



I Don't Need Church
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CHRISTCHURCHVA.ORG/SERMONS

MYTH: "I DON'T NEED CHURCH"

There is a significant tension present in Christian culture between the _____ and _____ dimensions of our faith.

We, in turn, can limit our experience of God to what we are searching for rather than allowing God to search us through the Church.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but **fellow citizens** with God's people and also **members of his household**, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*

Ephesians 2:19–22 NIV

- To be made alive in Christ is to belong to His Church.
- The Church is intended to be _____, not ours.

*Disclaimer: The Church, sadly, has been misrepresented at the expense of those who have misappropriated its primitive intent.

HOW DO WE RECLAIM CHURCH AS COMMUNITY?

*Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were **together** and had all things in **common**; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time **together** in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.*

Acts 2:43–47 NRSV

- We need the Church because it ensures _____.
- We need the Church because it is _____.

HOW DO WE RECLAIM CHURCH AS MISSION?

- We need the Church because _____ counts on its place in the world.

Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.” What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

Acts 6:1–6 NRSV

- Without the Church, we would not have an expanded definition of “_____.”

HOW DO WE RECLAIM CHURCH AS A MEANS OF GRACE?

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 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.

Hebrews 10:23–25 NIV

- The Church is the site of _____ for those who may not experience it anywhere else.

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 the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit...But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

1 Corinthians 12:12–13, 24b–26 NRSV

- Jesus’ Church exists at the site of _____, not spiritual betterment.

Answer key

There is a significant tension present in Christian culture between the INDIVIDUAL and CORPORATE dimensions of our faith.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

- The Church is intended to be GOD'S DWELLING PLACE, not ours.

HOW DO WE RECLAIM CHURCH AS A MEANS OF GRACE?

- The Church is the site of ASSURANCE for those who may not experience it anywhere else.
- Jesus' Church exists at the site of HUMAN BROKENNESS, not spiritual betterment.
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HOW DO WE RECLAIM CHURCH AS COMMUNITY?

- We need the Church because it ensures MUTUAL EDIFICATION.
- We need the Church because it is INCARNATIONAL.

HOW DO WE RECLAIM CHURCH AS MISSION?

- We need the Church because OUR MISSION counts on its place in the world.
- Without the Church, we would not have an expanded definition of "NEIGHBOR."

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