

You belong here.

Students don't need to wait until adulthood to become part of the Church.

60 minutes / Belonging + Church / 1 Corinthians 12

Bring a printed Bible (NKJV), paper, and pens. Use your Bible for full Scripture readings.

LEADER PREP • 5 MINUTES

Watch your language.

Adults often talk about teenagers as if they are "the future of the church."

That sounds positive, but it can accidentally communicate that they are waiting for their turn.

Scripture gives us a better picture. If students belong to Christ, they belong to His Body now.

THE WIN

Tonight's goal is for every student to leave believing: "This church isn't just a place I attend. I have a place here."

TONIGHT'S FLOW

Move from attendance to belonging.

The goal is not simply for students to enjoy the group. Help them see themselves as meaningful participants in the whole life of the church.

15 MIN / Table Ask students where they naturally feel like they belong: a team, friend group, club, class, gaming community, or family.

15 MIN / Word Read selected portions of 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 and use the three teaching points below.

20 MIN / Talk Let students talk honestly about when church feels like somewhere they belong-and when it doesn't.

10 MIN / Practice + Pray Help every student identify one concrete way they can participate in the life of the church this month.

THE BIG IDEA

You are not waiting to become part of the Church. You already are.

God does not build His Church around a few important people while everyone else watches. Every part matters, every person has a place, and every believer can contribute.

SCRIPTURE

Many parts. One body.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-27

Paul compares the Church to a human body. A body has many different parts, but they all belong together.

He even says that one part cannot look at another and say, **"I have no need of you."**

That means there are no unnecessary people in the Body of Christ. Different gifts, ages, personalities, and roles are not problems to solve. They are part of how God designed the Church.

TEACHING GUIDE • 15 MINUTES

Three simple truths.

Keep this conversational. You are helping students rethink what "church" means.

01 Church is more than a place you go.

We often use the word "church" to describe a building or a Sunday service. The New Testament describes the Church as people joined together in Christ.

02 Every part matters.

Paul says the eye cannot tell the hand, "I don't need you." A healthy body needs different parts. Your age does not disqualify you from being useful to God.

03 Belonging eventually becomes responsibility.

If this is your church, you are not only here to receive. You can encourage someone, pray for someone, welcome someone, serve somewhere, and contribute what God has placed in you.

TALK

Let them tell you where they feel included.

- 01** What makes a place feel like somewhere you belong?
- 02** When does church feel most like "your church" to you?
- 03** Have you ever felt like teenagers were mostly expected to watch while adults did the important things?
- 04** What is something students your age could contribute to this church right now?
- 05** What would make you feel more connected to the people in this church outside this student group?

OPTIONAL / KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

- How could our group help someone who feels overlooked at church?
- What would you like to learn from someone in a different generation?
- What might keep you from taking a first step into serving?
- How could we help each other follow through on that first step?

Choose what helps your group. You do not need to ask every question.

PRACTICE + PRAY

STUDENT PRACTICE

Find your place.

Ask each student to choose one practical way to participate in the church during the next 30 days: greeting, helping with kids, worship, media, setup, prayer, hospitality, outreach, or another meaningful area appropriate to your church.

PRAYER

Pray for the whole body.

Have students name different people or generations in the church. Pray for children, parents, seniors, pastors, volunteers, and one another. Reinforce that all of them belong together.

LEADER COACHING

Notice this.

- Which students already feel deeply connected to the church?
- Which students feel like outsiders?
- Did anyone identify a place they would like to serve?
- Are there adults in the church who could intentionally know these students?
- Is your church unintentionally communicating that "real ministry" is for adults?

BEFORE WEEK THREE

Turn belonging into connection.

- 01** Follow up with each student about the place they identified to serve.
- 02** Speak with your pastor or ministry leaders about creating real opportunities for students to participate.
- 03** Introduce at least one student to an adult in the church who could become another healthy spiritual connection.
- 04** Look for one opportunity to publicly communicate that your students are part of the church now.
- 05** Pray that students move from simply attending church toward loving and participating in the Body of Christ.

PARENT TABLE TALK

Help them see church as family.

Send this to parents after the gathering.

ASK Where do you feel most connected in our church?

SHARE Tell your student about a person in church who made a meaningful difference in your life.

PRACTICE Help your student identify one way they can serve or contribute this month.

PRAY Pray: "Jesus, help our family love Your Church and faithfully use what You've given us."

NEXT

Week 03 - Knowing God Personally.

Belonging to the Church matters, but students cannot live on someone else's relationship with God. Next week introduces a simple rhythm for beginning a personal walk with Jesus.