



## What Makes a Church a "Good Church"?

**Titus 2:11-12: (NASB)** *<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, <sup>12</sup>instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age.*



Christians, like most other people, are creatures of habit. Although society has engineered dramatic changes in how we handle our lives, for many Christians the act of going to church remains a staple in their lives. We go to church to do what? Traditionally we have gone to learn about God, to have fellowship with those of like mind, to get away from the rat race of our lives and to remind ourselves about how to live in a Christlike fashion. Traditionally we have gone to church to reaffirm our faith - to strengthen ourselves to better stand for our core beliefs. Times have changed. Now it appears many of us go to church for different reasons. In many instances church has become a place of

neighborly activity, social acceptance, goodness, activities, entertainment and fun. Church is now a nice place to go to "feel good about myself." So, are these changes unhealthy or bad? What is wrong with feeling "good about myself"? What makes a church a really good church?

First, a quick look at the word *church*:

**Church:** Strongs #1577 a calling out, i.e. (concretely) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation  
(Jewish synagogue, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both)

**Matthew 16:18: (KJV)** *And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my **church** <1577>; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Jesus called Simon "Peter," which means a small stone or a piece of rock. *Upon this rock* - uses a different Greek word meaning a large stone or rock. Jesus differentiated "Peter" from the "rock" upon which Jesus built his church - *that* rock was the knowledge that Jesus is the son of God. His followers are built upon the "rock" foundation that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah, the son of God.

**The Apostle Paul, talking about when he was known as Saul:**

**Galatians 1:13: (KJV)** *For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted **the church** <1577> of God, and wasted it:*

Clearly the *church* here means the called-out ones, people, the followers of Jesus. Knowing this changes the focus of our original question. So let's change our theme question a bit: What makes a congregation of Christians a really good congregation?



🔊) Attendance going down, *How Do I Choose a Church, The Spiritual Howcast*

- *Attendance at Christian churches among Millennials, those born between 1980 and 2000, is going down. There are many factors that play into that downward trend. However, a common critique is that for the last 30 years both church leaders and potential church attenders have been asking the wrong questions in their efforts both to reach out, "Welcome to Wrath of God Lutheran Church," and to search for someplace to belong. "Yes, I'm new here, please don't be weird." Mainly the focus for both have been both on matters of style: "You know what we need? Better coffee!" "Church should be like the Super Bowl, only with Jesus, and catering to consumer sensibility." "So, what does this church have for my kids?" "Are they going to wear like the man dress thing?" "Do the incense?" "What do you have for men?" "What do you have for singles?"*

We often look for a church that is going to suit us based on our wants. Are we asking the wrong questions? Is what is wrong with your church the fact that your coffee is not gourmet?

A "REALLY GOOD CHURCH"  
IS GOD'S PEOPLE ARRANGED IN  
HIS WAY AND FOR HIS GLORY.



Let's go back to the early church as an example. Each sub-group within a congregation was given individual responsibility.

Titus 2:1-8: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>*But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.*

Paul tells Titus he must speak sound gospel truth. Paul tells him the responsibilities of each sub-group. Think about what category you fit into and how you should be acting.

**Responsibility begins with those who are seasoned and therefore are to be respected:**

<sup>2</sup>*Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.*

<sup>3</sup>*Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,*

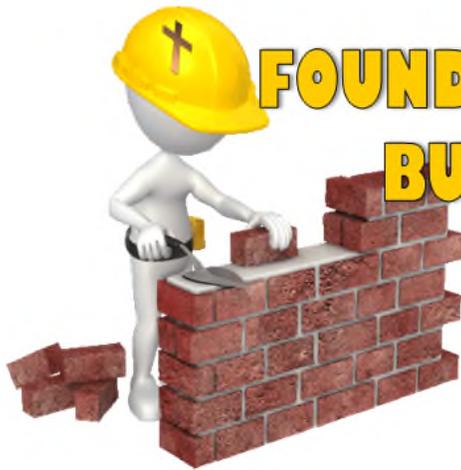
*Older men/older women* - those in attendance (not the teachers), leading the example. Paul started with the most seasoned members of the organization. They should be looked up to with respect.



**Responsibility from the seasoned is to be heeded by those who are mature and engaged in life:**

*<sup>4</sup>so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, <sup>5</sup>to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored. <sup>6</sup>Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; <sup>7</sup>in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, <sup>8</sup>sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.*

Young women/young men - mature but not yet seasoned. They should be looking up to the older generation as an example and have principles of behavior.



## FOUNDATIONAL CHURCH BUILDING BLOCK

**The church is strong, healthy and vibrant when seasoned, mature and truth-based examples are set, heeded and focused on godliness - superseding individual preference.**

Those who attend church should not be thinking about their individual preferences, but rather the goodness of the whole environment and how they can participate.

**Does a "really good church" encourage all to claim all their rights?  
What about early church slaves?**

The texts in Titus show what should be a very natural give and take between generations and genders. It continues with circumstances that are not only

unnatural, but downright horrible regarding slavery - how to handle slaves with the highest godliness and Christlikeness possible.

Slavery was a common occurrence in society during the early church. How were they told to deal with this? Was everyone to stand up for their individual rights?

**A "really good church" is God's people standing up together for Christ under the most difficult and limiting circumstances.**





For more on the biblical perspective of slavery, please listen to our podcasts, "Is Slavery Acceptable to God?" from March 11, 2012 and "Did God Ever Sanction Slavery?" from October 10, 2010.

**Titus 2:9-13:** (NASB) <sup>9</sup>Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, <sup>10</sup>not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

Wait! Christianity is all about liberty and being free in Christ. Why is the Apostle telling slaves to behave themselves, be subject to their master and not be argumentative? Shouldn't they be told to stand up for their rights?

The reason? *So that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.*

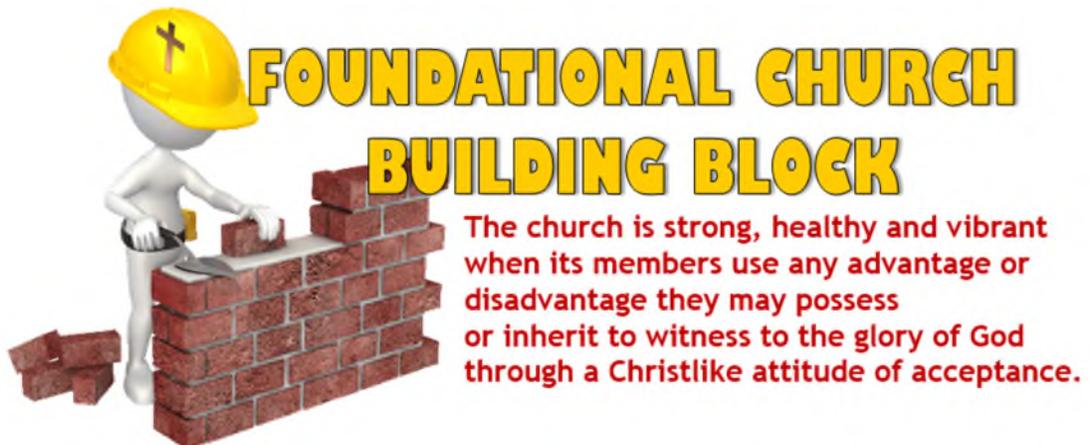
Today we work for employers. We are "enslaved" to serve them well. We should be a witness, let our light shine, be honest, have integrity, do our best job - and they will see that and appreciate it. Our employers should see there is something different about us.

But bondslaves did not have the right to quit. They were slaves for life or until their contractual obligation was up. The Christian take on slavery at that time was, rather than fight for your human rights, we are here told to fight for the privilege of representing Jesus in whatever disadvantaged circumstance our life brings us. It is not about your human rights; it is about the right to honor and praise God in the disadvantage of your life. That attitude of rising to a high level of personal conduct is what makes a good church.

#### **The conclusion for all of us:**

<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, <sup>12</sup>instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup>looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.

God's grace has brought salvation through Jesus. We have to deny ungodliness and worldly desires even if our rights are being infringed upon. Christianity is not about human rights, and that is a hard thing for a lot of Christians to understand. We need to rise above our human rights and be willing to put aside what might rightfully belong to us for the sake of following in Jesus' footsteps. For a lot of us, when we go to church, it is about "me."





### Where did the early church meet?

**Romans 16:3-5:** (NASB) <sup>3</sup>*Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,* <sup>4</sup>*who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;* <sup>5</sup>*also greet the church that is in their house...*

*Greet the church (the congregation, the people) that is in their house - Meeting at the house of Priscilla and Aquila was a common, well-known circumstance. They opened their doors in hospitality for the sake of Christian growth.*

 **First question - is it local, *How Do I Choose a Church, The Spiritual Howcast***

- *And after decades of making style and consumer questions the most important thing in church, people are finding themselves dissatisfied with it. Here are three better questions to ask when looking for a church. Number one: Is it local? Is it close enough for me to be involved beyond Sunday? Might the people you meet in the pews or chairs actually be your neighbor? According to recent research, the primary reason for seeking a church and a primary factor in millennial retention at a church is relationships. When people make friends on Sunday then share life together outside of Sunday, they stay at that church.*

There is something to be said for meeting with those who are somewhat close by for the purpose of having someone to walk along side of through life instead of just seeing them on Sunday. Can you find a place close enough where you can really be a part of other Christians' lives? Fellowship is valuable in building a bond together.

**A "really good church"  
is God's people providing shelter  
from the cold and dark  
of the sinful world.**



**Ephesians 5:11-21:** (NASB) <sup>11</sup>*Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;* <sup>12</sup>*for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.* <sup>13</sup>*But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.* <sup>14</sup>*For this reason it says, Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.*

To be a really good church we must encourage all to stay away from sin by being willing to call out what sin is and what it looks like. In a lot of congregations, because we want to be accepting, we are not willing to do that.



**Not only do we call out the darkness but we rise above it and choose what will influence our lives:**

*<sup>15</sup>Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, <sup>16</sup>making the most of your time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup>So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup>And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup>speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; <sup>20</sup>always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; <sup>21</sup>and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.*

This is speaking to the average "called out" follower of Jesus. The advice is to be careful how you walk. Make the most of your time. To make a church a good church, you have to be a good example. You do not just go to hear and be inspired, but you must be inspiring to others. Make sure your influences are spiritually-based and not desire-based.



*Singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord - Have praise, joy and enthusiasm.*

Are we supposed to "go to church" or are we supposed to "be the church," and what is the difference?

"Going to church" is a little bit of a misrepresentation. "Going to participate in church" is a better way to put it, because we participate in the congregation. Rather than going to a specific location, we are really going to be a part of a fellowship.

Hebrews 10:25: (KJV) *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

Now more than ever we need to assemble with those of like precious faith to encourage, build up and develop more Christlikeness.



**"The Joy of The Lord," (Verse two) Twila Paris**

The joy of the Lord will be my strength  
He will uphold me all of my days  
I am surrounded by mercy and grace  
and the joy of the Lord is my strength



Growing up in a mainstream church, my father was a choir director and I was the choir boy. Music can be an allurement to a church. It makes you feel good and you can contribute. But how does it develop Christlikeness in you? We need to be careful of not being swept up in emotion. Music should be a supplement but not the primary focus. It is good to touch your heart for bringing praise and honor to God, but don't go to church JUST because you like the band and the choir.





# FOUNDATIONAL CHURCH BUILDING BLOCK

The church is strong, healthy and vibrant when its members stand together in God's spirit and truth, call out darkness, inspiring one another and living thankfully.

How does a really good church handle those issues where we might be having a hard time with each other?

Dealing with external issues of our stations in life and the fighting off and calling out of sin are good church actions. Handling issues from within - not getting along as well as we ought, saying or doing things that may be hurtful to our brothers - that is where a good church, a good congregation, must rise up to what it should be...a spiritual environment that is clear, clean and Christ-focused always and under all circumstances.

That is hard to do, but most people, when looking for "a good church to go to" are not thinking along those lines. They instead ask, "Am I going to like the music?" "Are the seats comfortable?" "Are the services too long?" That is not what true Christianity is asking us to look at.

 **Second question - is it local, *How Do I Choose a Church, The Spiritual Howcast***

*Number 2: Is it invitational? Does the church have a posture of openness and warmth to those who are outside her walls? Do they hold events in the community that make people smile? Do they greet you when you walk in the door and make you feel at home? Do they attempt to make the service, regardless of style, understandable to the outsider or is it simply a foreign subculture - Narthex, offertory, hedge of protection, fellowship hall - that you're left to learn on your own?*



A "really good church" is God's people supplying joy for your journey and uplift for your heart when things are not as smooth between us as we would want them to be.

The idea of "church" is the congregation getting together to become more Christlike. Even though feeling good is a result, its main purpose is to help people understand spiritual things.



## Joy in our journey begins with “putting on” the right gear:

**Colossians 3:12-16:** (NASB) <sup>12</sup>So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; <sup>13</sup>bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. <sup>14</sup>Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

*Put on* - here we are given the analogy of getting dressed, implying we are not naturally equipped with these things. We have to intentionally put them on.

What makes a good church? Are the individual members of the congregation wearing the right “Christian uniform”?

Once we are properly clothed we can more easily let spirituality work within us to initiate true joy! One of the end results, the outgrowth, of being part of the church is joy. It is a joyful experience not only to be with others but to live in joy. That comes from spiritual growth, development and contentment. We can feel joyful on Sunday and be miserable the rest of the week. But if we put on what the Scriptures tells us, we can be joyful in our lives.

<sup>15</sup>Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

This has to be done in the right order.

<sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Music can be misrepresented in the church. *Admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs* - not just for the emotion but for growth. Hymns are prayers set to music.

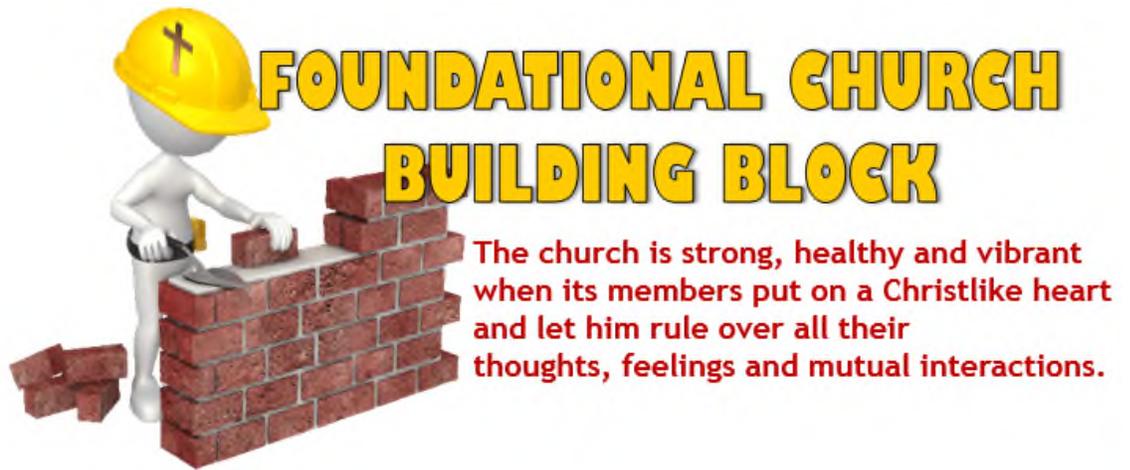
Letting Christ’s peace rule is a key to joy flowing in us and through us to others. Letting Jesus’ words rule is the filter through which all that joy can flow.

Do the songs or hymns bring praise, honor and glory to God? There is a sacredness of our gathering, and we need to rise up to that sacredness rather than bring it down to our personal taste in music.



### “The Joy of The Lord,” (Chorus) Twila Paris

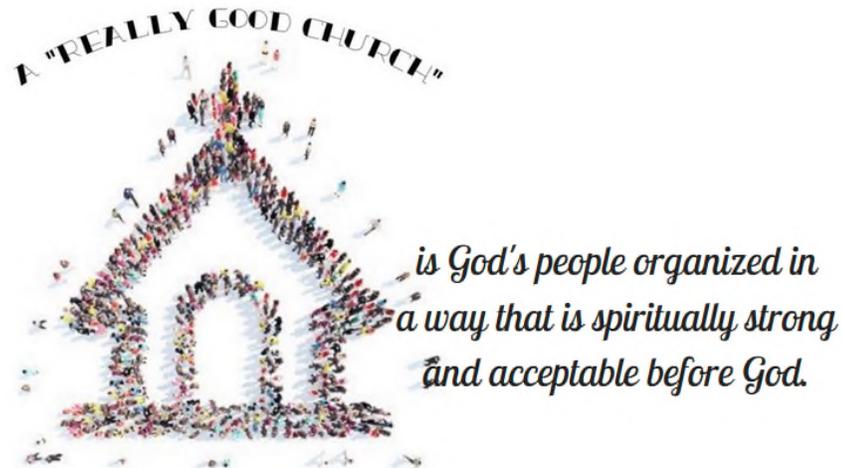
The joy of the Lord  
The joy of the Lord  
The joy of the Lord  
The joy of the Lord is my strength  
The joy of the Lord  
The joy of the Lord  
The joy of the Lord  
The joy of the Lord is my strength



### More early church meeting history:

Romans 16:23: (NASB) *Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you.*

Here is a principle of members of the congregation putting themselves out for the comfort of other members so they can come together to worship, study and pray together in an atmosphere that enhances spirituality.



Choosing leadership begins with personal integrity and character.

### The Scriptures talk to us about choosing leadership:

1 Timothy 3:1-4,6-10: (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. <sup>2</sup>An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup>not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. <sup>4</sup>He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity... (It continues with experience and consistent reputation) <sup>6</sup>and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. <sup>7</sup>And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. <sup>8</sup>Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, <sup>9</sup>but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup>These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.*



These are high-level qualifications we are to look for with someone in that position. This is very serious.

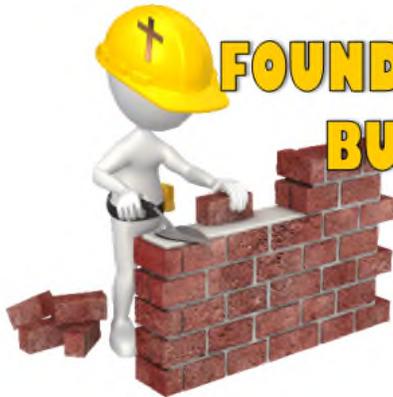
Acts 14:23: (KJV) And when they had **ordained** <5500> them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed

**Ordained:** Strongs #5500, cheirotoneō, to vote by stretching out the hand, to create or appoint by vote, to elect, create, appoint



Every year our church has elections for the whole congregation to vote for who they believe meets these qualifications. Only those within the congregation know each other's character traits and knowledge of the word. It would feel uncomfortable for a committee to send a stranger to lead our congregation.

Depending on your church experience, that might be a natural way - a leader comes in from the outside to teach because they are sent by a central organization. But that idea was not in the Scriptures. Each of these early church groups were responsible to develop spiritual leadership amongst themselves. They were to be really careful about who was chosen.



## FOUNDATIONAL CHURCH BUILDING BLOCK

The church is strong, healthy and vibrant when its members choose those who would lead them based upon truth, clear spiritual and character qualifications and not based on their emotions and personal biases.

**What about times when brothers or sisters are going through trauma? How does a good church react?**

Life is full of trauma and hard experiences. A good church SHOULD be an environment where those who are going through such things can find support and true encouragement. Coming to such an environment can be difficult, as our emotions tend to react before our spiritual sense does. Sometimes we just are not ready to be the kind of help we should be. We have to come up higher. Sometimes we are the one going through trauma, and we are not ready to share. We have to be willing to be vulnerable. Of all places, being amongst the fellow called-out ones following in Jesus' footsteps should be the most confidence-building place we could go.

**Third question - is it Christological, How Do I Choose a Church, The Spiritual Howcast**

- *Number three: Is it Christological? Christological means focused on the person and work of Jesus Christ as the answer to everything. When a church is being faithful to historic Christianity, the goal is for that community to know and love Jesus - who he is and what he's done more and more. That's really it. It's a relatively new idea to see Jesus as someone who came to earth just*



*to help us become the best versions of ourselves, and Millennials who have access to more information than any other generation, realize there are a thousand ways to live your best life without waking up at 9am on a Sunday. You could join a gym, go to a Tony Robbins seminar, watch Dr. Phil, drink more water, eat more kale, train for a marathon. (Just don't be a kind of person who ends up telling everybody about it.) A recent survey by the Barna Group found that those who stay at local churches cite intimacy with God as a primary factor. They want to hear that and understand how the truths of Jesus transform relationships and vocation and how he equips them for cultural discernment.*

We need to focus on that which is higher, not that which is common or emotional.



*A "really good church" is God's people supporting one another through self-control, endurance, integrity, mutual support, praise and meaningful fellowship.*

### **Self-Control and Endurance**

#### **Standing against our own emotions to better walk with our brethren:**

**James 5:9-16:** (NASB) <sup>9</sup>Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. <sup>10</sup>As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup>We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

*Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged - When you start complaining, you are missing the point of coming together. You are being earthly and that is not why you come together. If you are "the" church, you stand for something much higher.*

*We count those blessed who endured - you can endure the difficulties quietly. Work it out privately as Matthew 18 instructs. Stand against your own emotions with self-control.*



**Integrity**

**Letting our spiritual maturity and Christlike character override our emotional propensity to create drama in our experiences:**

*<sup>12</sup>But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.*

Your humbly-stated word should be enough.

**Mutual Support and Praise**

**Being close enough and willing enough to encourage our brothers help themselves even when they may feel awkward:**

*<sup>13</sup>Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises. <sup>14</sup>Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; <sup>15</sup>and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.*

This is talking about spiritual sickness, not physical illness. The church can help to spiritually build up those who need it.

**Meaningful Fellowship**

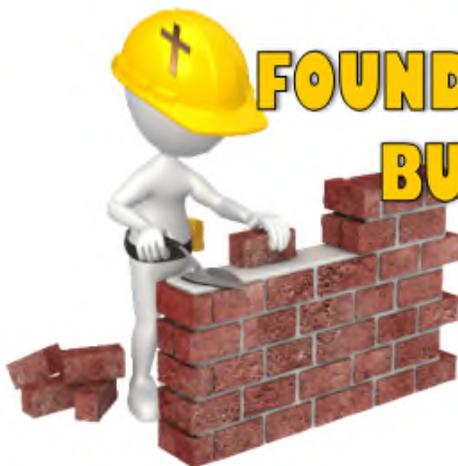
**Being vulnerable enough to speak and listen about the hard things in life:**

*<sup>16</sup>Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*



We have testimony meetings where we give opportunity for the congregation to share things on their hearts or to request prayers. It is a way for the congregation to enter into their experiences and lend support.

The congregation should be focused on a high enough spiritual plane that we can accept that vulnerability with grace, love and compassion. Sometimes people make mistakes and you want to say, "What were you thinking?!" This is not the time. They need to be put back together and encouraged spiritually.



**FOUNDATIONAL CHURCH BUILDING BLOCK**

**The church is strong, healthy and vibrant when its members take on deep and heartfelt care for one another as their personal responsibility.**



When I went to church as an adult, I went because I wanted to find God and understand the Bible. To love Him with all your heart, mind, soul and strength - how do you do that if you don't know where He is? That is why I went to church - to figure out who God was and what He was doing. Our purpose is to



honor Him and serve Him when we get together. Our main focus should be to help each other really find God and walk together with Christ. There is joy being with others who want to do the same.

There is always more to find out about God.



**"Oh, How Good It Is," (Verse two) Keith and Kristyn Getty**

Oh, how good it is  
on this journey we share  
to rejoice with the happy  
and weep with those who mourn  
for the weak find strength  
the afflicted find grace  
when we offer the blessing  
of belonging

### **Early church meetings - the very beginning, after Pentecost:**

Acts 2:46-47: (NASB) <sup>46</sup>Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, <sup>47</sup>praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

They needed each other instead of a big, fancy building.

### **One more example of our mutual support:**

Galatians 6:1-5: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. <sup>2</sup>Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup>For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. <sup>4</sup>But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. <sup>5</sup>For each one will bear his own load.

All of this shows that a "really good church" is not a place to go, rather it is an environment that needs feeding by all who are present! Bottom line: I am responsible! Make the congregation better by your contributions and presence.

### **What about diversity?**

#### **Is there room for real human diversity in a "really good church"?**

Diversity can be a tricky thing. The world's definition of diversity tends towards an "anything goes" approach while the biblical definition of diversity is clearly in line with focused principles. It is this latter diversity that is sought after in the context of spiritual growth within any "good church." Is there room for diversity? Yes. But what kind?

### **Early church meetings before and after the Apostle Paul's conversion:**

Acts 8:3: (NASB) *But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.*

Colossians 4:15: (NASB) *Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house.*



**"Oh, How Good It Is," (Chorus) Keith and Kristyn Getty**

So, with one voice we'll sing to the Lord  
And with one heart we'll live out His word  
'til the whole earth sees  
the Redeemer has come  
For He dwells in the presence of His people



A CQ chat comment: I love [John 15:12-13](#): (NASB) *This is my commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.* I find it inspiring to think that we are the hands and feet of Jesus for one another, that he can work through us to communicate his love and encouragement.

We should be the personification of Jesus as best as we are capable. There is no greater gift we can give to our brother or sister in Christ.



is God's people encouraging its members with vastly different abilities to come together and work as small parts of a well-oiled machine for the sake of the gospel.

**It is easy to compete, compare and judge accordingly. There is no place for that in the body of Christ:**

1 Corinthians 12:14-27: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>For the body is not one member, but many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot says, Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear says, because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?

**The call of the church is for the very purpose of diversity and purposeful inclusion! That's God's plan:**

<sup>18</sup>But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. <sup>19</sup>If they were all one member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>But now there are many members, but one body. <sup>21</sup>And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

If you are a "toe," you could grumble that you are not an eye, an ear or even a pinkie finger! OR, we can say, "God has granted me the great privilege of



providing the little edge of balance that nobody else can provide, because I am the little toe on the left foot." That toe plays a role.

The idea is to find that God put us there to supplement everything else. If all those different parts were not there, it would not work.

**Further, God has designed this body with humility and mutual respect as primary prerequisites:**

*<sup>22</sup>On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; <sup>23</sup>and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, <sup>24</sup>whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, <sup>25</sup>so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.*

It does not matter if you are the least talented individual among those you meet with. What matters is that you are there. Humility reigns over everyone. All have an equal standing before Christ because none are worthy.

**Our fellowship should thrive on this diversity and mutual care for this brings the energy of life:**

*<sup>26</sup>And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. <sup>27</sup>Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.*



Years ago when Christian Questions was on the radio, we were on from 6-8am Sunday mornings. My house is over an hour away from the studio, so I had to leave the house at 4:20am to get there on time. We have a long driveway and next door to our house is my parents' house. Behind their house was my grandmother's apartment. There was one particular Sunday when I left ten minutes late. I drove to the studio, we did the broadcast and came back for our Sunday church service. My grandmother, who was in her 80's at this point, comes over to me and asks if everything is okay. "Yes, why would you ask?" She said, "Because you left late this morning." How would she know? Because she woke up every Sunday morning to watch me drive out of the driveway so she could pray for me driving at that hour. Those who do not have the opportunity can still contribute to the opportunity. This is a great example of someone who did not have the ability to get out but was able to contribute to someone else's life. That is the beauty of the fellowship of the body of Christ.



## **FOUNDATIONAL CHURCH BUILDING BLOCK**

**The church is strong, healthy and vibrant when its members wholly accept their diversity and humbly realize that each one is but a small yet important part of the whole which comprises the body of Christ.**



It goes a long way to understand we are just small pieces.

### Early church meeting:

**Acts 12:11-12:** (NASB) <sup>11</sup>When Peter came to himself, he said, Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting. <sup>12</sup>And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

They worked together in a prayer meeting for the Apostle Peter.

The church is the people and the people - each of them - have a responsibility to bring spirituality, their contribution, their desire for growth and to learn with them. Work together as a unit. That is what makes a truly "good church." It is what is inside your own heart and mind.

*So, what makes a church a "good church"?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...  
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



### Qualifications for those who would lead in any Christian church:

**1 Timothy 3:1-15:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. <sup>2</sup>An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup>not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. <sup>4</sup>He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity <sup>5</sup>(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), <sup>6</sup>and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. <sup>7</sup>And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. <sup>8</sup>Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, <sup>9</sup>but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup>These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. <sup>11</sup>Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup>Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. <sup>13</sup>For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup>I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; <sup>15</sup>but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

**Titus 1:5-9:** (NASB) <sup>5</sup>For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, <sup>6</sup>namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. <sup>7</sup>For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, <sup>8</sup>but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, <sup>9</sup>holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.



### **A few more Scriptures that reveal the setup of the early church:**

**Acts 5:42:** (NASB) *And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.*

**Philemon 1:1-3:** (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our beloved brother and fellow worker, <sup>2</sup>and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: <sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Acts 16:31-40:** (NASB) *<sup>31</sup>They said, believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household. <sup>32</sup>And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. <sup>33</sup>And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. <sup>34</sup>And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household. <sup>35</sup>Now when day came, the chief magistrates sent their policemen, saying, Release those men. <sup>36</sup>And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, the chief magistrates have sent to release you. Therefore, come out now and go in peace. <sup>37</sup>But Paul said to them, they have beaten us in public without trial, men who are Romans, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they sending us away secretly? No indeed! But let them come themselves and bring us out. <sup>38</sup>The policemen reported these words to the chief magistrates. They were afraid when they heard that they were Romans, <sup>39</sup>and they came and appealed to them, and when they had brought them out, they kept begging them to leave the city. <sup>40</sup>They went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia, and when they saw the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.*

**1 Corinthians 16:15-20:** (NASB) *<sup>15</sup>Now I urge you, brethren (you know the household of Stephanas, that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves for ministry to the saints), <sup>16</sup>that you also be in subjection to such men and to everyone who helps in the work and labors. <sup>17</sup>I rejoice over the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have supplied what was lacking on your part. <sup>18</sup>For they have refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore, acknowledge such men. <sup>19</sup>The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. <sup>20</sup>All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.*