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## WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

(A Series of Studies for the New Believer of the Christian Faith)

By

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## The Importance Of The Local Church

(Lesson #3)

Note: Scriptures are quoted from various Bible versions for the sake of clarity in communication.



To be a part of a Local Christian Church one has to have first become a part of the “Body of Christ” which one does by accepting Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord. This decision to follow the teachings of Christ then makes one a follower of Christ and thus the term Christian (*or Christ-Like One*) is applied to them.

It is important to note that one does not get to heaven by joining a Local Church, rather an individual will get to heaven by joining themselves to Christ! Yes, once you have accepted Jesus Christ into your life as your personal Savior and your Lord your future is Heaven bound.

Because God loves you so much He also wants you to experience some “Heaven on Earth” now in this life. In order to do so you will need to grow in your understanding of God’s word and ways, and you will need to surround yourself with people who like yourself, want to follow Jesus and obey the teachings found within his word. This can be all accomplished by joining yourself to a Local Church Body of individuals who are just waiting for you to walk through their doors to greet you, and make you feel right at home amongst them.

### Why Be A Part Of A Local Church ?

Verse 24 of Hebrews 10 starts out with the words “Let us consider...”. God wants us to consider His word when we make our decisions in life. You have decided to trust Jesus with your life, your eternal life, and as such He has provided for your spiritual care and growth within the place called “The Local Church”. There are a number of benefits scripturally to be derived from obeying Christ and becoming a part of a Local Church such as:

1. **Galatians 5:13** The Local Church is a place where your spiritual and even physical needs can be met. In addition, it is the place where you can start to help meet the needs of others. Remember...  
“What you help make happen for others God will make happen for you”.  
“By love serve one another.”

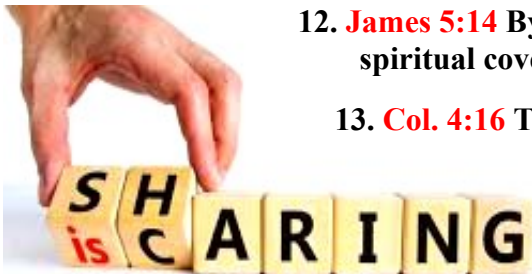
2. **1 Thess. 4:8** and **James 5:16** Tells us the Local Church is a place where you can be comforted and encouraged amidst your life's struggles.
3. **Heb. 10:24** The Local Church gatherings will stimulate, encourage, and challenge your faith in God to continue to grow.
4. **James 5:16** A Local Church is a great place to receive faith filled prayers.
5. **1 Peter 1:22** The Local Church is a place to receive love – unconditional love, and it includes in its expression not only the love of people but also the deep and abiding love of God.
6. **1 Peter 3:8** The Local Church is a place to receive compassion, where you will find someone to listen to you and someone who can relate to you.
7. **1 John 1:7** A Local Church is a place for fellowship, for healthy relationships to be discovered and developed.
8. **Romans 12:5** Tells us that at a Local Church you can discover the depth of covenant relationship such as marriage which may last throughout a lifetime.
9. **1 Cor. 14:14, 1 Cor. 12:9** A Local Church provides an atmosphere to both release spiritual gifts and to be ministered to by them.
10. **1 Cor. 14:33** The Local Church is a refuge for peace where you may refresh yourselves in the lingering presence of the peace of God.
11. **Cor. 7:7, 1 Cor. 11:34** The Local Church is a place of divine order, thus if you sense your life is a little out of control then being a part of a Local Church can probably help.



12. **James 5:14** By having a Local Church that you attend, you can tap into the spiritual covering and grace that is upon that household of faith.

13. **Col. 4:16** The Local Church is a place for communication.

**1 Cor. 13:9** says that we see in part, and that we know in part. By being a part of a Local Church you can get a bigger picture of what God is doing in your life and through your life.



14. **Acts 20:28** and **1 Cor. 4:17** tells us that the Local Church is a place to receive teaching and spiritual feeding.
15. **Acts 2:44** Says “**they had all things in common.**” The Local Church is a place of sharing not just “spiritually” but also of one another’s temporal treasures for the common good of all members.
16. **Acts 20:17** Says that the Local Church is a place for both spiritual and moral accountability.
17. **Eph. 4:12** The Local Church will help equip you for your God given life assignment.

18. **Eph. 4:12** Conveys to us that we can be matured. “No one is going to agitate you when you’re home all alone:, but in a setting of diverse people the areas where you need character development can be accessed and refined.
19. **Eph. 3:21-24** The local church is a place of God’s glory. God’s glory changes everything and if you can sense His presence and His glory when you’re alone imagine what it is like when it becomes compounded by others such as yourself at times of corporate praise and worship – indescribable and invigorating!
20. **Eph. 4:32** A local church is where one may find forgiveness and acceptance not through a compromise of Biblical standards, but because of it.
21. **1 Peter 4:9** A good local church is a place where you may experience hospitality. There is the church local and the church universal and on occasion I have traveled to other countries or other states and have been housed and fed and likewise we have housed and fed other believers. So being a part of a local church opens you up to a worldwide family of believers and here locally – when you come to this house/ this local church we’ll try to let you know that we’re glad to have you and your family here. Valet parking/Hospitality Room /Children’s Ministry Area/Ushers/Renovations/Various programs – Why? To extend hospitality, which you may receive at a local church and in particular this one.
22. **II Cor. 8:18-19A** also **Mark 16** The local church is a launching pad for world missions. Where do you think missionaries have come from? – A local church. Plus in these days technology can allow us via TV/internet to take our services and extend the sphere of influence of this local church even to other countries.
23. **II Cor. 8:14** Your abundance may be a supply for their want and their abundance may be a supply for your want. In a local church *there is supply*. There is a supply of what you need and there is a supply of what you have. – Joy/peace/finances/skills/love. If you’re not locked into a local church, you are not giving your necessary supply, but you are also not receiving your necessary supply.
24. A local church finally is a preserving agent for the community and for the home – morals – ethics and thought. **Matt. 5:13** “**Ye are the salt of the earth.**”

A Local Church Body has benefits to you spiritually. The question is “Are you willing to be both blessed by your Local Church and to be a blessing to your Local Church?”

Many, many of you have and we thank you. Others who have yet to become a part of the Local Church we need you! We need you, and we need your giftings, and your time, and your talents, your contributions as together we represent our Lord Jesus Christ as His Body here in the earth.

### Who Doesn't Like Gifts ?

Within the Local Church you will find that there is ministry or assistance that you can receive from five different types of leaders. Jesus, the head of the Church, has placed them each within that Local Church to assist you in your Christian growth, walk with, and future service to Him and others.



**Ephesians 4: 11-16 tells us:** “**And He Himself gave some to be Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ-- from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”**

Jesus Christ loves you as a person so much that He has provided you as a member of His body, the Church, with the ministry gifts, or offices of service, of the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers to equip and to train you how to walk and server in this life as a victorious overcoming child of God.

### Why do you need equipping?

You need equipping or training because you have a job to do; a very unique calling that God has in mind just for which has to do with bringing others to Christ in your own special way. These leaders have been placed within the Local Church by Jesus to provide you not only with instruction but to encourage you and literally “build you up” spiritually speaking.



This is what the word “Edify” means, it means “To Build Up”.

These Ministerial Giftings were created and were given this charge by the Lord Jesus Christ and they must continue in their efforts until all Christians come to maturity in their faith and until they grow into the very image and nature of Jesus Christ Himself.

These leaders are nurturers and builders, but they are also our protectors and the guardians of our soul. **Verse 14** shows us the dangers we can fall into without the ministry gifts or functions of the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers.

When we are first “Born Again”, we are like young Children, who need to be taught about life and trained in just basic life survival skills.

The leaders mentioned in **Ephesians 4** are there to keep us from being deceived by false doctrines/teachings from people who would deceive us for their own purposes. These five ministry gifts also called by some as “The Five-Fold Gifts” or “The Ascension Gifts”, will speak the truth of God’s word to us in love in their efforts to see us grow into the image of Jesus Christ, so that we might eventually step into that personal and unique ministry that God has intended for each of us and others to enjoy.

**1 Tim 4:1-2 says,** “**Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.”**

We are living in the last hours of the last days. There are people who would deliberately deceive the members of the body of Christ under the influence of deceiving spirits and doctrines of devils.

**Doctrines (Greek) = Instruction or Information from a Teacher**

According to **1 Tim 4:1-2**, these instructors supplied information that resulted in Christians departing from the faith. More amazingly, these Christians received their instruction from demons. Actually these demons are also more specifically known as seducing spirits (Greek – calls them- IMPOSTERS) who are to deceive God’s people so as to mislead them. When you mislead someone they can end up somewhere other than where they need to be.

The word of God tells us that in these last days demonic efforts will increase because

- The stakes are so much higher, and we are getting closer to Christ’s return.
- The world population is the largest in history.
- The technology to communicate to the masses is in place.

The demonic spirits are not for the unsaved or as we could call them, the un-churched.

No! Rather they are in place for the deception and the misleading of God’s people. Even **Matthew 24:24** tells us that the very elect (God’s people) could be deceived if they do not guard themselves and attend to their spiritual state.

We need to know the word of God and we had better adhere to that standard in our lives and in our Church Body.

This vital teaching and instruction in the word of God, as well as the monitoring of your spiritual progress, can only be obtained in the Local Church through the efforts of the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers.

### Encouragement From an Apostle

The Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the Church at Jerusalem with these instructions.

“Let us draw near (GOD) with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (The book of **Ephesians 5:26** says that we are cleansed by the washing of water which is the word of God.) Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised). And let us consider one another to provoke (stir up) unto love and to good works. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.” - **Hebrews 10:22 – 26**

Notice they used the term “Some” here and the same term “Some” back in **1 Tim 4**. I wonder who these some are?

I believe it is those same “Some” who have been deceived and who have departed from the faith and who have gone into Apostasy (Spiritual Error without willing to be corrected) that are now seen here again in Hebrews who are now forsaking their assembly with a Local Church.

The rationale that many saints utilize who are departing from the faith / not coming to Church is “Well I’m not forsaking assembling with other believers; I meet regularly with so and so for coffee.” “I have a regular Bible Study Group that gathers,” “I don’t need to go to Church to be a Christian”, “There are too many Hypocrites”. Etc.

All of these seem reasonable, but they is not contextual with scripture.

The Assembly referred to here in **Hebrews 10:25** is “The General Assembly”.

This is the same word “Assembly” from where we have gotten our English word “Church”.

This word “Church” is with reference to “The Church House”, or that place which houses the corporate body of Christ in that geographic region that gathers at specified times in a specific place.

The sad thing is many of these individuals who choose to disassociate themselves with a Local Church have also chosen to disregard and become rebellious to the word of God.

Any time someone does this, they are either deceived or setting themselves up to be deceived.

So let’s take a quick look at probably the top 7 reasons/excuses Christians have for not assembling themselves with a local church.

## 7 Reason’s Christian People Are Not a Part of a Local Church

- A. **Humanism** – This is living and operating under a humanistic philosophy or spiritual influence which places what they think over God’s word. If what we think does not line up with God’s word, we have to change our mind and adjust our feelings because God does not change His word.
- B. **Rebellion** - The person may just be rebellious and un-submissive to authority particularly to that of God and His appointed leadership in a local church – Pastor/Elders/Ministry Team Leaders. People that are rebellious and un-submissive cannot seem to get along with other people. They have the attitude of already “knowing it all”, which is actually their pride showing. If you’re known to be a person who has difficulty submitting to authority – you are in a dangerous frame of mind! The Bible tells us that GOD resists the proud. “Resists” means to set the whole host of heaven against you. It would be wisdom to ask God to help you overcome the pride and rebellion.
- C. **Lawlessness** - An individual may possess a lawless spirit - an attitude of, “I will recognize no authority, but that of my own and I will submit to no authority, but that of my own. To this individual he/she thinks that he/she is an exception to the rules, policies, or even Biblical mandates of the Church. This person is always looking for the “loopholes” to allow them to do whatever they wish. They spend more time justifying doing their “own thing” than seeking to do the “God Things”. This attitude will keep an individual out of a Church and if one does bring it in with them, then it usually results (When there is a Pastor in place with some Integrity before God and some Backbone) in both the person and their lawless ways being requested to seek fellowship elsewhere.
- D. **No desire for accountability** – This is usually of a lack of an unsubmitive heart to both God and to man. We also are to be accountable to those who are in Authority over our lives such as Parents, Law Enforcement Officials, godly Teachers, etc. God has placed Pastors, Elders, Etc. in Authority over our lives as well.
- E. **Pride** - Is another reason people may see no need for accountability. “I have no need that another man teach me” many say quoting **1 John 2:27**, yet a complete Hermeneutic (*Study of the Interpretation of Scripture*) would have seen that **Ephesians 4** provides for the office of the teacher and if God was opposed to teachers then He would not have made that office – another doctrine of a devil.

**F. Un-Teachable** - The person may be un-teachable. They have no desire to learn, but rather to simply be promoted and approved. Unity in a body is preserved when all members are willing to learn and understand the values and foundations of that gathering of the corporate body.

- Before one can lead they must follow
- Before one can teach they must first have been a student

We cannot walk together as a body unless people will walk in humility and be teachable.

**G. Deception**- The reason people may not be hooked into a local church is – they are deceived.

### Why Be a Part of a Local Church

**Verse 24 Hebrews 10** says “Let us consider one another” and in so doing, let us go on to consider the following solid reasons why we should be a active part of a healthy local church . There are benefits scripturally to be derived that we’ll receive by doing so. Let’s continue to take a look.

25. **Galatians 5:13** The local church is a place where your needs will be met as well as the needs of that church body by your presence. “By love serve one another.”
26. **1 Thess. 4:8** The local church body is a place where you can be comforted.
27. **Heb. 10:24** The local church body meetings (and this one is no exception) will stimulate your faith.
28. **James 5:16** It is a safe place to confess your faults (as you probably already know there are no perfect people thus no perfect place /church so you just use discretion.
29. **James 5:16** A local church such as this one is a great place to receive prayer.
30. **1 Peter 1:22** The local church is a place to receive love – unconditional love and it includes in it’s expression not only the love of people, but also the love of God.
31. **1 Peter 3:8** The local church is a place to receive compassion.
  - a. Someone just to listen to you.
  - b. Someone to relate to.
32. **1 John 1:7** A local church (including this one) is a place for fellowship, for healthy relationships to be discovered and developed.
33. **Romans 12:5** Tells us that at a local church you could discover the depth of covenant relationships which is far different than mere fellowship.
34. **1 Cor. 14:14, 1 Cor. 12:9** It is an atmosphere to both release spiritual gifts and to be ministered to by them.
35. **1 Cor. 14:33** The local church is a refuge for peace and because here in this local church that is no exception, you may refresh yourselves in that lingering presence of the peace of God that resides here.
36. **1 Cor. 7:7, 1 Cor. 11:34** The local church is a place of divine order thus if you sense your life is a little out of control, then being a part of a local church can probably help.

37. **James 5:14** By having a local church that you attend you tap into the spiritual covering and the prayer of that place.
38. **Col. 4:16** The local church is a place for communication. **1 Cor. 13:9** says we see in part, we know in part. By being a part of a local church you get a greater view and understanding of your geographical area and the world around you.
39. **Acts 20:28** and **1 Cor. 4:17** the local church (and this one is no exception) is a place of teaching and spiritual feeding.
40. **Acts 2:44** “they had all things in common.” It is a place of sharing not just “spiritually” but of temporal treasures for the common good of it’s members.
41. **Rev. 2:7** Being a part of a local church allows you to tap into the corporate directive from God for that church body which then harnesses you to the same anointing! You see God may have called us all to do something, but He’s also called us to something together.
42. **Matt. 16:18** A good local church will be a provider of revelation.
- Your Bible reading will make more sense.
  - Your marriage will come to a new level.
43. **Acts 20:17** the local church is a place for both spiritual and moral accountability.
44. **Eph. 4:12** The local church will equip you for the call.
45. **Eph. 4:12** Conveys to us that we can be matured. “No one is going to agitate you when you’re home all alone.” But in a setting of people the areas where you need character development can be accessed.
46. **Eph. 3:21-24** The local church is a place of God’s glory. God’s glory changes everything and if you can sense His presence and His glory when you’re alone imagine what it is like when it becomes compounded by others such as yourself at times of corporate praise and worship – indescribable and invigorating!
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**51. A local church finally is a preserving agent for the community and for the home – morals – ethics and thought. Matt. 5:13** “Ye are the salt of the earth.”

A local church body has benefits to offer you, the question is “Are you willing to receive these benefits and are you really serious about being a follower of Jesus Christ”?

Many, many of you have and we thank you. Others have entered their local Church and have even become contributors with their talents time and economics, and we thank you also. For those of you who have yet to be a part of a local Church we need you! and more importantly God, and a lost humanity need you. With these truths now in your mind and in your heart, we're looking forward to seeing you with us here in your local Church this Sunday.

# REVIEW QUESTIONS

(Lesson #3)

- PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING TRUE OR FALSE AND MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS.
- THERE IS ONLY ONE RIGHT ANSWER FOR EACH QUESTION BASED UPON YOUR LESSON.
- YOU MAY REFER TO YOUR LESSON FOR ASSISTANCE IN ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS.

(1). **Going to Church is not all that important.**

True. **False.**

(2). **There are benefits to being a part of a local Church**

**True.** False.

(3). **There are at least 7 good reasons why NOT to go to Church.**

True. **False.**

(4). **A local Church is more than just a building.**

**True.** False.

(5). **I have something to contribute to my local church.**

**True.** False.

(6). **A local Church has...**

- A. Imperfect people.
- B. Things that I need to grow as a Christian.
- C. **All of the above.**

(7). **When it comes to being a part of a local Church the Bible ...**

- A. **Has allot to say about this.**
- B. Doesn't recommend it.
- C. Leaves the matter entirely up to me and what I think about it.

(8). **The other Church Leaders specifically mentioned in the Bible besides the Pastor are...**

- A. Apostles, Prophets, Prayer Warriors, and the guy who brings the Doughnuts on Sunday.
- B. **Apostles, Prophets, Evangelist, and Teachers.**
- C. The Butcher, the Baker, the Candlestick Maker, and the guy who owned the big wash tub.

(9). **A local Church**

- A. Affects the morals of society
- B. Assists the poor and needy of their local community.
- C. **All of the above.**

(10). **People that know they should be in a local church but refuse to go could be ...**

- A. Rebellious, Un-Teachable, Deceived.
- B. Prideful, Desire no Accountability, Lawless, and Humanistic.
- C. **All of the above.**