

Sunday, October 16, 2022

Hands, Service, Helping, & Mercy

What is church according to the Bible? It is a *gathering* of people who believe in Jesus, to listen and learn from the scriptures about what it means to find & follow Jesus. This is done by singing truths about God, opening the Bible and teaching, encouraging, exhorting, and serving one another in love so *that* we may be sent into our world to bless others.

Let us *hold fast* the **confession of our hope** without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how **to stir up one another** to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Hebrews 10:23-25

To build up! **Church is about you being about others.** To increase the potential of someone to live into their God given purpose. It is centered on Jesus and others focused because the Bible is. We gather on the first day of the week because Jesus rose again on Easter Sunday. We put our money where our heart is and support the local church, thus we take an offering as an act of worship. We greet one another because the Bible says we are a family. We love each other because God loves us. There is a built in reliance on one another because the Bible says that together, we are like a body, one body with many parts.

God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" 1 Corinthians 12:18-21

In the preface of the book, "What is a Healthy Church?" By Mark Dever, Jonathan Leeman writes...

Nose and Hand were sitting in the church talking. The morning service, led by ear and mouth, had just ended, and Hand was telling Nose that he and his family had decided to look for a different church.

"Really?" Nose responded to Hand's news, "Why?"

"Oh, I don't know," Hand said, looking down. He was usually slower to speak than other members of the church body. "I guess because the church doesn't have what Mrs. Hand and I are looking for."

"Well, what are you looking for in a church?" Nose asked. The tone in which he spoke the words was sympathetic. But even as he was speaking them he knew that he would dismiss Hand's answer. If the Hands couldn't see that Nose and the rest of the leadership were pointing in the right direction, then he could do without them.

Hand had to think before answering. He and Mrs. Hand liked pastor mouth and his family. And Minister of Music Ear meant well. "Well, I guess we're looking for a place where people are more like us," Hand finally stammered. "We tried spending time with the legs but we didn't connect with them. Next we joined the small group for the toes, but that didn't interest us."

"Then we attended the Sunday school for all the facial features. Do you remember? We came for several Sundays a couple of months ago?"

"It was great to have you."

"Thank you. But everyone just wanted to talk and listen and smell and taste. It felt like, well, it felt like you never wanted to get to work and get your hands dirty. Anyway, Mrs. Hand and I were thinking about going to that new church over on East Side. We hear they do a lot of clapping and hand raising, which is closer to what we need right now."

"Hmmm," Nose replied, "I see what you mean. We'd hate to see you go. But I guess you have to do what's good for you."

At that moment, Mrs. Hand, who had been caught up in another conversation, came to join her husband and Nose. Hand briefly explained

what he and Nose had been talking about, after which Nose repeated his sadness at the prospect of losing the Hands.

Mrs. Hand nodded in agreement. She wanted to be polite, but, truth be told, she wasn't sad to be leaving. Her husband had made just enough critical remarks over the years that her heart had begun to reflect his. No, he had never burst into an open tirade against the body. In fact, he usually apologized for "being so negative" as he called it. But the little complaints that he let out here and there had had an effect. The small groups were a little cliquish. The music was a little out of date. The teaching wasn't entirely to their liking. In the end, it was hard for them to put their fingers on it, but they finally decided that the church wasn't for them.

In addition to all that, Mrs. Hand knew that their daughter Pinkie was not comfortable with the youth group. Everyone was so different to her, she felt out of joint.

Mrs. Hand then said something about how much she appreciated Nose and the leadership. But the conversation had already run too long for Nose. He thanked Mrs. Hand for her encouragement, repeated that he was sorry to see them go, then turned and walked away. Who needed the Hands anyway? Apparently, they didn't need him.¹

Church is about you being about others. When it's solely about you... then you end up getting things wrong, like the silly, but sad story I just read.

Read Romans 12:3, imperative. Don't think too highly of yourself, but think with sober judgement. Why?

Read 12:4-5, Indicative-One body and members of one another! **Church is about you being about others.** And those gifted with **HANDS** get it! The gifts of [Serving, Helping, and Mercy](#).

¹ Taken from the preface, written by Jonathan Leeman, in Mark Dever, "**What is a healthy church?**"

Friday was a long day. I was ready to pack it up when Paul Wilson, one of our Pastors, showed up ready to work. He was here to put some trim on our new cabinet in our remodeled kids area. Because he has a heart to serve, even though I was ready to throw in the towel for the day, it encouraged me to keep on keepin' on. And together we finished it. This is also the case with Naz who, without him, we would have not got to that point! Or his wife, Jen, who puts together our worship each and every week! Or Rick and Juanita, who were here with others to serve our city with mercy to provide food for those in need! Or Robert, who selflessly went to Diane Hearn's house and planted some trees for her. Or those who come here to pray for you throughout the week! Or John who faithfully collects your recycle to help fund areas of our church. Or Dianne who serves at showers of Blessing and is known county wide for her hugs.

Church is about you being about others.

As **each has received a gift**, use it to **serve one another**, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
1 Peter 4:10-11

What I am learning about the gifts is there is a calling for all of us to be involved in most of the gifts. Like last week, all of us won't have the gift of prophecy, but we are all called to listen to God for direction. Not all will have the gift of teaching, but we are all called to teach each other about how to follow Jesus. And not all of us will have the gift of serving, helping, and mercy, yet all Christians are called to serve, help, and be merciful.

Let's define these gifts

Serving (or ministry KJV). 1 Peter says 1. It's a gift. And how do we do it? By God's strength! And what's its end? God's glory!

Serving: to render assistance or help by performing certain duties, often of a humble or menial nature.² It is people-oriented

The Greek word is the idea of a deacon. A servant, with a love for serving people.

Helping

And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, **helping**, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. 1 Corinthians 12:28

Helping: the ability or capacity to help or assist.³ It is task-oriented.

MERCY

Read Romans 12:6-8. Mercy is done cheerfully!

Mercy: to show kindness or concern for someone in serious need.⁴ It is people and task-oriented towards the hurting.

Which one are you? Not sure? One book I read said the best way to know your gift is to jump in and start serving! As you do, your inclination towards certain things, along with others speaking into your life, will show you how God gifted you! **Church is about you being about others. WHY? Because that's what it means to follow Jesus!**

² [*Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament*](#)

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

“Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:28

*Gospel.

Church is about you being about others. We give our lives to, what Jesus gave his life for... The church, which is a *gathering* of people who believe in Jesus, to listen and learn from the scriptures about what it means to find & follow Jesus. This is done by singing truths about God, opening the Bible and teaching, encouraging, exhorting, and **servicing one another** in love so *that* we may be sent into our world to bless others.

HANDS, we need you.

Communion