



Links Players

WHY AM I HERE? 8: LIVING IN COMMUNITY

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25, ESV)

WHEN I WAS FIRST HIRED TO MANAGE A TENNIS CLUB (brave people!) I had already been the minister of a small church. With no club industry experience, I assumed I must have been the only candidate when they offered me the job. Several months later I asked one of the owners about that, and he said, “No, we just figured if you could handle a church, you could handle a club.”

Until then I hadn’t thought of clubs and churches as being similar. In some ways, though, they are. For instance, we love golf (though it cares not a whit for us), and we find ourselves joining a golf club. We love God (and he us), and we find ourselves in church. We become part of a community of like-minded people.

Eventually I learned one thing that applied to clubs and to local churches: A sense of community is as important for the health of the entity as it is for the health of the members. But the communities we create are not the same as the community God has created, because membership is not the same.

Here is the difference: In golf we are members of a club; in Christ we are members of one another (Romans 12:5). In a club, you are one of many and easily replaced. In Christ you are one of a kind—a living organ, unique and vital to the body.

There’s an old story about a fellow in a rural area who got upset with his church and stopped attending. The preacher went to see him one winter evening, and as they sat by the fire the fellow said he could worship God just fine in his woods. He could talk to God, admire creation, and read his Bible.

The preacher didn’t answer but instead used tongs to pull a log off the fire and put it on the hearth. They both watched as the log lost its flame. The fellow looked at the log, then at the fire, then at the preacher, and said, “I’ll see you Sunday in church.”

When we are living in community as God designed it, both we and the body benefit. When we are not living in community, both we and the body suffer. How we live in community can look different from time to time. That we live in community, though, should never change. Together we keep the fire alive.

Opening questions If you belong to a club, what do you like about it? What don’t you like? Have you thought of church like a club? Can you be a “loner” at a club? How about in church?

READING Hebrews 10:22-25; 1 Corinthians 12:14-27; Romans 12:3-5

Spurred on (Hebrews 10)

Can you find faith, hope and love here? How do they fit together? What are the three actions that go with these three gifts? What are the “good works” mentioned in verse 25?

Body parts (1 Corinthians 12)

Paul gives an extended illustration of his point in these verses. Why do you think he emphasized it so much? What body parts in the church have greater and lesser honor? How can different parts be a source of division?

Members (Romans 12)

Why does Paul urge humility and sober judgment of ourselves at the beginning of this section? What does it mean to be members of one another? Is the one body in Christ the local church or something bigger?

Written by Lewis Greer ©2020 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available here: <https://youtu.be/88AAhcpEWQk>