

## Five Models of the Church

<b>Model</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Limitation</b>
<b>Institution</b>	The organizational structure that includes doctrinal teachings	Order and commitment to unity	Could be viewed as authoritarian
<b>Communion</b>	The fellowship that unites believers	Emphasis on shared practices and the diversity of experience	Could be removed from the ultimate goal of the Church
<b>Sacrament</b>	The symbol of grace for the community	Bridges the outer and inner dimensions of the Church	Could become isolated from the world
<b>Herald</b>	The call to members for renewal and reformation	Spreads the Gospel message of peace and justice	Could emphasize witness over action
<b>Servant</b>	The call to stewardship and social responsibility	Serves others and not just the interests of the Church	Could limit the distinct features of Christianity

Respond to these items based on the chart above:

1. Which model is most intriguing to you? Why?

2. What is an example of this model's strength?



3. How might you try to overcome this model's limitation?

4. Where in Church history or the Scriptures do you find this model?

5. Name a concrete step you and others can take to live out this model of the Church.

6. Explain how Jesus promoted this model of the Church in his public ministry.

(The models of the Church listed on this handout are based on the book *Models of the Church*, expanded edition, by Avery Dulles [Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1987]. Copyright © 1974, 1987 by Avery Dulles.)

