

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

week 10



NOTES

As we have already learned, the local church is God's way of reaching the world with the good news of the Gospel. One of the most exciting aspects of your discipleship journey is when you can begin to contribute to the furtherance of the Gospel through your local church.

We are so glad that you have chosen to learn and grow at Franklin Road Baptist Church. The Bible refers to the church as a body. Each part of the body is responsible for its own system and function. As a part of the body of Franklin Road Baptist Church, our desire for you is to find what part of the body fits you best. Basically, where can you be the most effective in helping share the Gospel through your church. In this lesson, you will learn the purpose of the church, the spiritual gifts God has given you, and the relationships you can have with fellow church members.

THE CHURCH HAS A PURPOSE.

Each church based on the Word of God seeks to accomplish the same things. While methods and ministries will differ with every church, our message should be the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Here at Franklin Road Baptist Church, we have chosen to describe our purpose using three phrases - Know God, Grow together, and Show others, or to simplify it even further - know, grow, and show.

Acts 2:41-47

We take our purpose from the passage stated above.

Know God (vs. 41-42) - The first church saw the lost come to a knowledge of Jesus Christ and the doctrines that He had passed on to them. At our church this is done through our Sunday morning worship services and this discipleship course.

Grow Together (vs. 44-46) - The first church became unified through the study of their knowledge of God and His Word. They became unified for the cause of the Gospel. At our church this is done through our LifeStage Bible classes and our Wednesday night church Bible study.

Show Others (vs. 46-47) - The first church used their knowledge of God and their unity to tell others. At our church this is done through our weekly outreach opportunities, ministry service, special outreach events, and personal evangelism.

While other churches may describe their purpose differently, this is what God has shown us for our church. Let's look a little deeper at each of these phrases individually:

KNOW GOD.

One of the greatest desires of this church is to assist others in knowing God better. There is no higher purpose than to see others begin or renew a relationship with

God through Jesus Christ. For some, knowing God begins by accepting Jesus Christ as their Savior.

John 3:16

For others it may be that they have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior, but they have never known the God who sent Him in a personal way.

Philippians 3:10

Whatever the case may be, after we have met God, we now have the ministry of helping others know Him.

Matthew 28:19-20

Not only are we commanded to help them know God, but we are also responsible for helping them know God better after having met Him.

II Timothy 2:2

Conversation Starter: Have you ever been responsible for introducing someone to another person? There is great joy in seeing their friendship grow is there not? Imagine the satisfaction in introducing someone to Jesus Christ and seeing that relationship grow.

GROW TOGETHER.

Following a knowledge and personal relationship with God, our goal is to get church members to grow together in unity. We have already stated the avenues in which we seek to build unity, but what are the components of unity according to the Bible:

Doctrine brings unity.

Someone once said, "Doctrine is the glue that binds us together." If a church does not agree about the fundamental doctrines of the Bible, there will be a certain amount of confusion within the church.

Acts 2:42

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Prayer brings unity.

In last week's lesson on prayer, we learned about the power of praying with other Christians. One of the many benefits of praying with other Christians is the result of unity.

Acts 1:14

These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.



Acts 2:42

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Fellowship brings unity.

As you begin to meet the people of this church and fellow Christians, you will find that you have common interests. One of the great joys of being a part of a church family is that you can have godly and clean friendships with fellow believers.

Acts 2:45-47

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

The Gospel brings unity.

All of these components encourage and develop unity in the church, but the fact is, there is no perfect church and there is no perfect church member. You may not agree with everything this church does and you may not agree with everything someone in this church does. The early church is an example to us of how to put aside preferences that do not matter for the sake of the Gospel.

Acts 2:45-47

And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Philippians 1:27**SHOW OTHERS.**

The unity of the church is for an intended purpose. As our knowledge of God and His Word grows, we should desire to become a unified body doing our part to show others what we have found in Christ.

Matthew 28:19-20

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

The Gospel message never changes, but the ministries and methods employed by each church will differ. As we will look at next, it is the job of the church and the Christian to understand their purpose and do their part to reach those around them.

THE CHRISTIAN HAS GIFTS.

As we have established, the primary job of the church is to share the Gospel with the lost. God, in His omniscience, knew that you would accept Christ and be a part



of Franklin Road Baptist Church. He has already equipped you with gifts to be used as a part of this church body to help in spreading the Gospel. The Bible talks about how the church operates as a body.

Ephesians 4:11-16

DISCOVER YOUR GIFTS.

The Holy Spirit equipped the apostles and prophets of the Bible with gifts to aid in their furtherance of the Gospel. Many of these gifts (speaking in tongues, visions, healing, and prophecy) were given to prove these servants were of God. Their gifts were referred to as “sign gifts.” The need for these gifts disappeared with the completion of the Word of God (See I Corinthians 13:8-10, 14:20-22).

Just as God equipped those servants with the gifts they needed to accomplish His work, He has equipped you and this church with the gifts needed to get the Gospel out. These spiritual gifts are listed in Romans 12. After you have read the passage, there is a brief description of each gift listed below.

Romans 12:6-8

Prophecy - Oftentimes, we associate the word prophecy with the telling of future events. This was only a portion of the job of the prophets of the Bible. Their primary purpose was to preach the truth to God’s people. As we learned in lesson one, the Bible is the completed revelation of God. We have all the information about God and the future that we need. Those who have the gift of prophecy are passionate about preaching the truth of the Word of God.

Ministry - This gift is sometimes referred to as the gift of helps. This is a desire to serve and help in a variety of different ways. Many times it is a willingness to do that which no one else desires to do. In a culture where everyone desires the spotlight, do not belittle the power of this spiritual gift. If you have been blessed with a desire to serve behind the scenes, be faithful and diligent knowing that your service is vital.

Teaching - Have you ever heard someone speak that causes a light bulb to go off in your mind? Typically, those people have diligently studied and found a way to apply their study to lives of people. The gift of teaching requires solid Biblical interpretation and desire to study and apply God’s Word to people.

Exhortation - There are people in the world who make you feel better about yourself or your task as a result of being around them. The gift of exhortation is the desire to see others encouraged in the Christian life through positive words or deeds. As these people walk in the Spirit, they will find that they motivate others to love and serve God with whole-hearted passion.

Giving - God has blessed some people with not only a heart to give, but also, the provision to give. These Christians are generous by nature and have a unique desire to give to God’s work and God’s people as God has given to them.

Ruling - This also referred to as the gift of administration. As churches continue to grow, there is a need for clarity and organization. This gift is shown through the desire to organize, strategic thinking, planning, and working with teams of people.



Those who are gifted with administration take joy in seeing order in the work of God that results in the Gospel being furthered.

Mercy - During times of difficulty, God has gifted some to come alongside of fellow Christians and carry their burdens with them. Those with this gift can empathize with those who are going through trials. They understand what to say and when to say it. They have a desire to be around those who are suffering and hurting to assist in carrying their burdens.

God has given each Christian at least one of these gifts. No gift is more important than another. Rather, each gift is vital to see the work of God move forward.

ACTIVATE YOUR GIFT.

After discovering what God has gifted us with, it is our job to begin to use this gift for His honor and glory. Like a physical body needs all of its parts and systems to function, the church needs all of its members to accomplish God's work.

I Corinthians 12:18-24

You are vital to the work of God at Franklin Road Baptist Church. You have been gifted to fulfill a certain role in God's timing. As you review the list of gifts, we must remember that just because God may not have gifted us in one area, there are certain things that every Christian can partake in despite not being as gifted in one or many particular area. The lack of the gift of mercy is no excuse to be unmerciful to others. The lack of the desire to give does not negate that God commands that we give unto Him. The lack of the gift of exhortation does not mean that we cannot encourage others. Spiritual gifts are intended to give us a framework for how and where we can operate best in the body of the church.

THE CHURCH RELIES ON COMMITMENT.

Have you ever wondered how the church would operate if no one chose to serve? The truth is, it would not operate because it could not operate. If we desire to see the Gospel move forward through our Christian service, it will through our commitment to the following aspects of the church:

A COMMITMENT TO ONE ANOTHER

We use the term "church family" because our commitments to the church are similar to the commitments of being a part of a family. Because of our Heavenly father, we are all connected to one another through the blood of Jesus Christ. The Bible gives several "one another" commands to help us understand how to treat fellow Christians.

Love one another.
John 15:12

Serve one another.
Galatians 5:13

Be gracious toward one another.
Ephesians 4:2



Be like-minded toward one another.

Romans 15:5

Give preference toward one another.

Romans 12:10

Christ established the church with the intent of fellow believers encouraging and helping one another. As you can see, your relationships with fellow Christians are vital to yours and their growth.

A COMMITMENT TO UNITY.

While we understand that we must be committed to one another, we will not always agree with everything that everyone does. When something comes between you and another Christian can either strengthen or weaken the relationship.

Forgive from your heart.

Ephesians 4:32

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

There are some conflicts that do not even need to be discussed just forgiven and forgotten. Many times, these are offenses that the other party may not even know about. In situations like these it is best to ask yourself, "How does this matter in light of eternity?" If the answer is, "it doesn't," it is best to start with forgiveness and never bring it up.

Talk to the other person.

Matthew 18:15

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

Some conflicts can be resolved with a simple and Spirit-filled discussion.

Matthew 26:22

The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

When we air the offence with others, we are causing division in the body of Christ. Not only that but we add hurt and minimize the chance at reconciliation. This is not the way that we were treated by Christ nor is it the way to handle a fellow Christian.

Share only with someone else who can be a part of the solution.

Matthew 18:16-17

But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

If you have tried to speak to a fellow church member with no resolve and the matter is so that it continues to hurt you and others, bring it to the church leadership privately and ask for their help in seeking reconciliation.



The goal should never be to prove who is right and who is wrong, but to seek Biblical reconciliation. Unity is necessary to see a church continue in the furtherance of the Gospel. We should to keep unity through the components listed in this lesson. When there is division, we should actively seek to reconcile our relationship with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

A COMMITMENT TO THE GOSPEL

The Gospel is focus of the local church. Satan desires to distract and deter us from getting it out. When the Gospel stays within the church, Satan has succeeded at his mission. How can we make sure to remain committed to the Gospel?

Commit to sharing the Gospel personally.

Romans 1:16-17

The Gospel was never intended to be kept to yourself. The Great Commission commands us to share the Gospel. There are people in your life that no one else in this church has an opportunity to share the Gospel with.

Commit to serving in Gospel ministry.

Ephesians 4:11-12

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

This church is dedicated to sharing the Gospel with as many people as possible. As you find a place to serve, you are partaking in helping others.

APPLICATION

The local church is one of God's greatest works on earth. Let's take the time to evaluate and apply our Christian service.

Because the church has a purpose, I commit to being a part of that purpose to see the Gospel continue. The purpose of the church is share the Gospel. Here at this church we accomplish that by Knowing God, Growing together, and Showing others. Would you determine to be active in all three of these aspects? Would you work through this purpose statement and help other work through it?

Because the Christians has gift, I commit to using my gifts for God's honor and glory. God has gifted you to be able to do something special for Him. Would you discover and activate your gifts from God? Would you decide to honor God with the gifts that He has given you? Would you determine to use your gifts in the ministry of this church?

Because the church relies on commitment, I commit to my local church. The Lord may not always allow you to attend Franklin Road Baptist Church, but He has for right now. Would you decide to serve through this local church? Would you stay committed to the people of this church and this community? Would you determine to be committed to unity by resolving conflicts Biblically? Would you make a commitment to the Gospel by sharing it with others and serving in your local church?

