

**Question:** *What is one part in the Body of Christ that you think God has called you to be?*

3) So far we've discovered that we are encouraged and equipped in the Church. Now we will take a few minutes to see how **we are established in the Church**. Read **Ephesians 4:13-16**.

As you plug into the Body of Christ there is a maturity that comes to you through your walk with God. Paul says that part of the evidence of you maturing in Christ is you are not tossed to and fro and are not easily thrown off course by circumstances or false teachings. You grow deep in your walk with God and in the teaching of Scripture by being connected into the Body of Christ.

Read verse 15 again. Paul is speaking of each one of us growing up together into the maturity of Christ. This growth requires that all believers do their part in the Lord's ministry. None of us can become mature in Christ apart from the involvement of others.

**Question:** *In verse 15 Paul refers to "speaking the truth in love." Why is it often hard for us to hear the truth from others who are genuinely trying to help us grow?*

Read verse 16 again. This verse summarizes all of what we have been talking about today. Every single person in the Body of Christ is important and has a mission. We all must do our share in order for us to be healthy as a church. As we receive encouragement, as we are equipped, and as we are established – we can turn around and help others by offering those very things. This is how we can be a part of changing our world.

**Question:** *How has your involvement and growth in the church affected those who you come in contact with on a regular basis?*

**Personal Application** Take some time this

week to evaluate the importance of the Body of Christ in your life. Make a fresh commitment to embrace the vital relationships God has given to you in the Church in order for you to continue to make an impact on our community with the love of God.

**Prayer** Pray for each member to be vitally connected with other members of the Body of Christ. Pray that each would be encouraged, equipped, and established in Christ and in the church.



## Who am I – in the Church?

### Announcements

A Life Made Beautiful – 5/7-8  
Vision Night – 4/25  
Leadership.ChurchoftheKing.com – visit today!  
Service Ministry Crawfish Boil – 4/24  
REACH India Trip – April 11-20  
Men's Freedom Weekend – April 16-17  
Women's Freedom Weekend – April 23-24

**Warm-Up** *Why do you think the New Orleans Saints' success was so unifying for our region?*

As a region, we had a common purpose and unifying passion that crossed all types of barriers that often cause dissension. During the Saint's success, we, as a region, enjoyed greater successes in business, crime reduction and morale because we were united.

*Why do you think doing something as part of a team is usually so much better than doing something alone?*

There are several reasons why working together as a team helps you become more successful than if you were to attempt something alone. The importance of being part of a unified team is also applicable to our ability to grow closer in our relationship with God.

**Word** Today we are going to look at Ephesians 4:4-16, which will help us realize the importance of living a unified life with others who are part of *"the Body of Christ."*

**Question:** *What do you think the phrase “the Body of Christ” means?*

Let’s read **Romans 12:4-5** together to get a clear picture of what the Bible is talking about when it refers to *the Body of Christ*.

The Bible tells us that if we are Christians then we are in the Body of Christ, which is a unified effort of people who function as one, just like a body has many parts that function together in unity.

Let’s continue our discussion by reading **Ephesians 4:4-6**. To be called by God out of the world and into the Body of Christ is the highest possible calling. The Greek word for church, *ecclesia* means *to be called out*.

The Church is made up of those who are called out from the world to become members of the Body of Christ and respond to the calling. The Apostle Paul is not saying that we were called out of the world because we were worthy; rather, it is solely because of God’s love and His saving grace. God’s love and saving grace should be what motivates us as we attempt to live lives worthy and pleasing unto God. It is vital that we remember it is God’s love and grace that allow us to become part of the “Body of Christ.”

**Question:** *How does this explanation of the Body of the Christ bring hope instead of guilt and shame?*

A true understanding of the Body of Christ helps us to understand that it is not by our works, but by God’s grace and love that allows us to have eternal life with Christ.

Let’s take a look at **Ephesians 4:2-3** to help us understand how being part of the Church (Body of Christ) is lived out in relationships with others.

We are called not just to walk with God, but to walk with others as we walk with God. In the New Testament, Christianity is personal, but it is not private. We are called into a community of Believers – the Bible calls it the Body of Christ, or the Church.

**Question:** *Why do you think God has emphasizes the importance of interpersonal relationships within the Church?*

Today we will look at 3 things that we get by being a part of the Body of Christ.

**1) When we are a part of the Body of Christ we are encouraged in the Church.** One of the greatest things that can happen to us in the Body of Christ is to be encouraged. Encouragement is like oxygen to our souls. It’s like getting a shot of vitamin B12.

Read **Hebrews 3:13**. This is why being connected in a small group is so important. It is in these times together and through these relational connections that we receive the encouragement that we all need.

In **Ephesians 4:3-4a**. Paul also writes, “...endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit...” The reason there is such a unity, is that the Holy Spirit touches all of our hearts. Unlike when we rally around a common purpose – like a sports team, the chess club, the sewing club or the garden club, the unity of the Spirit is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the people in the Body of Christ. That’s why you can go all over the world and when you meet a true believer in Jesus there is a tremendous encouragement and connection.

**Discussion:** *Share a time when you received vital encouragement from another believer.*

**2) Not only are we encouraged in the church, but we are also equipped in the Church.** Read **Ephesians 4:7-12**. Just like a human body, there is unity within the Body of Christ. But there is also diversity amongst the different members of the Body of Christ just like there is diversity amongst our different body parts. We are all united in Christ and because of Christ, but there are differences among us due to the different gifts we have been given. In our physical bodies, our hands function differently than our eyes, which function differently than our toes. In a similar way, the Body of Christ has parts that function according to the gifts each has been given.

Read **1 Corinthians 12:14-15**. We are all equipped in the area where God has gifted us so that we can all play a part together – as a Body. You are equipped for a reason. There is unity, but also diversity.