

A study examining the importance of attending church when possible.

(My comments are in italics blue; the rest of the information is cut and pasted and cited. I have also underlined some of the cited material. – David Abegglen.)

This topic is thoroughly covered in conference talks and lessons. The reasons are listed differently in various talks, but the concepts are consistent.

Reason 1:

We need everyone's participation so that we can all benefit from the Savior's spiritual gifts.

New Testament Institute Teacher Manual / Lesson 39: 1 Corinthians 12–14

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/new-testament-teacher-manual/the-first-epistle-of-paul-the-apostle-to-the-corinthians/lesson-39-1-corinthians-12-14?lang=eng>

Paul's lesson on spiritual gifts encompasses 1 Corinthians chapters 12 through 14. 1 Corinthians 12 is divided into two parts: verses 1–11 are about the gifts of the Spirit (the start of the lesson), and verses 12–30 describe our role as members of the Church (or Body) of Christ. At first glance, they appear to be two different topics, but they are not. They are different elements of the same lesson. The lesson spans three chapters, and the part about the Body of Christ is an essential component. We all have some gifts, but no one has them all. However, when we unite as the Church (or Body), we can participate in all the gifts through each other.

D&C 46:10–12

10 And again, verily I say unto you, I would that ye should always remember, and always retain in your minds what those gifts are, that are given unto the church.

11 For all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God.

12 To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby.

Paul wrote about various spiritual gifts that can be received through the Holy Ghost. Each member of the Church is to contribute to the body (Church) of Christ. Apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, and spiritual gifts are all part of God's Church. Paul admonished his readers to strive earnestly for the best gifts. *New Testament Institute Teacher Manual / Lesson 39: 1 Corinthians 12–14*

Doctrine and Covenants teaches that Heavenly Father gives spiritual gifts to His children through the Holy Ghost for their benefit (see D&C 46:26).

26 And all these gifts come from God, for the benefit of the children of God.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “Spiritual gifts are endless in number and infinite in variety. Those listed in the revealed word are simply illustrations of the boundless outpouring of divine grace that a gracious God gives those who love and serve him” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, 371).

“It is up to each of us to search for and build upon the gifts which God has given. We must remember that each of us is made in the image of God, that there are no unimportant persons. Everyone matters to God and to his fellowmen... We must remember that to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God. It is our right and responsibility to accept our gifts and to share them. God's gifts and powers are available to all of us.” (*Elder Marvin J. Ashton / There Are Many Gifts / November 1987*)

The Physical Body	The Church or Body of Christ
Many parts, but one body.	Many members, but one Church.
Each part is different and has a distinct role to fulfill.	Members have distinct gifts that allow them to contribute to the Church.
The body is lacking if one or more parts are missing.	The Lord wants all members to be fully participating members of the Church.
Even parts that are seemingly insignificant are needed to make the body whole.	There are no insignificant members in the Church.

chart - New Testament Institute Teacher Manual / Lesson 39: 1 Corinthians 12–14

Reason 2:

Church attendance is part of the commandment to keep the Sabbath Day Holy.

General Handbook 26.3.3.1

Temple Recommend Interview Questions / Question 8:

Do you strive to keep the Sabbath day holy, both at home and at church; attend your meetings; prepare for and worthily partake of the sacrament; and live your life in harmony with the laws and commandments of the gospel?

Doctrine and Covenants 59:9–12

9 And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

10 For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High;

11 Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times;

12 But remember that on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

Come unto Christ / 3 Easy Ways You Can Keep the Sabbath Day Holy / 1 Worship God on the Sabbath day

One of the best ways to keep the Sabbath day holy is to devote time to worshipping God. During the other six days of the week, it's easy to get caught up in all of our responsibilities. On Sunday, you can take time to turn your thoughts and hearts to God. We can attend church services. We can read the Bible and other books of scripture. And we can talk with God in prayer. These activities can help us feel closer to God, even after the Sabbath has passed. (<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/comeuntochrist/belong/sunday-services/3-ways-to-keep-the-sabbath-day-holy#:~:text=Worship%20God%20on%20the%20Sabbath,We%20can%20attend%20church%20services.>)

One of those laws is to worship in church each Sabbath day. Our worship and application of eternal principles draw us closer to God and magnify our capacity to love. Parley P. Pratt, one of the original Apostles of this dispensation, described how he felt when the Prophet Joseph Smith explained these principles: "I felt that God was my heavenly Father indeed; that Jesus was my brother, and that the wife of my bosom was an immortal, eternal companion: a kind, ministering angel, given to me as a comfort, and a crown of glory for ever and ever. In short, I could now love with the spirit and with the understanding also." *The Need for a Church / By President Dallin H. Oaks / October 2021*

Reason 3:

We attend church to learn.

General Handbook

Sunday School 13.1

The Sunday School helps accomplish God’s work of salvation and exaltation. It does this by helping God’s children learn and live the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sunday School leaders, teachers, and classes:

Strengthen faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ by teaching “the doctrine of the kingdom” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:77).

Support home-centered and Church-supported gospel learning and teaching.

Help members teach in the Savior’s way.

Primary 12.1

Primary helps children:

Feel their Heavenly Father’s love and learn about His plan of happiness.

Learn about Jesus Christ and His role in Heavenly Father’s plan.

Learn and live the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Feel, recognize, and act on the influence of the Holy Ghost.

Prepare for, make, and keep sacred covenants.

Participate in God’s work of salvation and exaltation.

Young Women 11.1

The Young Women organization helps God’s children prepare to return to His presence. As they strive to keep their covenants with God, young women will be “armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory” (1 Nephi 14:14).

Young Men 10.1.1

Aaronic Priesthood quorums help young men make and keep sacred covenants and deepen their conversion to Jesus Christ and His gospel.

A quorum is an organized group of priesthood holders. The purpose of a quorum is to help priesthood holders work together to participate in God’s work of salvation and exaltation. In their quorums, Aaronic Priesthood holders serve others, fulfill priesthood duties, build unity, and learn and live doctrine.

Relief Society 9.1

Relief Society helps God’s children prepare to return to His presence. As daughters of heavenly parents, members of Relief Society “expound scriptures,” “exhort the church,” lift hearts, and “cleave unto the covenants [they have] made” (Doctrine and Covenants 25:7, 13).

9.1.1 Relief Society is a divinely instituted organization for all adult women in the Church. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the purpose of Relief Society is to save souls and relieve suffering. He stated that the Church of Jesus Christ was not fully organized until the sisters were so organized.

Members of Relief Society work together to help accomplish God’s work of salvation and exaltation. They serve others, fulfill covenant responsibilities, build unity, and learn and live doctrine.

Elders Quorum 8.1

The Melchizedek Priesthood helps God’s children prepare to return to His presence. It holds “the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church” ([Doctrine and Covenants 107:18](#)).

8.1.1 Worthy men 18 and older may receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and be ordained to the office of elder. A man ordained to that office enters into a sacred covenant to assist God in accomplishing His work (see [Doctrine and Covenants 84:33–44](#)).

Each elder is part of an organized group of priesthood holders called an elders quorum. Members of the elders quorum work together to help accomplish God’s work of salvation and exaltation. They serve others, fulfill priesthood duties, build unity, and learn and live doctrine.

1 Corinthians 12:28 The Importance of Teachers

In Paul's list of Church officers, he mentioned teachers immediately after apostles and prophets, which underscores the importance of effective teachers in the Church. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles encouraged all of us to improve our teaching skills:

“In this Church it is virtually impossible to find anyone who is *not* a guide of one kind or another to his or her fellow members of the flock. Little wonder that Paul would say in his writings, ‘God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers.’ [[1 Corinthians 12:28](#).] ...

“... We must revitalize and reenthroned superior teaching in the Church—at home, from the pulpit, in our administrative meetings, and surely in the classroom. Inspired teaching must never become a lost art in the Church, and we must make certain our quest for it does not become a lost tradition” (“[A Teacher Come from God](#),” *Ensign*, May 1998, 25).

Reason 4:

We attend church to avoid deception.

We can also avoid deception by worshipping regularly in the temple. This helps us maintain an eternal perspective and protects us from influences that might distract or divert us from the covenant path. *Personal Preparation to Meet the Savior / Elder Dale G. Renlund April 2025*

Church attendance precedes Temple attendance. See General Handbook 26.3.3.1

Temple Recommend Interview Questions / Question 8: “Do you strive to keep the Sabbath day holy, both at home and at church; attend your meetings; prepare for and worthily partake of the sacrament; and live your life in harmony with the laws and commandments of the gospel?”

D&C 41:2 (2-6)

2 Hearken, O ye elders of my church whom I have called, behold I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall assemble yourselves together to [agree](#) upon my word;

Be Not Deceived / Elder Dallin H. Oaks October 2004

“How do we take the Holy Spirit for our guide? We must repent of our sins each week and renew our covenants by partaking of the sacrament with clean hands and a pure heart, as we are commanded to do (see D&C 59:8–9, 12). Only in this way can we have the divine promise that we will “always have his Spirit to be with [us]” (D&C 20:77). That Spirit is the Holy Ghost, whose mission is to teach us, to lead us to truth, and to testify of the Father and the Son (see John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; 3 Nephi 11:32, 36).

To avoid being deceived, we must also follow the promptings of that Spirit. The Lord taught this principle in the 46th section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

“That which the Spirit testifies unto you even so I would that ye should do in all holiness of heart, walking uprightly before me, considering the end of your salvation, doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving, that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men. ...

“Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given” (D&C 46:7–8).

The Holy Ghost will protect us against being deceived, but to realize that wonderful blessing we must always do the things necessary to retain that Spirit. We must keep the commandments, pray for guidance, and attend church and partake of the sacrament each Sunday. And we must never do anything to drive away that Spirit.”

Doctrine and Covenants 50:23–25

23 And that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness.

24 That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.

25 And again, verily I say unto you, and I say it that you may know the truth, that you may chase darkness from among you;

Russell M. Nelson / Make Time for the Lord / October 2001

The voices and pressures of the world are engaging and numerous. But too many voices are deceptive, seductive, and can pull us off the covenant path. To avoid the inevitable heartbreak that follows, I plead with you today to counter the lure of the world by making time for the Lord in your life—each and every day.

If most of the information you get comes from social or other media, your ability to hear the whisperings of the Spirit will be diminished. If you are not also seeking the Lord through daily prayer and gospel study, you leave yourself vulnerable to philosophies that may be intriguing but are not true. Even Saints who are otherwise faithful can be derailed by the steady beat of Babylon's band.

My brothers and sisters, I plead with you to make time for the Lord! Make your own spiritual foundation firm and able to stand the test of time by doing those things that allow the Holy Ghost to be with you always. *Russell M. Nelson, "Make Time for the Lord,"*

How does His Church accomplish the Lord's purposes? It is important to recognize that God's ultimate purpose is our progress. His desire is that we continue "from grace to grace, until [we receive] a fulness" of all He can give. That requires more than simply being nice or feeling spiritual. It requires faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism of water and of the Spirit, and enduring in faith to the end. One cannot fully achieve this in isolation, so a major reason the Lord has a church is to create a community of Saints that will sustain one another in the "strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life." ***Why the Church / By Elder D. Todd Christofferson / October 2015***

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that all members of the Church can make valuable contributions in their ward or branch: "Your obligation is as serious in your sphere of responsibility as is my obligation in my sphere. No calling in this church is small or of little consequence. All of us in the pursuit of our duty touch the lives of others. To each of us in our respective responsibilities the Lord has said: 'Wherefore, be faithful; stand in the office which I have appointed unto you; succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees' (D&C 81:5)" (*"This Is the Work of the Master," Ensign, May 1995, 71*).

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency similarly taught: “You may feel that there are others who are more capable or more experienced who could fulfill your callings and assignments better than you can, but the Lord gave you your responsibilities for a reason. There may be people and hearts only you can reach and touch. Perhaps no one else could do it in quite the same way” (*“Lift Where You Stand,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2008, 56*).

Reason 5:

We attend church to receive the saving ordinances.

Individual spirituality can seldom provide the motivation and structure for unselfish service provided by the restored Church. Great examples of this are the young men and women and seniors who put aside their schooling or retirement activities to accept missionary callings. They work as missionaries to strangers in unfamiliar places they have not chosen. The same is true of faithful members who participate in the unselfish service we call “temple work.” None of such service would be possible without the Church that sponsors it, organizes it, and directs it. *The Need for a Church / By President Dallin H. Oaks / October 2021*

Crowning all of this are the authoritative priesthood ordinances necessary for eternity, including the sacrament we receive each Sabbath day. The culminating ordinance in the restored Church is the everlasting covenant of marriage, which makes possible the perpetuation of glorious family relationships. President Russell M. Nelson taught this principle in a memorable way. He said: “We cannot wish our way into the presence of God. We are to obey the laws upon which [that blessing is] predicated.” *The Need for a Church / By President Dallin H. Oaks / October 2021*

“And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

“After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Corinthians 11:23–26).

The purpose of sacrament meeting is for us to partake of the sacrament. This reminds us of the sacrifice our Lord made for us. We renew the covenants made at baptism, at which time we became members of His Church and took upon ourselves His name—the name of Jesus Christ.

We read in Doctrine and Covenants 20 that “it is expedient that the church meet together often to partake of bread and wine in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus” (v. 75). The bread and water that are passed to us are “the emblems of the flesh and blood of Christ” (D&C 20:40). *The Latter-day Saint Woman: Basic Manual for Women, Part A / Lesson 17 Church Meetings*