Being a Member of a Congregation is like Being on a Team

Intro:
- Eph. 4:16 as Christians, we work together to build up the group, cause growth of the body
- we are a team

- **team**: (World English Dictionary)
  - a group of people organized to work together – exactly what the church is, and does
  - a group of players forming one of the sides in a sporting contest
  - two or more animals working together to pull a vehicle or agricultural implement
    - illus.: Jer. 51:23 (NASB) “farmer and his team. . . .”
    - illus.: Mic. 1:13 (NASB) “Harness the chariot to the team of horses. . . .”

- being a member of a congregation is like being on a team
  - analogy: help us think about the benefits of God’s plan for us to work together as Christians, and blessings we receive

Being a Christian is like being a team member – teamwork – figuratively speaking
- Matt. 11:28-30 we take Jesus’ yoke upon us
- illus. video: yoke used to harness one animal to an implement to work, and often several
  - we are harnessed together as a team to do Christ’s work – Christians, church – video
  - some have extended the analogy to be harnessed together with Christ, teamed with Christ – video

- **Phil. 4:3a** we are yokefellows – companions – teammates
  - translations:
    - companion (NASB, NKJV)
    - yokefellow (ASB, NKJV)
  - Greek (suzugos), those united by any bond, such as marriage, relationship, office, labor, study or business; hence, a yoke-fellow, consort, comrade, colleague or partner (ISBE)
    - 2 Cor. 6:14a (NKJV) “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” – team
      - we can’t be on the same team spiritually as unbelievers
    - illus.: take relationships in definition and relate to a team – equally yoked, unequally yoked
    - we are yoked together with Christians, to work together in God’s kingdom – church, family, etc.

- thus, we are fellow workers - teameed up together with others to work together in kingdom
  - Rom. 16:3 Paul with Aquila and Priscilla – teamed together to work

- **1 Cor. 3:9** fellow workers with God – on His team
  - 1 Tim. 3:15 household of God
    - illus.: family is a team, each has a role and responsibility, work together

- **Phil. 4:3b** fellow workers (spiritual team), in the book of life
  - Christians, saved, we’ll spend eternity together

- 3 Jn. 1:8 when we support preachers and teachers, we are fellow workers with truth
  - illus.: team – elder, deacons, preachers and teachers, those we support throughout the world

- being a Christian is like being on a team – yoked together, yokefellows, fellow workers
  - What are some practical lessons we learn from this analogy? – yoked together, team
Members of a team have different roles – but each is equally important
- Eph. 4:7, 11-12, 15-16 Christ gives us gifts, different roles in the church, for equipping of saints, building up of the body of Christ, each person must do their share
  - illus.: team has leaders and followers
  - illus.: team, some things everyone does and some only a few do

- Rom. 12:3-8 members of body (team) not all have the same function, but each equally important
  - illus.: brain vs. feet, different function, each equally important
  - illus.: football, not everyone is the quarterback, but without each individual player doing his job, the quarterback would never have a chance to succeed

- our challenge is to understand our role today, and fulfill it to the best of our ability, while striving to grow so we can fulfill other roles in the future
  - must guard against apathy and complacency
  - must not be working to grow so much that we don’t do what we can today – tomorrow may never come
being a Christian is like being a team member (team work)
members of team have different roles

- A team is stronger than it’s individual members – sum is greater than any individual part
  - Heb. 10:23-25 one purpose of assembling is to stimulate one another
    - we would be weaker individually if it were not for the church – stronger as member of congregation

- brethren who are spiritually stronger help those who are weaker
  - Rom. 14:1-23 even if we have to give up certain things to help a weak brother, we do it
  - Heb. 12:15 we see that no brother comes short of the grace of God, as much as possible

- illus. pic.: cartoon – explain drawing – team supports members when they are weak

- brethren who have material possessions help those who don’t have them
  - Ja. 1-2 share with brethren in need

- illus.: geese (revised from Chuck Swindoll, letter, October, 1991, from SermonIllustrations.com)
  - often migrate thousands of miles
  - habits of geese while flying as a flock – team
    - those in front rotate their leadership – team stronger, than one individual – leadership team
      - when one lead goose gets tired, it changes places with another one who leads
    - by flying in a V-formation, the members of the flock create an upward air current for one another – team stronger and can fly further for longer, than one individual
      - each flap of the wings literally creates an uplift for the bird immediately behind
      - one author states that by flying in a V-formation, the whole flock gets 71 percent greater flying range than if each goose flew on its own
    - when one goose gets sick or wounded, two fall out of formation with it and follow it down to help and protect it – team takes care of individual parts
      - they stay with the struggler until it's able to fly again
    - the geese in the rear of the formation are the ones that honk – team members encourage each other
      - it's their way of announcing that they're following and that all is well
      - honkers in the rear encourage the ones up front who are doing most of the work

- team is stronger than individual members
  - team makes each member stronger than it would have been alone
A team is more productive than an individual member
- the purpose of a team is to be more productive than an individual member – team more productive than individual work on their own

- 1 Cor. 12:14-27 the church is composed of individual members, which all add to the productivity of the church as a whole – Eph. 4:16
  - working alone we are limited to just what we can do personally
  - working together with the church we can accomplish much more
  - illus.: some people can’t sing on key and would have trouble leading singing, but as a member of a congregation that is taken care of by someone else who has the ability

- illus.: men worked together to save Nome, Alaska from diphtheria
  - on January 20, 1925, the first case of diphtheria was properly diagnosed, after other sick children had died
    - but Dr. Welch, the only doctor in Nome, didn’t give the antitoxin to the boy since it had already expired, and the boy died
  - the next day, seven-year old Bessie Stanley was diagnosed with diphtheria in its late stages
    - Dr. Welch risked injecting her with 6,000 units of the expired antitoxin, and she died later that day
  - that evening, Dr. Welch contacted Nome’s Mayor and told the town council he needed one million units of antitoxin serum to stave off what was becoming a diphtheria epidemic
  - since the weather made it impossible for an airplane to get to Nome, their only chance of survival was to go by dog sled to pick up the serum
    - so, 20 mushers and about 150 sled dogs worked together and relayed diphtheria antitoxin 674 miles by dog sled across Alaska in a record-breaking five and a half days, saving the small city of Nome and the surrounding communities
    - the 20 men working together, did what was impossible for one man to do
      - the purpose of a team is to be more productive than an individual member

- illus.: Mk. 16:15-16 apostles – teamwork
  - 12 apostles, commissioned to preach the gospel to the whole world, accomplished it (aided by the Holy Spirit, helped by brethren) in about 30 years

- illus.: Lk. 10:1 missionaries went out in teams
  - Jesus sent apostles, and 70 out in teams of two
  - Paul traveled with a team of people to help in the work, often tasking individuals to do certain jobs during the journey

- illus.: Acts 6:1-7 team of 7 deacons appointed to do the work

- illus.: 2 Tim. 2:3-4 we are soldiers of Christ – church
  - soldiers serve in an army – group, team
    - an army composed of only 1 soldier would fail to defeat the enemy
  - the group (army) we serve in that fights against Satan and sin is the church – group, team
    - God has given us work to do by working together with brethren in the church – we would fail without the church
being a Christian is like being a team member (team work)
members of team have different roles
a team is more productive than an individual member

➢ Summary / Inv.
- review PP – relate to Christians as members of the church, local congregation

- being a member of a congregation is like being on a team – we’re a group of people working together accomplishing more together than we could alone

- Jesus invites everyone to be a member of His team
  - Matt. 11:28-30 “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

- inv.: come and put on Jesus’ yoke, be a member of His team, do His work, and be rewarded with eternal life