

IS CHURCH ALL ABOUT ME?

THEOLOGICAL QUESTION

What is the Church, and why should I be involved?

BIG IDEA

The church is the Body of Christ: both universally spanning the centuries, and right here, right now, locally. As believers in Christ, we are a part of this Body. We need to be involved on a regular basis, so we can worship God with His people, do life together, serve others, share Jesus' message with the lost, and make disciples who make disciples.

SCRIPTURE USED

1 Corinthians 12:12-13: *The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up only one body. So it is with the body of Christ. Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into Christ's body by one Spirit, and we have all received the same Spirit.*

Hebrews 10:24-25: *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

John 13:34-35: *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*

OPENER

Design a Church.

For the Opener, you will need:

- Paper plates
- Glue sticks or tape
- Some scissors
- Different colors/kinds of paper

EXPLAIN

The question is: "What do you think makes up a church?"

Invite your students to use different kinds of paper to represent different elements you find in a Church: music or worship might be green paper, the sermon could be yellow, small groups might be blue, etc. Then cut out slices to make a pie graph that represents the relative proportion of these or other elements students feel make up the Church (no need for specific percentages, just a visual representation). Glue the slices down in the circular center of the plate to create a complete circle. Give your group just a few examples, and then let them come up with whatever else they think makes up a church, giving them labels. Communicate that there are “no wrong answers.” It is possible that some people may depict something negative in the church, like hypocrisy. Let them create their own Church.

You can make this project more elaborate if you have an artistically inclined bunch. Various scrapbook pages or leftover scraps could be used.

After they’ve finished building out their church pie graphs that depict what they think makes up a church, use their creations to start conversation. After a few minutes of share time, transition to the lesson.

LESSON

ASK

- What do you think Jesus meant for the church to be made up of?

EXPLAIN

Think for a minute what it would be like to look down on the earth with God’s goggles, so to speak. What if you saw what He did, when you glanced down at the planet full of more than seven billion people?

God sees all Christians as His Church on this earth: the universal body of Christ, about which He feels very, very passionately. When believers gather together—whether that is a secret meeting in a place where Christianity can get you killed, or in a huge church in the city—God sees the little groups that we refer to as the local body of Christ.

The point is, every single Christian is a part of the body of Christ. Jesus was clear about His feelings toward the Church—His Bride—He loves her and wants her to be holy and pure (Ephesians 5:25-28). But we live in an imperfect world where gatherings of Christians do not always measure up to Jesus’ design for the church. We mess and muck things up. In fact, even the early church, as described in the pages of the New Testament, had many struggles and challenges. We’re not alone in not always getting it “right” when it comes to church.