



The Local Church

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The Church (ekklēsia)

Church *ekklēsia*-Means assembly/gathering

- We are the church (Believers Matt 16:18)
 - The word *ekklēsia* is used 118 in the NT
 - Refers either to the universal church & the local church
 - 80% of the time it is referring to the local assembly of believers
- The universal church is revealed and displayed in the context of a local church.

The commands given in scripture (one another's) to the Christian are carried out in the context of the local church.

Assumed Commitment to a local Church in the NT

Many today believe they do not need to be a part of a local church to live out biblical Christianity.

Some who support the need to be a part of a local church believe they can bounce around to a different church to meet their preferences or find other people like themselves

- This type of thinking is never supported in scripture and clearly reveals a very low view of the local church, and a very high view of self

The NT clearly supports a commitment to a local church

Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

The Universal Church was/is organized into local churches

- The Epistles are written to local organized churches or leaders in local churches
- Acts 14:23 *And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.*
- Titus 1:5 *This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you*

Commitment and Responsibility within the local church

The priority the local church holds in your daily life is determined by your view and understanding of the local church

All throughout the NT there is an assumed commitment and responsibility to a local church, without which the commands given to the local church are impossible.

Commitment and Responsibility within the local church

How can you fulfill the following commands without a commitment to a specific local church?

Church Discipline: Matthew 18:15-18
(Implies accountability to each other)

Submitted to leaders: Hebrews 13:17/1 Thess 5:12-14
(Implies accountability to church leaders)

Commitment and Responsibility within the local church

It is within the local church that God has:

- Given the ordinances to be carried out (1 Corinthians 11:17-34, Acts 2:41)
- Established leadership (1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 14:26-40)
- Given commands regarding relationships (1 Timothy 5)
- Given the command to be a pillar and buttress for truth (1 Tim 3:14-15)
- Given the gifts to each individual member to be used for the building up of the local church (1 Corinthians 12)

Commitment and Responsibility within the local church

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Commitment and Responsibility within the local church

- **Acts 20:28** *Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*
- **1 Peter 5:2** *So I exhort the elders... shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

Commitment and Responsibility within the local church

- **1 Corinthians 12**
 - Are we using our gifts to build up/edify the body
 - Do we view our calling to our local body as “indispensable?”
- **Ephesians 4:11-16**
 - Pastors/teachers equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ
 - We function properly “*when each part is working properly*,” it “*makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love*” v16

Commitment and Responsibility within the local church

- Part of commitment is attendance. What does your attendance say regarding your commitment?
- Currently, “have you been viewing the church is here to serve me, or I am here to serve the church?”
 - Who are you currently serving/ministering to?
- The picture I get from the NT is the local church becomes a central focus in the believers life.
- Perfect will of God in our lives
 - What is keeping you from fulfilling your commitment and responsibility to this local church?
- The church is unified in Christ and we are called to “maintain that unity”-Loving, serving & ministering to those different from me (imperfect)