the text means when it says to "offer your bodies as a living sacrifice." Verse 2 doesn't say that a renewed mind automatically results in perfect obedience to God's will. It says that a renewed mind gives us the ability to recognize God's will and understand that it is best. But we must intentionally pursue it with our lives.

In the most practical terms, if we build our lives using the same family, social, educational, professional, and financial objectives as the non-Christian world around us, it should come as no surprise to us when we find that we do not have the resources or freedom to pursue full participation in the mission God has given His church. The unbelieving world around you has not planned to make room in life for sacrificial giving and service for the mission of the church. Unless you strategically break from the pattern of the world in which we live, neither will you.

Conclusion

As we said at the beginning of class today, it's not uncommon to look at the people whom you see at church carrying the ministry forward as a kind-of elite Christian, a super-saint if you will. We hear a message about service similar to what you've heard today and we wish that we were able to contribute like them, but it just doesn't seem possible.

But if you renew your mind, letting God set the agenda of your life and then live intentionally by that new paradigm of life given to us by God in His Word, *it is possible*. **It is possible for you to be instrumental in pursuit of your church's God-given mission; in fact, you were created to do it.**