

**Over the next few weeks of Wednesdays, I will be teaching about the local NT Church using Jeff Johnson's book, "The Church" as a guide.**

If you're a "Born-Again Christian", you should be very dedicated to the a Local NT Church; the one primary reason, because you are part of the universal church and body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:1-2, Acts 20:28  
Outside of your own personal family, your local NT church should be the most important group of people to you; the church is your spiritual family; brothers and sisters in Christ who are united to Christ by faith!  
The other thing to understand is YOU ARE THE CHURCH; Christ is building His church with YOU; YOU are the habitation of God!

Matthew 16:18: The Lord Jesus said: "I will build my church". You believer in Christ are living stones, you make up a spiritual building which is inhabited by God! 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20

All the MORE reason to be joined to a local NT church!

Church: Ekklesia: Means a gathering or assembly, BUT not an ordinary gathering or assembly, but sinners who have been born-again by the Spirit of God.

The church is made up of saints who were called out of darkness, saved from their sins and from the world by the gospel of Jesus Christ and awakened to eternal life by the power of the Spirit of God.

John 1:12-13, Romans 1:16-17, Acts 2:41-47

**Understand: If you're born-again, you ARE the church, (called out of the world unto Christ), there is NO rational or Biblical reason for you to NOT be a member of a local NT church. Don't forget, you were bought with a price! The blood of Jesus Christ!**

Christ is the Architect and Builder of His church; and YOU "saved sinner" are the building materials. But not only is the Lord Jesus the Architect and Builder, He is the Owner! And He continues to be the Owner and Head over the church.

With this in mind, understand that when you come to gather with the saints here at GFBC, you're not coming to "Jimmy's Church", you're coming to a church that belongs to Christ. Not the brick and mortar building, but the regenerate souls of the saints!

Remember 1 Corinthians 3; we must never have "The I am of Paul and I am of Apollos" syndrome. We had better be of Christ and NOT of men!

As for preachers, YES, they are called by God to plant and sow in God's field, (to preach the Word in the church of Christ and to guide the flock of God). Romans 10:14-15

But NEVER, NEVER forget that the Church belongs to Christ, and it is God WHO must give the increase after the planting, sowing, and watering of the good seed, and it is Christ who is building His church!

Listen, if the Ownership isn't right, if I am building this church on my message and my ideas and my philosophies, it will fall, because it is being built upon the sand.

The Pharisee Gamaliel (in the days following Pentecost) counselled the religious leaders in regard to the Apostles, in the time of the birth of the NT Church. His counsel still stands correct to this day, that great followings of men eventually fail and come to nothing. Acts 8:34-39

Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 1:1-3, 2 Corinthians 1:1-2, Ephesians 5:23-24, 29.

### **The Lord Jesus Christ is the Owner and Builder of His Church:**

He builds His Church with living stones, living souls: Sinners born-again by the power of the Spirit of God.

1 Peter 2:1-10, Ephesians 2:19-22, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Remember, the Lord said, "I will build my church". The Lord Jesus Christ FITS EVERY SINNER whom He SAVES into His Church. This being the church universal, (this is every believer in Christ), who is joined to Him and united to Christ by faith!

Therefore, EVERY believer in Christ OUGHT to be an active and participating member of a local NT church.

There are no sinners, whom God's saves, whom He leaves to carelessly wander in the world, (as sheep without a shepherd). Or as in the case of those without a local church, as sheep without an "under-shepherd". Next time we will pick up with the under-shepherds, pastors; and the aversions by some professing Christians to commit to a local NT Church.

Aversion to commitment, Aversion to accountability, & Aversion to authority.