

What's the BIG Deal?

Topic: Church

Purpose of this study: To strengthen commitment to church involvement and to distinguish between parachurch and church involvement.

Motivation for teaching this study:

Many teens attend church simply because their family goes, yet they have no real commitment or understanding as to its importance. Once kids graduate from high school, the numbers of those still involved in local church drops significantly. Some students try to substitute involvement in parachurch or a Bible study for church involvement and never develop convictions or commitment to a local church. This study highlights the importance of a God-given institution, the local church, and attempts to distinguish it from other Christian groups.

Introducing the Lesson:

Today we want to conclude our Basics series talking about the church and why it is important in our lives. People have all kinds of ideas and thoughts about church so before we look to what the Bible says about the church, let's see what you think about it first.

Teaching the Lesson:

Please remember not to be critical of other denominations. You can share your views but remember that we must give an account before God for all of our careless words (Mt. 12:36). The first half this study is meant to give you an idea on what your students think and where they stand concerning their ideas of the church.

The church is both the universal body of believers, often called the universal church, and the local assembly of visible believers.

Eph 2:21-22 - Paul was excited that the Gentiles now could experience being a part of the spiritual building of the church.

Rom. 8:17 – since we are all children together and fellow heirs, we are all in the same family (Jn 1:12)

2 Cor. 11:-3 – Paul saw the Corinthians as being married to Christ. See Eph. 5:26ff.

Rom. 12:4-5 – not only are we the body, but we function as a body together, locally and globally.

Why is it important to be involved in a local church?

These are wonderful aspects of the Christian life to share together as a church. As your students grow and mature in their faith and involvement in the church, they will value more and more these awesome benefits. Ask them if they have had any of these experiences already.

Student Venture, the high school ministry of **Campus Crusade for Christ**, is the parachurch group of which I am a part. Parachurch involvement should never substitute for church involvement. Every believer needs to be a part of a local church. Parachurch groups specialize in certain niches of ministry, while the local church is more holistic ministering to people from the cradle to the grave.

Typically people get out of church what they put into it and a person's involvement in their church can change with the seasons of life they go through. Remember you reap what you sow.

Therefore, encourage your students to be involved in their local church as much as possible.

Closing the Lesson:

Hopefully these lessons have laid a solid foundation in your student's lives. But it is only a foundation, and much more building needs to take place for them to come to maturity in Christ. That is why I concluded this series with a lesson on the importance of church involvement. God has chosen to use you for this season in your students spiritual growth and development, but there are many more seasons and years ahead. It is essential that before you end this study, you know where you want to encourage your students to go next in their spiritual lives.

Evaluation:

1. What's the difference between the church and the parachurch?
2. Ask your students to define the church in one sentence as to what they think it represents.
3. Do your students know and understand why they should be involved in a local church?
4. What's your plan for challenging your students now? (as a leader now that the Basics are finished)