

I Want More

Part 4: How We Can Be More

1 Cor. 12:12-17

INTRO:

Whether it's at work, in our entertainment, or even in our religion... it feels like almost everyone is trying to get us to consume the product they are trying to sell. And even though it has seeped into almost every aspect of our lives... There's an alternative... An alternate community... a community that gives far more than it takes. A community where you can find mutual acceptance, encouragement, and dependability. A community that you are personally invited to be a vital part of...

So... Let's talk about it... together.

WE: We are enslaved to a system that depends entirely on us being dissatisfied.

We are constantly manipulated to think our value and worth comes from what we can buy, display, consume.

Which means we believe that what we have is not new enough, big enough, or that we don't have enough.

We are stuck. And this cycle eventually works its way into how we view and treat others and how we view and treat ourselves.

Surprisingly the Church was created to be different to destroy this cycle by being a new kind of community... **The church is not a product to consume but a community to join.**

But as we saw in the last episode... we've turned the Church into, and continue to treat the Church as, another product to individually consume.

We agree that community sounds better than consuming but we continue to *insist* on consuming? Why?

We choose consumerism over community because consumerism is just easier.

Honestly, and stick with me here... the difference between religious consumerism and a true Jesus Following Community is very similar to the difference between going to Taco Bell by yourself and enjoying A Family Holiday Dinner Celebration.

Nobody in their right mind actually thinks **Taco Bell** is the better option... but we choose more often b/c...

- Good enough to keep you from starving
- Quick/easy/cheap
- Get what you want without having to do any of the work
- Don't need to go with anyone else, pick and choose whatever you want.
- Can stay anonymous... there's no relationship you have to build. Can move on to another fast food place whenever you want.
- No commitments or promises to keep

- The immediate clean-up is simple.
- And if I work there I will make some money.

Of course the long term effects aren't great...

- Don't actually feel satisfied, feel kind of sick, sluggish, lazy.
- Ultimately unhealthy, empty calories, don't end up looking and feeling the way you actually want.
- And gas and diarrhea.

Just like **Religious Consumerism-**

- Easy. Quick. You can get in, punch your church card, get out and get on with your life.
- You get a religious experience without having to change/contribute anything
- You can stay anonymous/safe/can quit/move on/upgrade whenever you want.
- It's clean.. Don't have to get into people's real lives and hurts and pain and quirks
- If I work there it's easy to make money

But the Result (Ever feels these?)- Unsatisfied. Unhealthy, weak, sick, sluggish, bored. Alone. Life doesn't look the way you want and you don't know why.

Religious Consumerism leaves us unsatisfied, unhealthy, and alone.

Now a huge **family holiday celebration** ... is rare thing for most of us... b/c

- Huge time commitment. It takes many people interacting in the same kitchen all day.
- Get in each other's way and on each other's nerves.
- If don't show up or leave unexpectedly it's noticed
- Might have to put up with things you don't like (green bean casserole w/ cheese-its),
- It's messy- dishes/kitchen/kids.
- Doesn't make a lot of money.
- In fact can cost you something... time/effort/patience/money

But what comes out of that if done right?...

- Everyone participates (except grandpa), relationships built/strengthened, memories made for lifetime
- Sense of belonging, time for family members to talk/hang out/play
- Delicious/satisfying/real/mostly healthy food
- Left overs to share with others and keep you satisfied for many days afterward.

Community:

- Slow. Takes time to know, trust, understand.
- Have to be willing to accept, forgive, and ask for forgiveness.
- You are challenged to take Jesus seriously and adjust your life accordingly
- Can't really coast and fake it
- Which means people are involved in your life/choices... vulnerable/real/authentic
- No room to hide or be anonymous... challenged to contribute
- Harder to simply leave when upset or want to move on.. b/c real relationships have been made.
- Things get messy, awkward, uncomfortable.
- Fewer people are willing to do it... so less money.

But the Result- Life-Changing

- Acceptance, Support, purpose
- You are transformed to be more like Jesus... love joy peace patience kindness gentleness self-control
- Become healthier and happier
- Everyone has a role that builds and strengthens the group as a whole
- Life is improved for the community at large as we reach out and help
- **In a Jesus Following Community we find a life worth living with people who think we are worth loving.**

Paul describes it a little more poetically...

GOD: 1 Cor 12

V. 12 Body of Christ- The Church.

What invited to. Beautiful picture of what happens when join a Jesus Following Community.

- All connected, all needed to make up the whole.
- **We cannot be the Church alone.**

V. 13 Lose/Give up our individualistic identities/consumeristic classes

We are no longer you and me. We become US.

If you are part of the community, you are a vital part of the body.

We are all doing our part.

We all have Purpose/meaning/belonging together.

A Jesus Following Community finds unity in and even b/c of diversity

V. 14-17 Dependent Mutuality **Community requires commitment.**

When we only pursue Religious Consumerism we are never satisfied. Maybe you find what you want for a season... but then we start wondering what has this organization done for me lately? And if we feel like we have gotten all we can out of it we move on to another church or drop out altogether.

Consumers are fickle... Family is committed.

At Crosscreek we have seen the effects/dangers of religious consumerism...

We changed our direction b/c we realized the normal method of "church" lends itself toward enabling a consumer mentality. We discovered we were inadvertently creating religious consumers.

So we decided to be relentlessly committed to being a Jesus Following Community...

So here's what community looks like for us right now...

Each part is designed to facilitate the formation, growth, and strengthening of a community with a purpose. A community that invites our neighbors to discover, enjoy, and share the life Jesus offers... together.

Took our cues loosely from the first Countercultural Jesus Following Community... **Acts 2:42** 5 parts

*All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' **teaching**, and to **fellowship**, and to sharing in **meals** (including the **Lord's Supper**), and to **prayer**.*

Acts 2:42 NLT

Teaching

Difference:

Consumerism- Learn to consume... to soak up knowledge about God... "be fed." Knowledge is its own goal.

Community- Learn to apply. Life change is the goal.

Anything I say won't change your life... It's what you do with it.

Many people join churches b/c of pastor's teaching... I'm not a product to be consumed.

I'm a member of a community created by a man who rose from the dead.

I simply happen to have a teaching role in this community for now.

Fellowship- Connect Groups

- This is where the rubber meets the road... where the church actually is the Church.
- Not a bible study... a real/tangible expression of a Jesus-Following Community.
- Discuss teachings, how to apply right now.
- Get out of what you put into.
- If willing to be real, be vulnerable, accept, listen, share... life-changing
- Otherwise it's just another club to consume.
- Can make your own with others or contact us to be placed in one. Info@yourcrosscreek.com

Sharing meals/Communion- Gatherings

- CG's come together.
- We are part of something bigger than all of us.
- We are truly the body of Christ working toward the same goal
- Come to see what we are like... find people to join with. Here is what God is doing.

Prayer- Alliances and CG's

- One on one mutual support, acceptance, encouragement
- Praying for each other... sharing our lives with each other.
- Reach out to get involved... or just start one on your own... Resources at [website](#).

Love your neighbor as yourself... FOR Salem

Too often "church" becomes a club/organization that insulates us from the rest of the world.

We don't want to be an isolated community...

We are a community purposely in and purposely for our larger community.

Objections:

#1 "I'm an introvert and don't really need/want to be around people."

- Me too.

Difference between introvert and individualism.

- Introverts recharge alone (Jesus)
- Individualism thinks doesn't need anyone else. (Self-centered)

#2 "Alone in the woods is my church"... yeah, it doesn't work that way. B/c we aren't talking about a religious experience between just God and you... We are talking about a **daily life where your relationship with Jesus spills into, permeates every other relationship. Where the living Jesus is actually loving and serving others through you!**

#3 "I'm busy..."

We all have the same 24 hrs in a day. The difference is what we prioritize.

If you prioritize work/consuming over connecting in a community, you will eventually be consumed.

Also w/ right perspective, our work can become a place where we carry out our greater purpose.

#4 This is so different from what I thought "church" was...

Exactly. We've been conditioned to think "church" is a specific place you go, on a certain day of the week, at a certain time, to have someone teach you and inspire you. To have someone else lead you to worship God and another someone to teach your kids. Where you may give some money to help out and 'pay your dues' or show your appreciation, but then we go home and live our real lives the rest of the week until we "go to church" again.

The usual way isn't working. Religious consumerism might be comfortable/nostalgic/easy... but it's not how Jesus Followers will bring the Kingdom of God to earth.

YOU: I'm not encouraging you to be a part of Crosscreek... I'm encouraging you to be the Church. And hopefully the part that we call Crosscreek COMMUNITY Church.

We are not trying to build a brand/organization built on one person or a few staff members...

We are building a community that can last and be for our neighbors no matter what comes our way.

But in order for this to happen we all have to recognize that we are part of the same body...

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Pray: Show me how I can play my role in the Body.

Then I'm encouraging you to...

Join the community.

- CG's

- Come to Get together
- Alliances

Commit to each other / Support each other / Pray for each other.

- That we would be effective/keep our eyes on the mission/ self-sacrificial for the one that sacrificed himself for us.
- Let us know: www.yourcrosscreek.com/welcome

WE:

Consumerism saturates every part of our culture and it's killing us... relationally, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

The only thing that can eliminate this clinging stench is a community seeking the Kingdom of God, denying themselves daily, loving their neighbor as themselves... together.

We might not change the world but we can be a part of changing one life at a time.

You are invited to play your God given and God designed role as a vital member of the Body of Jesus.

We can either surrender to consumerism and go with the flow... hopefully achieve a life that's "good enough"

Or we can commit to a community that is committed to each other b/c we are committed to the King/Savior/God who committed his life to us... and find the true life that Jesus offers all of us.

The Church not a product to individually consume but a purposeful community you are invited to join.

We find true life when we commit to a true community together.

Summary:

Consumerism has seeped into almost every aspect of our lives. Almost everyone is trying to get us to consume the product they are selling. But there is an alternative... an alternate community... a community that gives far more than it takes. A community where you can find mutual acceptance, encouragement, and dependability. A community of which you are personally invited to be a vital part.

Episode Breakdown:

- 00:00 An alternative
- 02:00 Tacos and turkeys
- 07:50 The difference
- 09:50 We need each other
- 11:30 5 parts from Acts
- 16:10 Typical objections
- 20:00 A little hw
- 22:45 Qs and updates

Main Points:

- The church is not a product to consume but a community to join.
- We choose consumerism over community because consumerism is just easier.
- Religious Consumerism leaves us unsatisfied, unhealthy, and alone.
- In a Jesus Following Community we find a life worth living with people who think we are worth loving.
- We cannot be the Church alone.
- A Jesus Following Community finds unity in and even because of diversity.
- Community requires commitment.
- We are a community purposely in and purposely for our larger community.
- We find true life when we commit to a true community together.

Challenge this week:

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Pray: Show me how I can play my role in the Body.

Discussion **Questions:**

1. How have you seen God working this week?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12. What analogy would you use when trying to describe a Jesus-Following Community?
3. Jon said, "We cannot be the Church alone." Do you agree or disagree? If that's the case, what role do you think a "personal relationship with Jesus" plays in a Jesus-Following Community?
4. What would it look like for you to more fully join a Jesus-Following Community? Do you have any objections/concerns/barriers that Jon didn't address?
5. How can your group pray for you?

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SHOW NOTES

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 | TRANSCRIPT → <https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/media/2022-03-27.pdf>

 | SAY HI → <https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/welcome/>

 | EPISODE BIBLE VERSES →

Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Peter 2:9-10, Hebrews 10:23-25, 1 John

 | RESOURCES

→ The High Cost of Consumer Christianity:

<https://medium.com/interfaith-now/the-high-cost-of-consumer-christianity-69e4c38fbcc>

→ Leo Tolstoy- How Much Land Does a Man Need?: <http://www.online-literature.com/tolstoy/2738/>

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 | FOR JUDSON Clothing Closet Shopping List → <https://a.co/itJVTDV>

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