



I AM A CHURCH MEMBER/BTU CHURCH-IN-TRAINING

MOUNT CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

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2024 Theme: “Let’s “BE” The Church” (2 Corinthians 6:16; Matthew 5:14–16)

I AM A CHURCH MEMBER

Discovering the Attitude that Makes the Difference

Chapter 3 - I Will Not Let My Church Be about My Preferences and Desires

Imagine for a moment that you are sitting in the stands of a high school football game. Here is what you see:

The team breaks out of the huddle but instead of lining up against the opposing squad, they break into groups of two or three, arguing with each other. Soon they start shoving, and two of them actually get into a fight. One of the players storms off the field and you can hear him say, "That bunch of idiots can't agree on anything." He continues, "Those two over there are arguing over the color of the uniforms. A couple of others are fussing over the right way to kneel in the huddle. Those two guys are arguing because one believes in what he calls 'personal' football, and the other believes in 'social' football. They can't agree whether the individual or the team is more important. Some of the players say the less talented players should go play on their own field, and some of the guys don't like the music played by the band. A few are fighting over whether the other football team has more players. And I'm quitting because I can pass a lot better than that other guy, and they won't let me be the quarterback."

This situation seems absurd and yet there are times when this is exactly what happens in the local church. People, who are on the same “team,” spend more time focused on their preferences and desires than playing the game.

The Servant Motif

The word “servant” occurs fifty-seven times in the New Testament. Sometimes it refers to a person who has the official role in a household. But many times it refers to the role we are to assume as believers in Jesus Christ. The word “serve” occurs fifty-eight times in the New Testament.

Jesus said that we must be last of all and servant of all – Mark 9:35

Paul, after his conversion, declared, “I was made a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace that was given to me by the working of His power.” (Ephesians 3:7)

In a survey, there was found ten dominant behavior patterns of members in many churches.

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| 1. Worship Wars | 6. Inordinate demands for pastoral care |
| 2. Prolonged minutia meetings | 7. Attitudes of entitlement |
| 3. Facility Focus | 8. Greater concern about change than the gospel |
| 4. Program Driven | 9. Anger and hostility |
| 5. Inwardly Focused Budget | 10. Evangelist Apathy |

Serving others is probably not something we think about often but it was at the very heart of Jesus’ ministry. In fact, He said that He did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). One of the clearest pictures of Jesus’ servant heart can be found in John 13:1-17.

The Mind of Christ

One of the best descriptions of the attitude we should embody was written by Paul in Philippians 2:5, “Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus.

Jesus did not consider equality with God as something to be used for His own advantage. He emptied Himself by assuming the form of a slave. He humbled Himself. He became obedient to death – even to the death of the cross.

- As a church member, you give up your _____ when you join. You are supposed to be a _____ instead of seeking to be _____.
- _____ is important in the Bible. The word “*servant*” occurs 57 times and the word “*serve*” appears 58 times in the New Testament. Jesus said, ““If anyone wants to be first, he must be _____ of all and _____ of all”” (Mark 9:35, HCSB).
- You will never find _____ in church membership when you are constantly seeking things your way.
- _____ is the highest biblical example of serving in humility we have in scripture.

Homework For Next Week

CHRISTIAN PARADOXES

A paradox is a statement that doesn't seem to make sense, but when understood, makes a lot of sense.

Fill in the blank of an "appropriate" paradox.

1. WE **F**_____ BY LOSING (Matthew 10:39)
"He that finds his life shall lose it, and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it"

2. WE **R**_____ BY GIVING (Luke 6:38)
"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

3. WE ARE **E**_____ BY BEING HUMBLE (Matthew 23:12)
"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

4. WE BECOME **G**_____ BY BECOMING SMALL (Matthew 18:4)
"Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven"

5. OUR **W**_____ IS OUR STRENGTH (2 Corinthians 12:10)
" for when I am weak, then I am strong."

6. WE **L**_____ BY DYING (Galatians 2:20)
"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me..."