

Why

Do We Church?

Why do we
read the
Bible?

Why do
we pray?

**Finding
Answers For
Following Jesus**

Why do we
need Jesus?

Why do we
worship?

Why do we
go to church?

1ST-5TH GRADE

Day 3: Why do We Go to Church?

Why do We Go to Church?

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will teach the kids that Christians meet together at church so that they can use their gifts to bless and help one another.

Key Verses

1 Corinthians 12:12-30—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - Hebrews 10:24-25a

"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some."

Hook

Review yesterday's memory verse, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

Ask the students to list parts of the body. Once you've made a list of around 12-15 parts, ask the kids which part is the most important. As they give answers, ask if that means they would be okay with only having that part of the body (e.g. "So you would be okay with only having a heart?"). Then ask which parts they think they could live without.

God has given us many different body parts, all of which play an important role in the body. Today we are going to see that the Church is a lot like a body.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul compares the Church to a body. A body is made up of many parts, and each of these parts are very different from one another, but they all come together to form one body (vs. 12-14). The same way, the Church is made up of many people who are all different from one another, but they all come together to form one Church, the Body of Christ.

Just as each part of the body is important, every believer has an important role in the Church. To illustrate this, in verses 15-25, Paul shows how it would be ridiculous for a foot to say that it wasn't important and leave the body because it isn't a hand. Both play a different but equally important part. The same way, an eye can't say to a hand, "I don't need you." The body is designed so that every part has an important job to play, and all the parts need and depend on one another. Likewise in the Church, every believer has been gifted a certain way in order to perform a different job in the Church. In verses 28-30, Paul lists some of these jobs, each of which was important and necessary for the Corinthian church.

In verse 26, Paul points out another important truth about the body. When one part of the body is hurt, it affects the rest of the body. If your eyes aren't working right, your legs don't know where to go. When you break your arm, your hand can't reach out to where it needs to go. The same way, when one Christian is suffering, it should affect the rest of us. We should come alongside that person, grieve with them, and help them, not have an attitude of, "Not my problem." The same way, when something good happens to another believer, we should celebrate with them, even if it doesn't benefit you personally.

LOOK

When most people think about going to church, they might imagine going to an old building, having someone talk to them about the Bible, and then leaving. They view church as a place you go, the name of a building. But this is not what the Bible teaches about the Church. The Church is God's name for the community of Christians. We may meet in a building, but if the building goes away, the Church still remains. So when we talk about why Christians go to Church, what we are really saying is, why do Christians meet together?

The Church was designed to be like a body, and each of us are like the individual body parts. Body parts are not designed to work by themselves. They need to be put together and work with each other to make a body. The same is true of Christians. We were not meant to live the Christian life on our own. God has given each believer some of the gifts that we need, so none of us can live for God on our own, but together we can help one another in our walks with the Lord.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

The reason Christians meet together is so that we can all use our gifts to help one another. Many people think that all we do at church is sing songs and learn from the Bible, and of course these are major parts of what happens at church, but there is so much more. Believers meet together to pray for and encourage one another. They work together to help the community and tell nonbelievers about the Lord. They help the poor, widows, and others in need. People give their money to support the church, missionaries, and other great causes. Sunday School teachers watch the children and teach them the Word of God. It's not just up to the pastors and worship leaders to help Christians follow Jesus. Every believer has something to contribute to the Church!

Think about all the people who help our church to run: not only pastors, but worship leaders, Sunday School teachers, security, ushers, cleaners, and more. Sure, some churches might not have all these people, but every church needs people to do different jobs, and every Christian has an important role to play. That includes you. As a child in Sunday School, you might not think of yourself as having an important job, or any job, at church, but think of all the things you can do. If you see a kid sitting alone, you can be a friend and make them feel welcome. You can pray for your classmates. You can bless your teacher by listening to them and obeying. You too are an important part of the Body of Christ!

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Hebrews 10:24-25a.

Make a list of as many jobs in the church (Sunday School teachers, ushers, security, sound people, etc.) and ways that Christians help one another at church. Ask the kids what jobs they can do to help other believers.

Pray: Thank the Lord for giving us the Church as a place where we can meet together and help one another. Ask Him for help in performing your role in the Body of Christ.

Parent Question: Why do Christians meet together?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 1 Corinthians 12 by David Guzik

C. The diversity and unity of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

1. ([1Cr 12:12-14](#)) The fact of unity: believers all belong to a greater unit, the **body** of Jesus Christ.

For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body; whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many.

a. **All the members of that one body, being many, are one body... for by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body:** The “body-like” unity of Christians is not a goal to achieve; it is a fact to be recognized. Paul clearly says **we were all baptized into one body**.

i. Passages like this have led many to regard baptism as sort of the “initiation ceremony into the community of Christians.” While this may be *an aspect* of baptism, it is not the main point. The main idea behind Christian baptism is the identification of the believer – his “immersion” in Jesus Christ ([Romans 6:3-5](#)). The idea that baptism is primarily the initiation ceremony into the church has led to, and reinforced, unbiblical ideas such as the baptism of infants (upon the thinking, “who wants to exclude them from the church?”).

ii. But here, Paul does not have in mind *water* baptism as much as *Spirit* baptism: **For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body**. Paul here is writing of the common “immersion” all believers have in the Holy Spirit and in Jesus, a common “immersion” which brings them into **one body**.

b. **One body... many members:** Paul uses the brilliant illustration of the human body to relate the working of the community of Christians. Even as every cell in a human body is linked by a common root (a common DNA code), yet the parts of our body (**members**) look different, are treated differently, work differently, and accomplish different purposes. Even so, there is great diversity in the body of Jesus Christ, both in appearance and function, yet each member has a common root and a common goal.

c. **Whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free:** Because of the fact of the “body” dynamic, the dividing lines created by the Corinthian Christians were strictly artificial. Jew, Greek, slave, free, did not matter anymore, because they were all in **one body**.

2. ([1Cr 12:15-20](#)) Elaboration on the illustration of a body.

If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.

a. **If the foot should say:** If the **foot** felt or declared itself not part of the body because it was **not a hand**, the foot would be both foolish and mistaken. Diversity does not disqualify one from the body.

i. Here, Paul puts the question in the mouth of the one who feels *excluded* from the body. It is as if some of the Corinthian Christians said, “I don’t have this certain spiritual gift. I guess I’m not part of the body of Jesus Christ.” After all, *hands* and *eyes* seem more important and more “glamorous” than *feet* and *ears*. So Paul wants these Christians who felt excluded to know they are indeed members of the body, and their sense that they are not is just as foolish as the **foot** or the **ear** that feels excluded.

ii. Yet the same principle can be stated towards those who want to *exclude others* from the body. Paul could have just as well said, “The hand cannot say the foot is not of the body because it is not a hand.” Paul wants Christians who might exclude others because they don’t appreciate their place in the body to recognize the fact of unity.

b. **If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing?** Not only is this diversity in the body of Jesus Christ *acceptable*, it is *essential*. The body cannot work properly if all are hands or if all are eyes. The body must have different parts and gifts, or it would not work together effectively as a body.

c. **Just as He pleased:** Why is the foot a foot and the hand a hand? Because it pleased the Designer to make it so. So the hand can take no “pride” in being a hand, and the foot can take no “shame” in being a foot. Each serves the pleasure of the Designer.

i. In the design, we see the wisdom of the Designer: *everybody has something*; but *nobody has everything*.

3. ([1Cr 12:21-26](#)) Continued elaboration, showing that the less “glamorous” parts of the body are just as important.

And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

a. **And the eye cannot say to the hand:** Now Paul writes to those tempted to pride and a sense of superiority because of their gifts or place in the body. They cannot say to such parts, **“I have no need of you.”**

b. **Those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary:** Often, we consider a part of our body unnecessary or of low importance, until it is hurt – then we realize how important it is! The hand or the eye may *seem* to be more important, and may have more “glamour” in its position, but it is not more necessary or important than other parts of the body.

c. **Less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor:** The parts of our bodies normally covered by clothes are often considered **less honorable**, but we give them **greater honor** by clothing them so carefully.

i. Clarke on the **less honorable** parts: “Seem to mean the principle *viscera*, such as *heart, lungs, stomach, and intestinal canal*. These, when compared with the *arms and limbs*, are comparatively *weak*; and some of them, considered in *themselves, uncomely* and less honourable; yet these are more essential to life than any of the others.”

ii. Even so, **God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it:** If someone feels they are a “hidden” or “unglamorous” member of the body of Jesus Christ, God knows how to bestow honor upon them.

d. **That there should be no schism in the body:** Seen from God's perspective, with the illustration of the body, there is never any reason for **schism in the body**. The "pride" of the "honorable" member is checked, as is the "shame" of the "less honorable" member.

e. **That the members should have the same care for one another:** Paul's theological point about the nature of the body of Jesus Christ has now come to a very practical application. The Corinthian Christians should **care for one another** because they are all part of the same body.

i. The parts of the body work together. The eyes and ears do not only serve themselves, but the whole body. The hands do not only feed and defend themselves, but the whole body. The heart does not only supply blood to itself, but serves the whole body. Sometimes there is a part of our body that only lives to serve itself. It doesn't contribute anything to the rest of the body, and everything it gets it uses to feed and grow itself. We call this *cancer*.

ii. "I want every member of this church to be a worker. We do not want any drones. If there are any of you who want to eat and drink, and do nothing, there are plenty of places elsewhere, where you can do it; there are empty pews about in abundance; go and fill them, for we do not want you. Every Christian who is not a bee is a wasp. The most quarrelsome persons are the most useless, and they who are the most happy are peaceable, are generally those who are doing most for Christ." (Spurgeon)

f. Paul could have, and some today think he should have, just come out and said "**care for one another**" and ignore the spiritually true foundation for such caring. "Come on, Paul. Don't bother us with theology. Just tell us what to do." But Paul wants more than a *result* from the Corinthian Christians; he also wants them to have *understanding*. He also knows that ultimately, the best results are based on understanding!

g. **And if one member suffers:** The **care for one another** mentioned in the previous verse is now explained. It means to have a heart towards, and sympathy with, our fellow members, though they be different.

4. ([1Cr 12:27-31](#)) God distributes gifts and callings according to His pleasure.

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

a. **You are the body of Christ, and members individually:** Paul sums up his previous point. Even as a human body is a unified whole with many different parts, so also is the body of Jesus Christ. Now Paul will write about the different parts of the body.

i. "We could call one *eye*, because of his *acute observation* of men and things, and *penetration* into cases of conscience and Divine *mysteries*. Another *hand*, from his *laborious* exertions in the Church. Another *foot*, from his industrious *travels* to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ crucified: and so of others." (Clarke)

b. **Apostles** are "special ambassadors" of the church. Paul and others in his day had a unique apostolic authority, which will never be repeated because the foundation of the church has already been set ([Ephesians 2:20](#)). However, God still has His "special ambassadors" in the church today, though not with the same authority as the original apostles.

c. **Prophets** are those particularly called to speak forth for God with the gift of prophecy. There was a unique, foundational authority to this gift as well ([Ephesians 2:19-20](#)). However, God raises up those to speak to the church and the world with a special blessing and power.

i. However, if one will either claim or receive the *title* of “prophet” today, let them be held to the standard of a prophet: 100% accuracy, in every word ([Deuteronomy 18:20-22](#)).

d. **Workers of miracles:** Those used of God to do miracles. Yet, the Biblical pattern is for miracles to be done on the Holy Spirit’s initiative, not the initiative of the individual.

e. **Helps:** This has in mind those who help, or assist, others in doing the work of the Lord. The term was used in Jewish context in this way: “The *Levites* were termed by the Talmudists *helps of the priests*.” (Clarke)

i. Spurgeon on those with the gift of **helps**: “It strikes me that they were not persons who had any official standing, but that they were only moved by the natural impulse and the divine life within them to do anything and everything which would assist either teacher, pastor, or deacon in the work of the Lord. They are the sort of brethren who are useful anywhere, who can always stop a gap, and who are only too glad when they find that they can make themselves serviceable to the church of God in any capacity whatever.”

ii. In John Bunyan’s book *Pilgrim’s Progress*, “Help” came to Christian when he was mired in the “Slough of Despond.” That is often when the gift of helps is most useful. “Dear, very dear to us, must ever be the hand that helped us out of the depth of the mire where there was no standing; and while we ascribe all the glory to the God of grace, we cannot but love most affectionately the instrument he sent to be the means of our deliverance.” (Spurgeon)

iii. Spurgeon also describes the qualities of someone who is effective in the gift of **helps**:

1. A tender heart to really care.
2. A quick eye to see the need.
3. A quick foot to get to the needy.
4. A loving face to cheer them and bless them.
5. A firm foot so you will not fall yourself.
6. A strong hand to grip the needy with.
7. A bent back to reach the man.

iv. An old Puritan preacher once did a great sermon on this text: *And Bartholomew* ([Matthew 10:3](#)). His point was that Bartholomew is never mentioned by himself, but always with the phrase *and Bartholomew*. He is always spoken of doing something good with someone else. He was never the leader, but always a helper.

f. **Do all speak with tongues?** Paul’s plain meaning is that the gift of tongues is *not* for every believer, just as the gifting of **apostles, prophets, teachers**, working of **miracles** or **healings** and so forth are not for every believer. Great damage has been done in the church by promoting tongues as necessary to really live as a Christian, or as *the* evidence of the Holy Spirit’s presence. This has caused many to seek the gift of tongues, or to “fake” the gift of tongues, often only to assure one’s self or others that they are indeed filled with the Holy Spirit.

i. Since tongues is a communicative gift, used in speaking to God, the gift of tongues should be desired when the individual feels a lack in their ability to communicate with God. When one feels hindered in their ability to talk to God using their given language, they can and should ask God for the empowering to communicate with God in a language which He understands, but which surpasses their understanding. If someone feels satisfied with their ability to communicate with God, there is really no need for the gift of tongues, and it should not be desired until one does want a communication with God which goes beyond understanding.

g. **Earnestly desire the best gifts:** Though the Holy Spirit gives the gifts, it is good and proper for us to desire them, and to ask for them, all in submission to the plan of God.