



Misquoted **You Can Follow Jesus Without the Church**

Think you can follow Jesus without the Church? Think again! Jesus never said *you can follow him without the Church*. This is good news, though! His Church isn't a place that requires you to fit in; it's a place where you're invited to BELONG.

Scripture:

The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit. Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

1 Corinthians 12:12-27 NLT

Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing. So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands. Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ’s love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They’re really doing themselves a favor—since they’re already “one” in marriage. No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and pampers it. That’s how Christ treats us, the church, since we are part of his body. And this is why a man leaves his father and mother and cherishes his wife. No longer two, they become “one flesh.” This is a huge mystery, and I don’t pretend to understand it all. What is clearest to me is the way Christ treats the church.

Ephesians 5:22-33 MSG

Ice Breaker and Intro Question:

1. What’s one thing you are grateful for in this moment?
2. What resonated with you from Sunday’s service? (Sermon, scripture, song, etc.)

Discussion Questions

3. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 quietly by yourself. Take a few minutes to underline or highlight what sticks out to you. Share with one another and give everyone an opportunity to share.
4. What does this passage teach us about belonging?
5. Michael shared that when we try to fit in, we edit ourselves and try to be like everyone else. When we belong, we are accepted just as we are. The church is a place of belonging! How does understanding the difference between belonging and fitting in change things? How should it change how we engage with people as part of the church community?
6. How does the illustration of the church as a body from 1 Corinthians 12 help you understand this? How does it challenge you?
7. “There is something rich that happens when we show up to contribute rather than just consume.” How have you experienced this? Have you experience this as part of the church?
8. Read Ephesians 5:22-33 together aloud as a group. What can we learn from this? How does this encourage you?

Additional Resources:

- Invite someone to join you for Christmas At the Movies! Learn more at www.wschurch.org/movies.

Notes: