



## **Week 5: Life in the Church (Family)**

**MV:** *Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal 6:2)*

### **ASK: Is Christianity a solo sport?**

Western culture, Lone Ranger, pull yourself up by your bootstraps, this is all part of "American Christianity". We are self sufficient and tend to work alone.

Every individual needs to obey Jesus call to follow.

**T or F: We cannot follow Jesus as individuals.**

**T or F: It is impossible to make disciples apart from the church.**

**Do you want to make disciples? Really? Is your heart in it?**

There are 50+ "one another" statements in scripture

It is impossible to follow Jesus alone if you're to love one another, serve one another, pray for one another, etc.

We can't claim to follow Christ if we reject the church He created, the church He died for, the church He entrusted His mission to, the church that IS His bride.

Church is NOT: a social club, building, a program, or an option

Church is: God's strategy to reach the world; a group of redeemed people who live and serve together in such a way their lives and communities are transformed

What matters is the interaction with people God has placed in our lives

Out of 114 times the church is mentioned in the NT, 90+ refer to the local church (us!).

Many try to live lives apart from a local church (I can worship in nature, on the golf course, etc.)

Mutual interdependence, accountability and submission rub us the wrong way.

*"Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you." (Heb 13:17)*

*"2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ... 5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your*

enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1Pe 5:2-3, 5-8 NIV)

1 Tim 3:1-13 duties of elders/deacons

God has united us together in local churches to keep each other from sinning and straying from Christ.

*"1 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. 4 Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, 5 for each one should carry their own load. 6 Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor." (Gal 6:1-6)*

*"15 "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. 16 But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' 17 If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector. ... 19 "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Mat 18:15-17, 19-20)*

We gather together to preach God's word, celebrate the Lord's supper together, baptize new believers, pray for and encourage one another.

Then we scatter to care for believers and share the gospel with unbelievers

*"42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." (Act 2:42-47)*

#### **ASK: Who should be ministering and how?**

*"1 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal 6:1-2)*

Ministry = help them

Problems are messy, yes, but that is God's call to us. Problems also belong to the church body, not just to you.

We are called to encourage, challenge, and help others in our lives and they do the same for us.

Our own sanctification (being more like Christ) happens as we help others.

But when we help we often only scratch the surface or the symptoms, not wanting to go deeper and get to the heart of the matter.

INVEST in their life; Walk WITH them.

*"18 "Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? 19 For it doesn't go into their heart but into their stomach, and then out of the body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.) 20 He went on: "What comes out of a person is what defiles them. 21 For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come--sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22 adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. 23 All these evils come from inside and defile a person.""* (Mar 7:18-23)

Trying to control the situation or circumstances doesn't get at the HEART of the matter—the HEART of the person

**ASK: So how do we change a person's heart?** (It's impossible for us, but not God)

*"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." (Ezekiel 36:26-27)*

This is a cataclysmic life change. God places His Spirit in us and changes us from the inside out.

*"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you--they are full of the Spirit and life." (John 6:63)*

*"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Tim 3:16-17)*

*"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. 17 Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops. 19 My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, 20 remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins." (James 5:16-20)*

**Bearing one another's burdens is not easy, but it's not optional either.**

*"And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you." (Rom 8:11)*

**Resurrection power flows through us! We can do whatever God's calls us to!  
We need to take our responsibility to one another seriously**

The mission of the church is too important to leave to everyone else.

The goal of the church is to grow up in every way into Christlikeness.

If you're not a part, you're hurting others.

Helping people to change is what discipleship is all about.