

"GROWING IN THE BODY"

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1. JESUS LOVES HIS CHURCH AND HE WANTS HIS FOLLOWERS TO BELONG TO IT.

Ephesians 5:25-27 *And you husbands must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by baptism and God's word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. (NLT)*

Ephesians 5:28-30 *In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man is actually loving himself when he loves his wife. No one hates his own body but lovingly cares for it, just as Christ cares for his body, which is the church. And we are his body. (NLT)*

1 Corinthians 12:27 *Now all of you together are Christ's body, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it.*

Acts 2:41 *Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church – about three thousand in all. (NLT)*

2. JESUS WANTS YOU TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS AND TO GROW IN HIS CHURCH.

Acts 2:42-47 *They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, sharing in the Lord's Supper and in prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had. They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need. The worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity – all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved. (NLT)*

Ephesians 4:3-6 *Always keep yourselves united in the Holy Spirit, and bind yourselves together with peace. We are all one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future. There is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and there is only one God and Father, who is over us all and in us all and living through us all. (NLT)*

1 Corinthians 1:10b *I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose. (NLT)*

Romans 15:5-6 *May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other – each with the attitude of Christ Jesus toward the other. Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (NLT)*

Hebrews 10:24-25 *Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near. (NLT)*

Proverbs 27:17 *As iron sharpens iron, a friend sharpens a friend. (NLT)*

3. JESUS WANTS YOU TO HELP BUILD UP HIS CHURCH.

Romans 15:2 *We should please others. If we do what helps them, we will build them up in the Lord. (NLT)*

1 Corinthians 14:26b . . . *But everything that is done must be useful to all and build them up in the Lord. (NLT)*

Romans 15:7 *So accept each other just as Christ has accepted you; then God will be glorified. (NLT)*

Ephesians 4:11-13 *He is the one who gave these gifts to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ, until we come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature and full grown in the Lord, measuring up to the full stature of Christ. (NLT)*

4. JESUS WANTS YOU TO SERVE GOD AND OTHERS IN HIS CHURCH.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 *Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving. There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work through all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church.*