

When the Church Looks Like Jesus

Craig Rees

BIG IDEA

The church is most compelling when its shared life makes Jesus visible.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; 6:1-7; 8:1; 10:1-48; 11:1-18, 19-26, 27-30; 13:1-3; 20:17-38; Romans 14-15; 1 Cor. 12-14; 2 Cor. 4:5; 8:1-7, 19-21; Gal. 1:6-9; Eph. 3:10; 4:11-16; Phil. 1:3-5; 2:1-5, 14-16, 21; 4:10-18; Col. 1:15-20; 1 Thess. 1:6-8; Titus 1:5, 16; 2:1-10; James 3:17; Revelation 2-3

1. What kind of church life makes it obvious who Jesus is, and what kind of church culture can hide Him even when the doctrine sounds right?
2. Titus 1:16 says people can profess to know God but deny Him by their works. How can that warning apply not only to individuals but also to a whole church?
3. Where have you seen a gap between gospel language and gospel culture, either in a church, ministry, or even in your own life?
4. James 3:17 describes wisdom from above as pure, peaceable, gentle, and open to reason. What would change in a church if those qualities shaped its tone as much as its theology?
5. Acts 4:32-35 shows a church using its resources to meet needs. What does that passage reveal about the relationship between generosity, unity, and credible witness?
6. When you think about money, programs, leadership, and time, what signs help you tell whether a church is organized around mission or around maintenance?
7. Ephesians 4:11-12 says leaders are given to equip the saints for the work of ministry. How does that challenge a consumer mindset and call every believer into participation?
8. Philippians 2:1-5, 14-16 calls the church to humility, unity, and selfless service. Which part of that passage feels most confronting to you right now, and why?
9. Different New Testament churches expressed Christ's mission in different ways. How can a church stay faithful to the one gospel without assuming every church must look exactly the same?
10. What is one practical way you can help make the church more believable this week—through generosity, service, peacemaking, encouragement, or visible participation?