

A CHURCH-CENTERED PEOPLE

—WEEK 10—

What comes to your mind when you think about the word “church”? Do you think about a building? Do you think about a service? Do you think about an institution? It can be easy to be a part of a church (maybe even your whole life) but be confused about what exactly the church of Jesus is.

Some people see the church as an activity. They see the church as another event on the calendar. I go to workout on Monday nights. I have lunch scheduled on Thursday with my coworker. And then I go to church on Sunday. Church is just another activity.

Some people see the church as optional. They see the church as a great choice out of a whole slew of choices. Should I go to church this Sunday or go play golf? Should we go to church or should we leave early to visit my wife’s family? Should we go to church or have a day at home? Church is just one of many options.

Some people see the church as limited to Sunday mornings. Church is what takes place at 10:30 AM on Sundays. Hopefully, it finishes before noon so we can beat other churches to restaurants. Church is just what we do on Sundays

But the Scriptures are clear: Church is not an activity. Church is not optional. Church is not just what takes place on Sundays. Church is not what we do. It’s who we are. We are the church. When we were redeemed by the blood of Jesus we are not just given a new identity as individual Christians. We were united to a people, the church.

Our Church Covenant reads: “We will, when we move from this place, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God’s Word.”

This might be the most important study of the whole covenant study. Because how you see the church is how you will treat the church. If you see the church as an optional activity that takes place on Sundays, you’re not going to be committed to our church and you probably won’t prioritize going to one when you move to another city.

But if you see the church as the Bride of Christ that was purchased by Jesus’ precious blood, then Sundays will start looking a lot more precious to you. If you see the church as the

people of God that you belong to, then you won't just clear your Sundays. You will be clearing off your weekdays to spend time with God's people too.

If you see the church not as what you do but who you are, then you will see it as first priority to find a church when you move from this city. You will see it as vital for your Christian life. If I don't have God's people around me, then I am missing a central part of what makes me who I am. And that's a lot bigger than a Sunday morning.

Meditate on God's Word

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. - Acts 2:42-47

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”
-1 Corinthians 12:12-13

Questions for Application

1. What comes to your mind when you think about the word “church”? Why does it matter how you understand the church?
2. How does the gospel shape how we see the body of Christ? How can we live seeing ourselves as a part of the body rather than just as an individual Christian?
3. Why is it vital that you quickly join a church if you ever move from Bowling Green?

Close by praying that God would help us cherish his church and renew our commitment to one another within the body of Christ.