

Continuing with One Mind

Pursuing unity and devotion to Christ in the church

Acts 2:37-47; Coast Community Church; Mark Johnson; 8-22-2021

Does scripture give us a model for life in the body?

Scripture gives us a blueprint for what a believer's life should look like in the context of the church, and it's important for us to be well acquainted with the gifts that the Lord has provided us through the local expression of the body of Christ.

1. **The Great Commission** - Matthew 28:16-20
 - Given to all God's children, includes a call to Discipleship through Baptism and teaching.
 - These means of grace occur in the context of the church.
 - The call to missions is a call to establish the church of Christ abroad so that believers may be baptized and welcomed into a congregation where the Word is taught week in and week out.
 - The church is to be a normal part of a believer's life

2. **Great Commission in action** - Acts 2:37-47
 - Peter preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - Believers are baptized and identified in the church.
 - Believers step into what is to be the normal rhythm of teaching, fellowship and prayer in the context of the local church.

3. **Commitment to Christ and to one-another** - Nehemiah 9:36-38, 10:29
 - Children of Israel make a covenant to the Lord.
 - Covenant brings mutual accountability in pursuit of holiness.

Membership to a local expression of the body of Christ is to be the normal way of things in the life of a believer. Ongoing faithful teaching based around the finished work of Jesus Christ is to be a component of the church. Mutual accountability in pursuit of Christ-likeness should be part of the commitment made to the members of the congregation.

4. **Members are to pursue restoration of other members** - Galatians 6:1
 - The members of the church are to be about the business of coming alongside brothers and sisters in Christ for the sake of restoring that which is broken.
 - Qualification for restoration is not based on our merit but on the attributes of God.
 - This passage calls the congregation to humility and love even when it's painfully difficult.
 - Church discipline begins from a position of upholding the holiness of God, but the process given in scripture demonstrates a heart that loves too much to allow a brother or sister in Christ to throw away their eternal soul over trifles.

5. **God has given gifts to the members congregation of Christ for the building up of the church** - Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Thessalonians 5:14-22, Romans 12:3-8

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- The leadership of the church is given for the equipping of the saints to do the work of ministry.
- The work of ministry is to make the church look more like Christ
- As members participate in the ministry, the attributes of God are demonstrated
- Members of the body should be on the lookout for the attributes of God so that they may draw attention to them for His glory and the joy of the children of God

Matthew Henry on Romans 12: “We must not say, I am nothing, therefore I will sit still, and do nothing; but, I am nothing in myself, and therefore I will lay out myself to the utmost, in the strength of the grace of Christ. Whatever our gifts or situations may be, let us try to employ ourselves humbly, diligently, cheerfully, and in simplicity; not seeking our own credit or profit, but the good of many, for this world and that which is to come.”

6. **We are to fight complacency and fear with the promises of God** - Romans 8:28, Matthew 18:20, Philippians 2:1-11
 - Stepping into the messiness of ministry in the body of Christ is a matter of trusting and obeying.
 - We will find that the Lord is faithful to meet the deepest needs of our heart as we seek to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - Don't be afraid of participation, but look for it and welcome it! For the sake of the Glory of God, the building up of the body of Christ and for your greater experience of the grace of God.

In Summary

- The pursuit of evangelism and missions is given to all the children of God. This call should result in seeking to establish members into local expressions of the body of Christ.
- Membership in the body of Christ is God's design for His children. Believers covenanting together for mutual accountability in pursuit of Christ is a precious gift.
- Identifying, using and growing in our spiritual giftings should be a regular occurrence in the life of the body of Christ. Seeing these giftings at work is a blessing from the Lord that reflects His attributes.
- Don't be afraid of participation in the body of Christ. Welcome it!