



WHY THE CHURCH?

The church is full of sinners. All of us fall short of God's standards on a regular basis. We sin, we seek forgiveness (or we don't, and thereby commit more sin!), and we begin the cycle all over again. Why, then, did God create such an imperfect institution to deliver His perfect message? That's the question Pastor Chuck considers in this last message of the Start Here series. Listen to the message then discuss why the church is important—to Jesus and your faith.

CONNECT TO ONE ANOTHER

How would you describe the happiest couple you know? What about their relationship stands out to you?

What do you think is the best part of a wedding?

What is your favorite part of a worship service? Why?

CONNECT WITH GOD

Read Ephesians 5:21-33 in the Message

21 Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

22-24 Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing. So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands.

25-28 Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ's love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They're really doing themselves a favor—since they're already "one" in marriage.

29-33 No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and cares for it. That's how Christ treats us, the church, since we are part of his body. And this is why a man leaves father and mother and cherishes his wife. No longer two, they become "one flesh." This is a huge mystery, and I don't pretend to understand it all. What is clearest to me is the way Christ treats the church. And this provides a good picture of how each husband is to treat his wife, loving himself in loving her, and how each wife is to honor her husband.

Talk about your first reaction to reading this passage. What about this relationship stands out to you?

Pastor said marriage or any relationship takes submission or giving up your right to be first. Why is it so hard to love like this? What are we afraid of losing by loving like this?

Were you confirmed? Do you have a confirmation life verse? What is it and how has it

impacted your life?

CONNECT WITH LIFE- MOVING FORWARD

Have you seen a relationship that imitates the relationship mentioned in Ephesians 5:21-31? Have you experienced these characteristics in any of your relationships? How is God calling you to love others this week?

Pastor said commitment takes love and love takes responsibility. Are you currently working on any areas of commitment to Christ's church? Can the group help or is there anything we can do together? Pastor mentioned worshiping, making disciples, serving, giving, etc.

Pastor also emphasized good communication for a marriage for husband and wife as well as the

An illustration of a male student with brown hair, wearing a black jacket and blue pants, standing on the right side of the page. He is holding a pointer. To his left, there are ten horizontal teal lines spaced evenly down the page, intended for writing notes.