

FOUNDATIONS

Track One : Believer to Disciple

Lesson 08 : The Local Church

This course is designed to teach us the purpose of the local church and the believer's relationship and function in the local church..



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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New King James Version.

THE LOCAL CHURCH - ITS NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS

Matthew 16:15-19

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

The Church is God's idea. Denominations are man made.

The Meaning of the word 'Church'

Church Gr. "ekklesia" ek = out of, klesis = a calling, to call

In its literal sense the word 'Church' simply refers to a gathering together of those who have been called out, for a definite purpose.

1.1. Important Truths About The Church - The Body of Christ

1. The Church is Christ's Body Colossians 1:18, 24 Ephesians 1:22, 23

2. The Church is eternal, because Christ, the Head is eternal.

3. The Church is the instrument to execute Christ's purposes.

The Body executes what the head commands. Both here in this present age and in the millennium Daniel 7: 18

4. Every believer is a member of Christ's Body - the eternal Church

1 Corinthians 12:27

1.2. Important Truths concerning The Local Church

1 Timothy 3:14-15

1. The local church is called "the household of God"

The local church in a certain place is the family of God in that place
Family is about relationships
Mutual love, care and concern, support
People in different stages of growth and maturity.

2. The local church is the physical expression of the Spiritual Body of Christ in a certain geographical area.
3. The local church in a certain area is Christ's instrument in that area to execute Christ's purposes.

1.3. Why should you be a committed part of a local church?

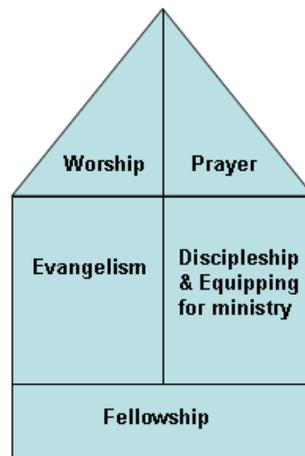
1. The Local church is also God's idea
2. It is within a local church that you and I live out in daily life our membership in Christ's spiritual Body - the Church.
 - You are able to serve others and receive through others
 - There is strength, support and encouragement
 - We can do a whole lot more together
 - There are things that happen in a "cluster" which an individual grape cannot produce. Isaiah 65:8
3. You need to be committed to one local church when you are in a particular place. Body parts don't float around, but stay together.

2. The Mission of the Local Church

The mission of the Local church can be categorized into 5 main areas:

- 1, Evangelism & missions : reaching people with the gospel and fulfilling the Great commission
- 2, Discipleship :
 - A disciple is one who has been trained to be Christ-like in character, conduct and service.
- 3, Prayer & Worship :
 - Through prayer and worship we change the spiritual atmosphere over our city
 - Prayer and worship creates an atmosphere for spiritual ministry as we gather together
 - God speaks in the midst of a worshipping and praying congregation
- 4, Fellowship : Living as the family (household) of God
- 5, Ministry : Equipping of the saints for ministry

- Every member fully equipped, activated and released to fulfill their calling
- Believers discover and exercise their gifts for the edifying of the body
- Impacting the world around us
- Sending ministers out and reproducing itself.



A well-formed local church will have all these 5 dimensions in proper balance and emphasis.

A Local Church is a "Body", a "Family" and an "Army"

3. A Body

The church is a "body" analogous to the human body. The human body has various systems - a total of nine. Paying attention to all the systems is essential to health, strength and productivity.

We can draw an interesting parallel:

1. Circulatory System : ensuring every individual receives care and nurture.
2. Skeletal System : ensuring structure, shape and support by having proper leadership, organization and administration in place.
3. Muscular System : ensuring strength, movement and mobility by ensuring that every believer becomes a minister.

4. Digestive System : ensuring a strong, anointed and timely ministry of the Word so that people receive, digest and absorb solid spiritual nourishment.

5. Respiratory System : ensuring a continuous, fresh, breath, inspiration and work of the Spirit

6. Nervous System : ensuring keen sensitivity and perception to what is happening in the local body and providing a timely response.

7. Endocrine System : ensuring spiritual activities as prayer, faith, love, servanthood and maintaining core values and culture of the church, such as creativity, being contemporary, empowering people, spiritual mentoring, etc. Although present in small measures, these act as the "chemical control system" stimulating growth, health and balance.

8. Excretory System : ensuring that the church effectively eliminates unhealthy things - individually and corporately.

9. Reproductive System : ensuring that individuals and the local church are reproducing - winning souls, discipling, planting churches.

4. A Family

The house of God - A spiritual house

Galatians 6:10 Ephesians 2:19-22 1 Timothy 3:15

"house" Greek "oikos" = a dwelling, by implication a family

Applies to both the corporate Body of Christ and to the local church.

Jesus - The Master of the house

Matthew 10:25

"master of the house" Greek "oikodespotes" = the head of a family: - goodman (of the house), householder.

We are to live a the family of God - caring, supporting and encouraging one another.

5. An Army

Matthew 16:15-19

2 Timothy 2:3-4

3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

There is rank, order and discipline in the army.

God has set leaders amongst us - to lead us forward.

Military Mindset

We need to be on “high alert” since we are in battle. There is no demilitarized zone as long as we are here in this life.

Military Lifestyle

We live as soldiers - While we discharge our earthly duties, we must keep ourselves from being entangled with the affairs of this life.

Military Discipline

We keep our entire being - spirit, soul and body under discipline.

If you are not a member of a local church, we encourage you to please consider becoming a committed member. Signing the membership form is an expression of your commitment. Please pick up the membership information packet from the Information Desk and review the booklet.