

Overflow: Community
Bethany Assembly of God
8.4.2024

Introduction

Today we are going to examine the church as a community, or as the Scriptures declare, a body, and the importance the church community being in unity with the Body of Christ has in displaying God's glory, discipling nations, and developing and deploying Christian ministers and leaders. We can take great encouragement from the Scriptures concerning the value that God places on the church community, see Hebrews 10:24-25. It is my intention to underscore the importance of the church body for the individual believer, as well as the importance of the individual believer to the church body.

You need the church and the church needs you. See 1 Cor. 12:12-14.

This interdependence is vital to fulfill the mission that God has given to the church to display His glory through obedience to the Great Commission. To quote Pastor Mason from last week, *"If we overemphasize individuality, we miss the grand interconnected story of what God has been up to from the beginning."*

You shouldn't be without the church and the church shouldn't be without you.

Today we will look at three powerful truths related to the importance of individual believers united together in the body of Christ for effective mission and growth in the church.

Body unity DEMONSTRATES Christ to the world: God demonstrates the importance of community in the Trinity (John 15:9); Jesus promised His presence in a united church community (Matthew 18:19-20); Jesus emphasized loving unity which demonstrates His mission (John 13:34-35 & John 17:20-21).

DISCIPLESHIP requires a united community: Discipleship is the result of a united community of believers (Matthew 29:19-20); The Christian practices and ordinances demand community; Spiritual gifts can only be understood and successfully practiced in the context of Christian community; An environment of community is necessary to create growth (Mark 4:26-29).

Ministry DEVELOPMENT and DEPLOYMENT are products of the church community: Leadership development was a priority of Jesus' ministry. The intention is not for people to simply fill a seat and receive. The objective is that we develop as a leader in the kingdom of God and be deployed into ministry, fulfilling our role in the body (Matthew 25:14-30).

Conclusion

God has chosen to reveal Himself to the world not just through you, but through the church body of which you are a part. Are you merely filling a seat or are you a disciple ready to fill a ministry and leadership role? You need the church and the church needs you.