
Big Dreams, Bigger God: We the People

New Hope Community Church
Dr. Jack Bracy, June 23, 2019

The Human Condition Suffers from ...

I vs We

What's in It for Me?

The Goal of Being a Church Is Never to Meet to Meet but to Meet to Do Together!

“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” *Hebrews 10:24–25, NLT*

“In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.” *Romans 12:6–8, NLT*

“so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.” *Romans 12:5, NLT*

Universal vs Local Church

Everyone Who Is A Part OF the Church

Is to Have A Part IN the Church

What Is the Evidence for Believers to Be Members of a Local Church?

1. The Body of Christ

“The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you.” In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.” *1 Corinthians 12:21–26, NLT*

Unity and Organic Relationship

2. Shepherding

“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.” *Acts 20:28, ESV*

The Bible Gives Elders A Special Responsibility to Care for
A Specific Group or Community of People

3. Church Discipline

“If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won’t accept the church’s decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector.” *Matthew 18:15–17, NLT*

How Do We Identify the Group of People Who Will
Listen and Render a Righteous Judgement?

“The Church” Must Be A Definable Group

4. Excommunication

“It isn’t my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning. God will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, “You must remove the evil person from among you.”
1 Corinthians 5:12–13, NLT

2 Significant Implications:

- 1) There Is An “In the Church” Group and an “Outside the Church” Group
- 2) A Person Can Be Removed from Being “In the Church”

5. Submission

“Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.”
Hebrews 13:17, NLT

The NT Commands Individuals to Submit
to A Specific Group of Leaders

What Does the Spirit Want?