



Ministry Mobility

Idle Attendance to Active Engagement

May 17, 2026

Today we're talking about how to use the God-given gifts that you might be ignoring!

About a dozen years ago, when I first met Noah, he quickly told me, **"You're gonna be working in ministry with me one day,"** and I told him something along the lines of, **"Whatever. I don't even know what that means."** Well, long story short, I graduated from Ozark Christian College last week, I start Seminary this fall, and in a couple of weeks I'll begin working at Boise Bible College helping disciple future ministry leaders.

So, I guess it's safe to say that Noah was right ... again! He saw something in me that I couldn't. At least, not back then. So: **What are you ignoring within yourself?**

Just like it took someone else pointing out gifts in me, it often takes other believers helping us recognize our place in ministry. In fact, everyone has a place in ministry, no matter what! **There is a place for every single human being in the Church.** After all:

"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." – Matthew 9:37-38 NIV



Speaking of, what comes to mind when I say, "church"? worship music, listening to sermons, or catching up over coffee after service might cross your mind. Most people think of church as a building Christians visit once or twice a week, and while that's one function of the church, **they aren't getting at the heart of what, or who, the church truly is.** When we look at the NT, we get a good picture of how the early church functioned and who it was.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ... All the believers were together ... Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. – Acts 2:42-47 NIV

You see, **the early church was built around Christ and participation in ministry**, not idle attendance. Without believers living that way, the Gospel may never have reached Europe, Asia, Africa, or the Skagit Valley. But, by the power of the Holy Spirit and the obedience of our predecessors, we find ourselves in this building today.

So, this all makes me wonder: when people who don't know Jesus look at 1480 South Burlington Boulevard, are they seeing anything that resembles the love and faithfulness of those early believers? When they drive by at night and see our mosaic lit up through the window, **do they see the same Jesus?**

Well, **it depends on which one of you they've met.** If they've met a faithful believer from this place, they don't just see a face; they see the body of Christ made up of humble, sacrificial servants. They see more than an old warehouse; they see the hands and feet of Jesus actively engaged in the community. If they've met an idle attendee who doesn't represent Jesus with love and kindness, they see your own judgmental eyes in that face, glaring at them as they pass by.

The Church and its people are Christ's representatives, His ambassadors, to the world.

We are called to be His hands and feet, acting on His Word within our community. In other words, the Church is the Body of Christ!



For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy ... if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; **[and]** if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. – Romans 12:4-8 NIV

The Body of Christ is many parts and functions, but **one mission: proclaim Christ in word and deed.** And God uniquely gifts each believer to participate in this mission. Now, please hear this: no gift is better than another! All are necessary, and all work together toward unity and Gospel ministry. Each person is unique, and **each person has a place in kingdom work.** Each congregation also uniquely uses its gifts within its own context.

Christ's Church of Oronogo, down in Missouri, is where I was blessed to call home for the last three years. This semester, as a staff intern, I had the privilege of teaching several times at Young at Heart, their 55+ ministry. I'll be honest, though, there weren't any 55-year-olds in there. Man, that room is well-aged. Now I'll tell you, despite the staggering age difference, I love that group of people with all my heart.

That congregation is one of the healthiest I've ever seen. They have an incredible staff with humble and well-educated pastors whose names you'll find on book covers and main stages at conferences. But some of the most genuine ministry I saw take place in that building, 15 times the size of this one, was in a smaller, tucked-away meeting room full of older saints quietly caring for each other.

All the believers were one in heart and mind. ... They shared everything they had ... there were no needy persons among them. – Acts 4:32-34 NIV

These are elderly folks who care for those who are more elderly than themselves. They visit shut-ins, pray together, write letters to missionaries, do community service projects, serve at local ministries, and meet so many practical needs. Young at Heart makes sure that no one slips through the cracks, and they make sure there is no needy person among them, just like the early church! No flashy programs. No platform-seeking. Just **ordinary people faithfully serving Jesus with their gifts.** That is ministry. That is the Body of Christ proclaiming the name of Christ.

This makes me think, **what if we all acted more like the church in Acts?** What if we all had the same genuine desire to fulfill the needs of the people around us as they did, and as they do at Young at Heart? Who could this group of believers be if we leaned into our identity as active, sacrificial, faithful members of the Body of Christ? Because:

Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants ... Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of [Christ]. ... From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.
– Ephesians 4:11-16 NIV



Every member built up. Every person using their gifts and encouraging others with their gifts. That is the Body of Christ at work. Notice, though, Paul is not saying pastors do all the work. The role of pastors and church leaders is not to build up popular platforms, but to build up people! **Healthy congregations multiply their ministry through empowered believers**, not personality-driven leaders.



What Paul is saying is that every person has the same calling placed upon their life. We are called to serve Christ, love people, meet needs, and proclaim Jesus. In other words, **everyone has a place in ministry!** Ministry work belongs to the entire church. Not just to employed ministers or “super Christians,” but to everyone who believes in and follows Jesus.

Not every person needs to be a pastor, but **everyone ought to act pastorally**. Not everyone must preach from a pulpit, but every Christian is called to preach Christ through their words and deeds. And honestly, the global church, and this congregation, needs to stop underestimating ordinary faithfulness.

Ministry is ministry, no matter how many or how few cameras are pointed at you. Let the love of Christ fill you and empower you to do good work, so that the world will see Jesus through you!

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples – John 13:34-35 NIV

Jesus says it plainly here: the world will recognize His disciples, His body, by their love.

The credibility of the Church’s witness is tied directly to whether or not we love like Jesus. And the Church looks most like Christ when it’s humble and sacrifices for the sake of others, just as Jesus did.

And here’s the encouraging part: **God loves using ordinary people!**

Moses was a terrible speaker, Gideon was timid and fearful, and I'm just an introverted kid from the valley who does not like being on stage.

[God] is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us – Ephesians 3:20 NIV

And how does God display this power? Through His Church, the Body of Christ!



Through humble, surrendered, regular people. Imagine what could happen in this building, this town, this valley, if this congregation actually lived like they are empowered by Christ. **Deeper discipleship. Bold evangelism. Radical hospitality. Prayerful dependence. Sacrificial generosity.**

Imagine churches full of people who don't just show up for services, but actively disciple others and help carry the mission of Christ into the world. Because the future of the Church is not built through attendance. It's built through people who are being discipled and who make disciples.

Like I said earlier, **every single Christian is called to minister using their gifts**, no matter what their vocation may be. Some, though, are called into vocational ministry as pastors, missionaries, counselors, church planters, worship leaders, and teachers. I didn't know this was an option growing up, and if it weren't for Noah and others pointing it out to me, I may not have ended up here today.

And how can people possibly recognize that gift unless the Church actually cultivates it? How many kids in that Ark right now, if we pointed out their gifts and told them they could use them for the glory of God, might grow into a ministry vocation?

How many kids over there are good at singing and need to be told, "You could lead us in praise one day!" And how many are burying their noses in Scripture and need to be told, "We need smart, kind people like you to help other people know God's word"? Jesus Himself says,

"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field. – Matthew 9:37-38 NIV

The need has not changed, and the workers are still few. But perhaps our emphasis can change. Perhaps we can shift from idle attendance to actively engaging our community and world with the Gospel.

Maybe we can stop treating this building as just a place to attend and start treating it like a training ground for the other six-and-a-half days of ministry we're supposed to be participating in. Maybe we can do our part to ensure **the Church is a people sent by Christ for the sake of Christ.**

Because ordinary believers, you and me, can change the world in immeasurable ways through the power of the God we serve. **So, what is your ministry?** How has God gifted you to empower the Body of Christ? Will you stop ignoring the gifts God's placed within you? After all, there are lots of needs in the Church and the world, so which ones are you gifted to fill?