



HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH— *Your Role in God's Family and Mission*

by John Vermilya

What if your unique gifts are meant to spark something powerful in your church community? If you have ever wondered what it really means to be part of a church community or felt the desire to be more engaged and don't know where to start, you're not alone. Participating in the local church is more than just showing up—it's about connection, purpose, and impact. For a more in-depth look at this topic, you can also check out Chapter 6 of the Forge Resource Multiplying Movements.

GOD'S FAMILY ISN'T A SHOW—IT'S A MOVEMENT YOU JOIN

Early believers didn't come to watch or consume; they came to participate, to serve. Acts 2:42 says, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer" to share life (NIV). They knew that church community required everyone's presence and unique contribution.

SERVING IN CHURCH—WHY YOUR ROLE MATTERS

The Bible is clear: you're not called to be a spectator. Paul calls the Church a Body, the Body of Christ! Many members, one purpose, each with different gifts (1 Corinthians 12). You matter. You are needed. The Church cannot fulfill its mission without you.

Serving in church does not mean doing everything. But it does mean doing something—teaching, welcoming, leading, praying, cleaning, organizing, feeding. God equips you for such a time as this.

BUILDING CHURCH COMMUNITY—GOD'S DESIGN FOR CONNECTION

In Acts, we see believers gather for teaching (learning God's ways), fellowship (building real friendships), breaking bread (sharing meals and communion), and prayer (living faith together). Church is the environment where real, honest, messy, beautiful community forms.

Don't wait to be asked—look for ways to serve and connect. Find someone alone and sit with them. Volunteer to help a ministry team. Organize a meal for someone in need. The more you step forward, the stronger church community gets.

OVERCOMING DISAPPOINTMENT—STAYING WHEN IT HURTS

Let's be honest. At some point, every church lets you down. Every church community has flaws, failures, and frustrations. If you give up every time it's hard, you'll miss God's biggest lessons.

If one place isn't healthy, pray and ask God if He wants you to stay and work through it, or if He is calling you elsewhere, but never give up entirely. Serving in church often means forgiveness, patience, and perseverance. Healing comes through community. Growth comes through showing up, again and again.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

- **Join a small group or Bible study.**
- **Offer to help with hospitality or children's ministry.**
- **Lead a prayer time or worship set.**
- **Start a conversation with someone new each week.**
- **Ask your pastor or leadership team how to get involved.**

USING YOUR GIFTS—GOD'S MISSION NEEDS ALL OF US

Ephesians 4 tells us that God gave leaders "to equip the saints" (that means you!) "...for the work of ministry" (ESV). You don't need a title or position. You are called, empowered, and needed right where you are.

Ask God: "How do You want me to participate in the local church? Where can my gifts meet real needs?" Then step out, try something new, and watch God work.

THE MISSION CONTINUES—CHURCH BEYOND THE WALLS

Participating in the local church doesn't end when the service is over. The true Church is not a building; it's the people. As you serve in church, you're also mobilized to serve in your school, neighborhood, workplace, and the wider world.

The healthiest church communities worship together, grow together, and scatter to serve together. You are not alone. You are part of something ancient, global, and eternal.

YOU ARE GOD'S PLAN A. THIS IS YOUR MOMENT TO STEP FULLY INTO THE CHURCH COMMUNITY. DON'T WAIT ON THE SIDELINES—JUMP IN, AND DISCOVER JUST HOW BEAUTIFUL, POWERFUL, AND ESSENTIAL SERVING IN CHURCH CAN BE.



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