

One Another's- The benefits of belonging.

Sermon Notes

March 9, 2025

Illustration: I belong to Costco, Amazon Prime, Espn+, ordained in EFCA, Hunt family, McClellan family, and LEFC.

- Each one creates inclusion into a community of people.
- Most often chosen by need or affinity, except for family.
- Each one provides benefits.

Being part of the church has been so crucial to my life's journey.

- The church provided a place for me to be taught and nurtured growing up and continuing to do so into my adult years.
- A place to celebrate and to grieve.
- A place to receive help when situations arise: birth of a child, sickness, tragedy, aging, career discernment, relational conflict, marriage assistance.
- Partnership in discipling children.
- Prayer.

When moving to a new community, your church search will be most important.

The church is designed to meet both the spiritual and physical needs of its people, but done so as a mutual benefit by serving each other.

The church is designed by God to care well for both the spiritual and physical needs of its people. **Acts 6:1-6**

- The overseers were charged with teaching, praying, and church leadership.
 - The spiritual needs of the people.
- The deacons and deaconesses were established to meet the physical needs of the people.
 - As the church grew, so did the various physical needs of the people: caring for the widows, orphans, clothing, food, and counsel of many kinds.

- The qualifications of deacons and deaconesses were no less important than the overseer. **1 Timothy 3:8-12**
 - Manage their families well.
 - Committed to Jesus and good teaching.
 - Trustworthy.

- Equally important to serve the physical and spiritual needs. **[Parking lot story: I recently visited another church even larger than ours, and there were NO CAR PARKERS!!! I drove round and round in the parking lot, and could not find a spot anywhere near the church! I finally went to an area that felt like ‘the back 40’ to find an empty space, and then walked by myself the whole way to the front church door!!! I wanted to go back to LEFC and hug every one who helps with car parking on a Sunday morning! You are making people feel welcome and wanted!!!]**
 - If you visited a church and were not welcomed or served well, it doesn’t matter how good the worship or preaching might be, you wouldn’t come back.
 - If you visited a church and you were welcomed and served well, but the preacher did not open the Word and the worship lacked life, you wouldn’t come back.

The physical needs of the church can only be met through the participation of the whole church. Acts 4:32-35

- Your giving of a tithe to the church enables us to meet the financial needs of people.
 - We have a very well-built ministry to care for and advise people under financial stress. **[Acknowledge Jon Balson]**

- Your giving of your time and skills enables us as a church to meet the various physical needs that arise—basic care around the house, transportation, food train, car care, etc...

- God’s grace was powerfully at work—recipients of grace were giving grace. **GRACE TO GRACE!**

The spiritual needs of the church are not only met by overseers alone, but also by each member of the church. Galatians 6:1-5

- We who are walking by the Spirit are called to restore people who have failed, or struggling to not fail.

- Some people resist walking and sharing their challenges with others and this is often rooted in pride. (3)

- We come alongside each other and help carry people who are burdened. (2) **[Video clip- Lord of the Rings]**

- We cannot repent for people, nor can we carry the burden temptation or consequences bring.
- We can uplift them, so that they can walk the difficult journey of repentance. (5)

- It is a good thing to share the fruit of what is happening in your life with those who are teaching you or caring for you.
 - This inspires them to keep going.
 - It is a gift in return. Blessing each other.

Being a blessing to one another.

1. Serve- giving of your time and talents.

2. Give- enabling the church to assist those in need.

3. Belong- commit to being a blessing to those who worship with you.
 - Only members can become elders, deacons, or deaconesses and lead the ministry of caring for one another.
 - You never know when you might need to receive the blessing.
 - It is a blessing to be a blessing.

Benediction:

- The connection counter for mercy network. If you have a need or want to help those in need.

- Join an ABF or Life Group.

- Life groups and ABF's welcome and invite others into belonging.