

7 Things Your Church Needs From You

by Tim Challies¹

Your church needs you to...

...Be Humble

There is no character quality more important than humility. While humility does not come naturally to any of us, it can be learned, because here's the thing: Humility isn't a feeling or an attitude—it's action. If you want to learn humility, you need to act humble. Here are 3 quick tips on becoming humble:

- Find mature Christians who exemplify humility and spend time around them. Learn from them and learn to be like them.
- Volunteer for the lowliest of tasks. Don't ask to be in the public eye when you serve, but be content to stay in the back. Find joy in doing the lowliest jobs and do them when and where only Jesus will see.
- Get to know Jesus. It was Jesus who said, "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." (Matthew 23:12). And it was Jesus who humbled himself the deepest and was exalted the highest.

...Prioritize Church

Every church has people who make the public gatherings of the church a low priority. These are the people who only come to church when it is convenient and who use any excuse to miss a day or miss a service. Every church desperately needs people who will make the public gatherings a top priority. Today is the day to begin elevating the importance of church in your life.

Let me give you two reasons:

- First, you need your church. God made you part of your church for your good. You cannot do life on your own. You aren't strong enough, you aren't wise enough, you aren't mature enough, you aren't godly enough. Without the beautifully ordinary means of grace you encounter in the church, you won't make it. Without the support of your brothers and sisters, you won't make it.
- Second, your church needs you. God made you part of your church for the good of others. 1 Peter 4:10 says, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." God has gifted you to be part of your church, and those gifts are to be used for the good of other people. So prioritize church as an expression of generosity toward others.

...Consider Giving God a Day

Why don't you considering setting aside an entire day of the week and dedicating it to the Lord in a special way? We believe that the Old Testament law has been fulfilled in Christ, though there is some disagreement among Christians about the implications. But even if you believe that the Sabbath command is no longer binding on us, there is still value in learning from it.

It completely changes Sunday when you give the entire day to the Lord and his people. Now you're not having to decide whether to take that class or join that club that meets Sunday afternoon. You're not skipping church during exam time because you've got studying to do. You're not leaving early to get home before the football game starts. Instead, you're leaving behind all the cares of life, and even many of the joys of life, and dedicating an entire day to worship, to fellowship, and to serving others.

¹ Accessed 10/16/2014 (<http://www.challies.com/christian-living/7-things-your-church-needs-from-you>).

...Live Like a Christian All Week Long

It is easy enough to be a Christian at church, but then you get home. But then you go to work. But then you go to school. And then you're surrounded by people acting ungodly, and even worse, you're left along with your own thoughts and your own desires. Yet your church needs you to live like a Christian all week long.

Each of us faces different challenges and different temptations. But one key to living like a Christian all week long is spending time in Word and prayer every day. Make this a priority no matter how busy you are and no matter how crazy life seems. Make this something you do no matter how badly you've sinned and how little you feel like doing it. Pray day-by-day not only for yourself, but for your church. Take that membership directly and pray through it from A to Z, and then start over. Make your devotional life something you do not just for the good of yourself, but for the good of others.

...Get to Know People Not Like You

Churches are involuntary communities—we don't get to pick who comes to them, God does. So what we have to do is learn to live with these people and learn to love these people, even when they are very different from us. "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." If your church is divided so that all the young adults hang out together and all the older folk hang out together, or if all the people with accents hang out together and all the people without accents hang out together, that makes a statement about the gospel—that the gospel is not big enough and powerful enough to really make people love one another even though they are different.

So commit to get to know people not like you. There is no reason you shouldn't be able to say that some of your best and closest relationships are with people who are very different from you.

...Learn Generosity

Few things reveal the heart better than money. Money has an amazing way of displaying what you really believe and what you really value. No matter who and what stage of life you are at, there is no better time than now to learn to be generous with your money. Here's what the Bible says: "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." You must give, and you must learn to do it cheerfully.

Here are just 2 quick tips:

- Remember that it's not your money. The money belongs to God—he just gives it to you to manage it. And he means for you to manage it well and to his glory.
- Give to the Lord first. I know people who say they can't give to the church, and yet they've got a new cell phone and are carrying a cup of Starbucks into church every week. That doesn't compute. Learn to give the first and best of your money to the Lord. The harder that seems, the more you need to do it.

...Be a Great Church Member

Make yourself invaluable to your church, and do this by serving other people. I love reading about Dorcas, the woman Peter raised from the dead who was described as being "full of good works and acts of charity" (see Acts 9). "When Peter arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them." Dorcas was a great church member. She loved people so much, and did so much good to them, that the whole community mourned when she died.

Would that be you? Would the people of your church weep as they remember you for all the good you did to others?

Find the place you can serve your church, and serve there without fail, without excuse, without requiring praise and accolades. Do it for the good of others and the glory of God.