

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS HACIENDO NEGOCIOS

Painting the Picture of the church Pintando la pintura de la iglesia

The offertory asked a huge question, “If we are the Body of Christ, why aren’t his hands extended?” or why do people feel unloved?

Are we really the Body of Christ and what does that look like?

I wish it would be neat to have three canvasses in the front of the church with three artists painting pictures of the church while we worshipped.

If we just gave them an empty canvass and said paint a picture of the church, what would the picture look like?

I want you to turn to the person next to you and ask them what does their picture of the church look like.

SHOW a picture or pictures of a church buildings. (Ours, Church in Venezuela and others-a few)

How many of you have this or something like this as your picture of the church? Many would have this picture of a church.

SHOW a picture of people worshipping together in a place, not a church building. (under a tree, in a small group format, big youth group gathering like).

Depending on culture the picture would be very different. In many parts of the world there would be no pictures of church buildings.

Some would have a picture of people together worshipping hands raised, or praying in a circle.

**God’s picture of the church is
people joined together in Christ!**

**¡La pintura de Dios de la iglesia es
gente unida junta por Cristo!**

Matthew 18:20 For where two or three gather together because they are mine, I am there among them.”

Mateo 18:20

20 Porque donde dos o tres se reúnen en mi nombre, allí estoy yo en medio de ellos.

Eph 2:19-22 So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God’s holy people. You are members of God’s family. **20** We are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. **21** We who believe are carefully joined together, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. **22** Through him you Gentiles are also joined together as part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

Efesios 2: 19-22

*19 Por lo tanto, ustedes ya no son extraños ni extranjeros, sino conciudadanos de los *santos y miembros de la familia de Dios,20 edificados sobre el fundamento de los apóstoles y los profetas, siendo Cristo Jesús mismo la piedra angular.21 En él todo el edificio, bien armado, se va levantando para llegar a ser un templo santo en el Señor.22 En él también ustedes son edificados juntamente para ser morada de Dios por su Espíritu.*

It is not a building. If we are going to be effective once again in our world, we will have to change our picture of the church from a place or building to a group of people who follow Christ together. If you are a Christ follower you are part of the church, you can’t help it. Quit fighting it.

ILLUSTRATION: Story of the Church in Vietnam.from Chuck Colson

No church building, no Bible, no praise team, nothing that we call church. There were no signs declaring that they were Nazarene, Baptist, Assembly

of God, Methodist, Pentecostal, Holiness...on and on the labels go. They were gathered together in the name of Christ.

The way a church functions in worship, Bible Study, kids and youth ministry will and should change to meet the needs of a present day, but it is still the church.

The question is, do I need to join a church? If you have accepted Christ you are already a member of the church. He is waiting for you to plug into a local group of people to worship, grow and fulfill your role, your gift, your ministry.

The church is people gathered together around Jesus. Worship, prayer, Bible study, fellowship and loving each other of course will happen.

I love the picture of people, young and old sitting around a table discussing Biblical stewardship.

I love the picture of people young and old praying together on Wed. nights, tears streaming down their cheeks.

The proper painting of the church really needs to include what we do.

Let me ask you a question, when Jesus came did he rent office space in the back corner of the temple or across the street and hang a sign inviting people to come in? No not at all. He went to meet the needs of the people.

**God's picture of the church is
a group of people going OUT, not
sitting waiting for people to COME IN.**

**La pintura de Dios de la iglesia es
un grupo de gente que va,
no que se sienta y espera para otros a venir.**

Listen to Jesus words.

As you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world..

Como tú me enviaste al mundo, yo los envío también al mundo.

Go into all the world and make disciples...

I love the pictures from our own church that God has been painting.

Live Nativity

Nacimiento Vivo

...taking the story of Christ to people. The fellowship is unbelievable, because we know we are doing something significant.

Story of church in Atlanta going to a trash filled park for their Easter service and resurrecting it.

**God's picture of the church is serving with love-compassion
La pintura de Dios de la iglesia es sirviendo con amor y compasión.**

Feeding ministry

El ministerio de alimentar

...being Christ's hands extended. We need to expand this type of ministry because we have so many people who want to help. Wow.

I had the opportunity a couple of weeks ago to sit in the apartment of one new member who was struggling to hang onto his faith and listen to Cordie, Bill and Mike encourage him, tell him we are walking this road with you, we love you and you are one of us. I will never forget Cordie saying, We expect you to fall, we are here to walk with you.

I have been praying for some time now about an after school program for kids from the community who are left alone because parents are working. Many kids need help with homework, need a snack, need a place to exercise. LaBrae schools are in our back yard and there is a growing need for ministry after school.

I have a couple who are going to begin doing the leg work to find out what all this would entail, how to go about it, and are there other churches we can partner with. I am psyched.

I am thrilled to be part of a church that is serving our world with compassion. This is the picture of the church that God has painted on my mind. This is the picture of the church that I am called to lead.

If you have chosen to follow Christ than you are part of The Church, God's Body. I want to invite you to take part in the new picture of church that God is painting in our midst.

**God's picture of the church
is a body with every part valuable.**

**La pintura de Dios de la iglesia
es un cuerpo con cada parte valioso.**

Paul paints this picture in 1 Cor. 10:16-18

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread

1 Corintios 10:16-17

16 Esa copa de bendición por la cual damos gracias,[c] ¿no significa que entramos en comunión con la sangre de Cristo? Ese pan que partimos, ¿no significa que entramos en comunión con el cuerpo de Cristo? 17 Hay un solo pan del cual todos participamos; por eso, aunque somos muchos, formamos un solo cuerpo.

Paul says Christ is the head of the body. Some are the hands, some are the feet, some are different parts. Some are visible and out front, and others are behind the scenes. All are valuable.

There are so many needs in the body and of course in the world, every person needs to do their part of the work will not get done and the world will not be reached.

Every week in staff meeting we spend a large amount of prayer asking God to help people be obedient. Phyllis will speak of the need for more greeters. Beth will pray for a spirit filled person with gifts of administration to coordinate the Children's ministry. Broe will talk about the same kind of need for a NYI leader, I will pray for people to reach out and be a friend to

new people, or take on the ministry of compassion that God has put on my heart.

We are constantly needing people to respond to the call of God and the gifting of God in their life and do something.

**God's picture of the church is
a "communion of Saints."**

**La pintura de Dios de la iglesia
es una <<comuni3n de Santos.>>**

Communion, Lord's Table or Eucharist, is a sacrament which is defined as a special means of Grace. I have had the opportunity to experience the church as a means of Grace as a sacrament. Sitting in the chair and experiencing Cordie and Mike express real care and concern was like communion. I walked away feeling blessed to be part of a church where Bill and Cordie and Mike and June care about someone this much.

I have had the occasion in the last months to experience the amazing love reaching out to me when I have been down. Recently I wrote in my journal after a person had expressed a great ministry to Penny and me, it was like having been served communion. It was the hands and heart of Christ reaching out to us. I emailed the person a note and said you were Eucharistic in our lives. You were a means of God's grace to us.

We are to carry each other's burdens, pray for each other constantly, serve each other.

I am so happy to be part of a church where more and more regularly we care for each other at this deep life changing level.

This deep caring for each other is the picture that God is painting in my heart. It is the picture of the church that I want to be part of and pastor.

I want you to be part of it as well.

BAND COMES AND BEGINS TO PLAY OR DVD RUNS AS WE
PREPARE OUR HEART FOR COMMUNION.

Don't miss the connection between remembering the Body of Christ in communion and what we are called to be as the Communion of Saints.

This communion time I hope is a challenge for you to accept Christ if you have not. To actively join his church. I hope you feel called to join this church and join in the compassion, outreach, the worship and the service.

Communion.