

Take Another Look at Christmas Pt 3: Where Do I Belong

I. Returning to the Orthodox View of Christmas

A. Christmas is a time to remember that you and I were created to be loved by God, to be in an eternal relationship with Him and to be connected with Him in running.

Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in Your the planet book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139:16 (NIV)

B. Jesus came to earth, not only to show us Who God is and how to live a godly life, but He came to pay the price for our sins, remove the penalty of sin forever and restore our relationships and our futures with God and other people.

Even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This is what He wanted to do, and it gave Him great pleasure. He is so rich in kindness and grace that He purchased our freedom with the blood of His Son and forgave our sins. Ephesians 1:4-5, 7 (NLT)

C. Only when we enter into this right relationship with God are we able to answer the 3 biggest questions all mankind is asking about life:

- Who am I?
- Where do I belong?
- What am I here for?

II. Where Do I Belong?

Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Romans 12:3 (NIV)

A. Belonging is a God-given human need.

Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. Romans 12:4-5 (NLT)

1. GAR: for

2. Simile: As the human body needs all its various parts doing different things to function properly, the body of Christ has very specific and diverse abilities, all of which are needed for it to function properly.

B. You have a distinct role to fulfill in this supernatural community of God called the Church.

We will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of His body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. Ephesians 4:15-16 (NLT)

1. The work we are to do: The same thing Jesus did when He was here:

But the one and only Son is Himself God and is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us. John 1:18 (NLT)

"For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost." Luke 19:10 (NLT)

2. You are needed for the body to be complete, to function as it was intended by our Creator.

C. You have needs God wants to support and dysfunctions and hurts that God wants to heal as you interact with other members of His supernatural community, the Church.

1. When we have a distorted view of ourselves, we start comparing ourselves to others' weaknesses.
2. Weaknesses remind us we need other people.
3. Focus on your strengths and use them the way God intended, letting others use their strengths to compensate for your weaknesses.

We will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of His body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. Ephesians 4:15-16 (NLT)

E. God wants you to know that you belong to His family; you are needed by His family, He has created you to fit perfectly in His family.

- F. We are to be salt and light.

III. Identifying My Strengths and Weaknesses

A. Strengths: abilities and talents in which I'm proficient:

- Teaching
- Encouraging
- Equipping
- Craftsmanship
- Helping
- Hospitality
- Organizing
- Leading

- Sharing
- Praying
- Creative communication
- Comforting
- Giving
- _____
- _____

B. Weaknesses: areas I'm deficient

- Administration
- Craftsmanship
- Record keeping

C. Instead of asking God to help you get better at things you just don't have the talent for, ask Him to:

1. Find ways to use your abilities for the benefit of others.
2. Bring others into your life who can do well what you can't.

"God, thank You for my strengths. Thank You for creating me exactly the way you have...with the gifts and talents that are uniquely me. Thank You for the opportunities you have given me to use my abilities for Your purposes and show me greater ways to use them here at Cornerstone/Arden Arcade.

"And Lord, I thank You for my weaknesses, for creating me with the needs that I have that You intend to meet through others in Your body. Open my eyes to this relational reality and give me the courage to seek out others You have put in my path. Give me the confidence to accept other's offers of help—to not respond pridefully or angrily but gratefully when others offer their abilities to serve me. Amen."

D. Your final assignment: Thank you card