

“In the last twenty years something terrible has happened to Americans. They no longer relate to other people or care about them—at least not very much. Instead the majority focus on themselves and deal with others only for what they can get out of them.” ~James M. Boice

“Instead of asking what they can give or how they can serve, too many churchgoers are only interested in what they can get. The church deserves far more than the halfhearted commitment or apathetic neglect it so often receives.” ~John MacArthur

“He did not come merely to call individuals to salvation. He came to build a church. Christians are created to be that church and community.” ~James Montgomery Boice

“Every Christian is called to be passionately committed to a specific local church. Why? Because the local church is the key to spiritual health and growth for a Christian.” ~Josh Harris

“The body of Christ is made up of members who are dependent on one another in the exercise of the life they have from Christ.” ~Edmund Clowney

Q: How do the following metaphors reinforce the church’s corporate nature & interdependence?

- The church as a body. (1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 4:4-6, 11-16)
- The church as a temple. (1 Cor 3:9; 16-17; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5)
- The church as family/household. (Gal 6:10; Eph 2:19; 1 Tim 3:14-15; 1 Jn 3:16-18; 4:20)
- The church as flock. (Acts 20:28-30; Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 5:1-3)

“Part of the local church’s job is to distinguish those who believe from those who don’t—to show what it means to truly follow Christ.” ~Joshua Harris

Dr. Whitney notes he wrote *Spiritual Disciplines within the Church* ...

1. To declare the glory of the church and to invite people to enjoy the church.
2. To contend against the consumeristic view of the church prevalent today.
3. To contend against the privatization of spirituality.
4. To encourage those who love the church.
5. To help growing Christians learn about the church.

Q: Which is the biggest concern for Christianity in America? At Providence Church?

“The longer I’m a Christian, the more aware I become that I cannot live the Christian life on my own. My individual and direct relationship with God through Jesus is the greatest privilege and He is truly all I need—and yet God in His wisdom has created all of us to need others, too. Is this a contradiction? Not at all—for God has ordained that much of His grace flows to us *through others*.” ~Joshua Harris

Q: What things can a church do to help its people understand the vital importance of being a part of a local church?

Suggested Reading: Joshua Harris, *Stop Dating the Church*; Edmund Clowney, *The Church*; Thabiti Anyabwile, *What Is a Healthy Church Member?*