



The Local Church

Local Church Purpose

There are four main principles regarding the purpose of the local church.

Building up the believer in the local congregation. This would be the basic function. Taking the believer to spiritual maturity. Scriptures are abundant. Methods include daily classes, recorded lessons, literature, etc.

Evangelization and missions: Scriptures are abundant and to challenge this concept would be stupid. Providing to others outside the local assembly, information for edification purposes. 1 Cor. 9:7-15. Also the other sheep concept in John 10:16.

"Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7, NASB)

"For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God." (2 Corinthians 9:12, NASB)

"I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd." (John 10:16, NASB)

Training of spiritual gifts: Deacons must first be proved and includes the communication gifts as well as the administration gifts. One of the responsibilities is to teach men that they may be able to teach others also. 1 Tim. 3.

In 2 Timothy 2:2, “entrust” is the second aorist middle indicative of παρατίθημι (paratithēmi). Paul commands Timothy, the pastor of the church at Ephesus, to teach other men whose purpose it will be to teach others also. “Teach” is the aorist active infinitive of διδάσκω (didaskō) and is a command not given to a church, but to a pastor of a church, who is to teach men who will be able to teach.

"The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Timothy 2:2, NASB)

The practice of training other men for the ministry: This was done by the Lord Himself, of the disciples, in the Gospels. This was done by Paul of many men mentioned in the book of Acts. This was commanded of Timothy as the pastor of the Ephesus church. 2 Tim. 2. Titus was told to ordain men to the ministry that had been taught. Titus 1. Paul admonished many of the churches to accept his men in training as they would minister occasionally. 1 Cor. 16:10.

"Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without cause to be afraid, for he is doing the Lord's work, as I also am." (1 Corinthians 16:10, NASB)

Certain men were chosen to be seconds to Paul in his ministry. This was an act of the church. Titus and another brother were helpers in the ministry. Financial responsibility to Titus and the brother was enjoined by Paul upon the Corinthians. Paul administrated the finances of the communicating leadership. 2 Cor. 8:16-24; 2 Cor. 8:8. 2 Corinthians 8:24 is explained by 2 Corinthians 8:8 in context.

"Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you." (2 Corinthians 8:24, NASB)

"I am not speaking this as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of



your love also." (2 Corinthians 8:8, NASB)

In 2 Corinthians 8:19, “appointed” is the aorist passive participle of χειροτονέω (cheirotoneō) and means to appoint by vote and therefore, to enable one to have charge of some office or duty.

"and not only this, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and to show our readiness," (2 Corinthians 8:19, NASB)

Local Church Priorities

There is one pastor-teacher per local church with final authority. He has four priorities, to study, to teach, to work with the church deacon board to resolve problems in the local church, and to exercise leadership authority over his family. Phil. 1:1.

"Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:" (Philippians 1:1, NASB)

The deacons’ priorities are to take in Bible doctrine daily, to oversee local church function, to exercise their spiritual gift of administration by carrying out local church policy, to troubleshoot problems in the local church, to function as examples of grace application in their job where they earn a living, and to exercise leadership authority over their families. 1 Tim. 3; 1 Tim. 5:8.

"But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." (1 Timothy 5:8, NASB)

For men in the congregation, the priority order should be daily intake of Bible doctrine, daily prayer, your wife, your family including raising your children, and lastly your job.

For women in the congregation, the priority order should be daily intake of Bible doctrine, daily prayer, your husband, your family including raising your children, and lastly your job either in business or as a household manager.

The ultimate purpose of the local church is to grow spiritually the congregation of believers who will thereby function under their spiritual gifts. Eph. 4:12; Eph. 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 10; Deut. 32.

"for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;" (Ephesians 4:12, NASB)

"but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love." (Ephesians 4:15-16, NASB)

The local church is the basis for missionary activity. The local church should be supported in the Church Age. A sound missionary organization proceeds out of sound local churches resulting in missionaries founding sound local churches in other countries. The Church began by meeting in homes for Bible class. Rom. 16:5; Acts 12:12; Col. 4:15.

"also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaphroditus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia." (Romans 16:5, NASB)

"And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying." (Acts 12:12, NASB)



"Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house." (Colossians 4:15, NASB)

Local Church Selection

A local church is a group of believers living in one geographical location generally meeting in a building of some kind or a home, and in the early Church under persecution, a cave or catacomb. 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thes. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Rev. 2; Rev. 3.

"To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:" (1 Corinthians 1:2, NASB)

"Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace." (1 Thessalonians 1:1, NASB)

"Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:" (Philippians 1:1, NASB)

It is limited to the believers in that area, whereas the universal Church includes all believers dead and living everywhere. Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 5:25-27; Col. 1:17-19; Col. 2:9-10.

"And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." (Ephesians 1:22-23, NASB)

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless." (Ephesians 5:25-27, NASB)

"He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him," (Colossians 1:17-19, NASB)

"For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;" (Colossians 2:9-10, NASB)

When you enter a local church, how do you evaluate it to confirm it is the one for you to obtain spiritual food? You should ask the following questions. Is the local church emphasized? Is the Bible taught verse by verse on a daily basis by a pastor-teacher with emphasis on knowing Bible doctrine? Do the activities of the local church center in daily study and exposition of the Word of God or does it emphasize a program to keep people busy who attend?

What is the attitude toward Hebrew, Greek, verbal inspiration and literal interpretation? Is the categorical approach followed? Is teaching evangelism used as well as person-to-person evangelism without invading the privacy of the person taught? Is the youth interest built on Bible doctrine or youth activities? Does missionary emphasis center on biblical rapport rather than program or personality?

Ultimately, the right local church will be determined by your ability to identify the one teaching Bible doctrine as your right pastor. This doesn't mean to have to like him personally or that you like his personality, or anything about him. You identify him through his teaching as your right pastor. Therefore recognition of the pastor's authority and submission to it is a must. Heb. 13:7; Heb. 13:17.



"Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith." (Hebrews 13:7, NASB)

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you." (Hebrews 13:17, NASB)

Church Membership

Membership is for any believer who recognizes the authority of the pastor-teacher and attends regularly. In the early Church, the sermons were very long. Acts 20:6-12.

"We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days. On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him." When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left. They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted." (Acts 20:6-12, NASB)

Membership in a local church requires that they be believers in Jesus Christ. Acts 2:41; Acts 2:47.

"So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41, NASB)

"praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved." (Acts 2:47, NASB)

The local church includes members of the Body of Christ resulting from the Baptism of the Holy Spirit at salvation. 1 Cor. 12:12-13; 1 Cor. 12:25-27.

"For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, NASB)

"so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it." (1 Corinthians 12:25-27, NASB)

Members of the Body of Christ must do all things decently and in order. Therefore, the local church must do all things decently and in order. 1 Cor. 14:40.

"But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner." (1 Corinthians 14:40, NASB)

In 1 Timothy 5:8-9, "put on the list" refers to church membership and with it an obligation of the local church to render aid to those who are unable to provide for themselves by other means. In this case, it was a poor widow with no other means to support herself.

"But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the



faith and is worse than an unbeliever. A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man," (1 Timothy 5:8-9, NASB)

In 1 Peter 5:2, "the flock of God among you" refers to a specific local church group.

"shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;" (1 Peter 5:2, NASB)

In Hebrews 10:25, "assembling together" is ἐπισυναγωγή (episunagōgē) and means an assembly of believers, a gathering. Today, the local church is where they are to assemble. The local church building can be anything that the pastor and deacon board have determined. It may even be the home of one of the congregation who has offered their home for services. This was common in the early Church.

"not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:25, NASB)

When churches were persecuted, they met anywhere they could. There were no church buildings until the union of the church and state. The last sanctuary or temple was destroyed in 70 AD. Church buildings came after 300 AD. They observed the Lord's Supper every Sunday. The Word of God should be taught daily so believers can get doctrine daily.

Ingredients of a Good Congregation

Strangely, a good congregation is not a religious congregation, nor a rich congregation, nor the in congregation in town. It does not have to have a dignified gentleman as the pastor, nor does it have to have a program. It does not have religious salesmen peddling their wares door to door.

A good congregation is one that is positive to Bible doctrine and recognizes the primacy of the Word of God. In Revelation chapters 2 and 3, seven different local church congregations are evaluated.

God's will for dissemination of Bible doctrine in the Church Age is a local church. Matt. 16:18; Rev. 2; Rev. 3.

"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." (Matthew 16:18, NASB)

The only bona fide classroom for teaching doctrine in the Church Age is a local church headed up by a pastor-teacher. Eph. 4:11-13.

"And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-13, NASB)

The pastor-teacher should be passionate about teaching his congregation Bible doctrine on a daily basis. As the pastor-teacher teaches doctrine, the capacity of the congregation to love Jesus Christ increases. This capacity is increased because they are functioning under the grace apparatus for perception. This is only possible as a pastor functions under the ICE concept (isagogically, categorically, and exegetically) of Scriptural interpretation. Phil. 2:25-30.

"Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you. Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard;" (Philippians 2:28-29, NASB)



The congregation must have positive volition toward Bible doctrine being taught resulting in assembling to hear more doctrine. In Philippians 2:29, “Receive” is προσδέχομαι (prosdechomai) and means to receive to one’s self, to admit, to give access to one’s self. This is face-to-face teaching. Heb. 10:25.

"Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard;" (Philippians 2:29, NASB)

"not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:25, NASB)

God can multiply a local church’s ministry into a worldwide testimony. Rom. 1:7-8.

"to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world." (Romans 1:7-8, NASB)

God constantly evaluates local congregations and tests them. Rev. 2 and 3. The ingredients of a good congregation include teachable positive believers who are faithful to the Word of God. To function as a congregation, they must also respect the privacy and the rights of other believer-priests. The inevitable result is that relaxed atmosphere of live and let live even while being tested or enduring undeserved suffering. Rev. 2:5; Rev. 2:10.

"Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent." (Revelation 2:5, NASB)

"Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2:10, NASB)

Ingredients of a good congregation include being able to handle spiritual testing and undeserved suffering. They will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. They hate false doctrine and love divine truth. They stay in fellowship the majority of the time and by doing so, avoid divine discipline. They hear and believe the Bible doctrine taught and stay positive so they can be effective in the Angelic Conflict. Rev. 2:14-16.

"But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality. 'So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 'Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth." (Revelation 2:14-16, NASB)

The good congregation should have inner happiness in their souls from the intake of doctrine as well as the edification complex of the soul and maximum doctrine in the right lobe. The good congregation grows to spiritual maturity. This means freedom from reversionism. This means having objectivity so that the congregation can benefit from the pastor’s ministry without getting tangled up in or being disillusioned by the pastor’s old sin nature. Rev. 3:1-6; Rev. 3:2; Luke 8:14.

"Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God." (Revelation 3:2, NASB)

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (Revelation 3:6, NASB)



""The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity." (Luke 8:14, NASB)

The good congregation knows dispensational truth. There is no confusion about the place of the Jews as a nation. There is no confusion between the Church Age and the Tribulation. Rev. 3:7-13; Rev. 3:9-10.

"Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.'" (Revelation 3:9-10, NASB)

The good congregation comprehends the folly of being a lukewarm Christian. Rev. 3:14-22

"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.'" (Revelation 3:15-16, NASB)

"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.'" (Revelation 3:19-20, NASB)

Local Church Finances

The principle of equal responsibility is stated in 2 Corinthians 8:9-15. As there should be an equality in giving so there should be an equality in handling. One believer does not give to alleviate the responsibility of the giving of another believer. Even so, one fund should not be used to alleviate the responsibility of another fund. Just as a believer cannot rely on another to take up his slack, neither can one fund rely on another fund to take up its slack.

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich." (2 Corinthians 8:9, NASB)

"at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality;" (2 Corinthians 8:14, NASB)

The principle of communicator's priority is found in Acts 6:3-4. This is the matter of the business of the local church being given to deacons to allow the communicator to give himself to the ministry of the Word unhindered by the normal pursuits of life. If the deacon duties can distract communicators, much more so do the normal life pursuits hinder the ministry of the communicators.

""Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."" (Acts 6:3-4, NASB)

The principle of support of communicators is found in 2 Corinthians 12:13. Much is made of the tentmaking of Paul. Not much, however, is said that this was done under the principle of supreme sacrifice and not the norm or standard. Paul states that the inferiority of the Corinthian church was in the area of non-support to him. Paul says, "Forgive me this wrong."

"For in what respect were you treated as inferior to the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not become a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong!" (2 Corinthians 12:13, NASB)

In 2 Corinthians 12:13, "wrong" is ἀδικία (adikia) and means the wrong of depriving another of what is



his. The Corinthians were deprived of their rightful responsibility to support Paul. Paul's taking from the other churches deprived them of their responsibility. As a result, they were inferior. "Inferior" is the aorist passive indicative of ἡττάω (hēttaō) and means that they were made this way by Paul's actions. It means to be less than they should be by now.

In 2 Corinthians 11:8-9 and 2 Corinthians 11:12, we find the statements of Paul's actions regarding support and the accompanying factors. In 2 Corinthians 11:8, "I robbed other churches" is συλάω (sulaō) and means to rob, to plunder. This Greek word is closely connected to another Greek word σκῦλον (skulon) which means to take the skin off someone. It means to strip the body of arms, to peel the arms from the body. The robbing is described by the aorist active participle of λαμβάνω (lambanō) and means taking or receiving. His robbing of other churches was the receiving of support, while at the same time, the Corinthian church was getting the benefit.

"I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to serve you;" (2 Corinthians 11:8, NASB)

"But what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting." (2 Corinthians 11:12, NASB)

In 2 Corinthians 11:9, "burden" is καταναρκάω (katanarkaō) and means to weigh heavily upon. Paul states that he did not weigh heavily upon them for support and there was a definite reason behind it. In 2 Corinthians 12:13, Paul uses the same term to define his wrong to them. Paul did accept support from the Macedonian believers to help in the Corinthian work. But this was for a very specific purpose stated in 2 Corinthians 12:12

"and when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so." (2 Corinthians 11:9, NASB)

"The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles." (2 Corinthians 12:12, NASB)

However, one must remember we are talking of the functions of one man, an apostle, operating in several churches, not just one church, operating as a man, not as a corporate body of believers. The purpose for Paul's actions set forth in 2 Corinthians 12:12. This was done to "cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded." This was done to eliminate anything or anyone from using this as a gripe tactic.

2 Corinthians 11:12, "occasion" is ἀφορμή (aphormē) and has several meanings taken together which give the import of Paul's reasons for not demanding support from the Corinthians. They are; a base from which one attacks another with reference to an attack on a financial basis, that by which an endeavor is excited and goes forth, that which provides the incentive for other actions, and the opportunity or resource to which we look to get something done.

"But what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting." (2 Corinthians 11:12, NASB)

2 Corinthians 11:12, "desire" is the present active participle of θέλω (thelō) and means to wish for a thing. It is without the article in Greek, therefore, is anartharous in construction. This means that the participle indicates that the action described in the participle is a characteristic of the person. In other words, Paul knew that there were some Corinthians who were always looking for something to nail him



with.

This is indicated by the last phrase in 2 Corinthians 11:12 “to be regarded just as we are” means that in order that they might glory, having caught Paul, and therefore, show themselves just like him. In other words, he has found things wrong with them and pointed it out. Now they continually look for something in him that they can point out and be equal with him. He knows this financial issue is just the thing they would pounce on.

The entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 9 sets forth the concept that the ones who communicate live by the resources to whom they communicate.

The Church Universal

Believers are said to be “in Christ” during the Church Age. This is Positional Truth. This is the Church universal. No matter how carnal or how much in emotional revolt or reversionism, you are in Christ, if you have been saved. There is no way to be kicked out of the Church universal. 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 8:38-39; 2 Cor. 5:17.

"To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:" (1 Corinthians 1:2, NASB)

"But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption," (1 Corinthians 1:30, NASB)

"Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1, NASB)

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39, NASB)

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." (2 Corinthians 5:17, NASB)

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, “old things are passed away” does not mean to give up demon rum or going with wild women. There are no taboos involved here. The applications are many. There is no such thing as closed communion. That is blasphemy. 1 Cor. 11:22-32.

"What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you." (1 Corinthians 11:22, NASB)

"Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly." (1 Corinthians 11:27-29, NASB)

Regarding baptism, every time some people think of baptism they think of water. Yet, there are seven baptisms in Scripture. In Ephesians 4:5, “One Lord, one faith, one baptism” is referring to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit joining each of us into union with Christ at the point of salvation.

"one Lord, one faith, one baptism," (Ephesians 4:5, NASB)

There are so many goofy things are going on in local churches today. They include loving everybody,



get a program with every member involved, get more youth directors, and have the choir directors direct this and direct that. Everything but the systematic teaching of the Word of God. I have ladies in my church who have more Bible doctrine than 80% of the fundamental pastors around the country.

In the Church universal, includes every believer in Christ, living or dead. When you express faith in Jesus Christ to belong to the Body of Christ (the Church universal), there is no biblical information on “joining the local church.” 1 Cor. 12:12.

"For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ." (1 Corinthians 12:12, NASB)

But, many, many passages indicate that local churches were comprised of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Believers who recognized the authority of the pastor-teacher. Believers who have the conviction that this is my “right” pastor-teacher. 1 Cor. 12:1.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware." (1 Corinthians 12:1, NASB)

In Acts 9:31, the word “church” is ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia) and is an old Attic Greek word for assembly. Athens was the only true democratic city-state in the ancient world. Every citizen was a member of congress and when congress convened they all assembled in a large hall (30,000 - 40,000) This was an *ekklēsia*.

"So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase." (Acts 9:31, NASB)

Some fraternities had an *ekklēsia*. In Acts 7:38, “congregation” is the same word and is used for the assembly of Jews in the Old Testament. This has nothing to do with the Church.

""This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you." (Acts 7:38, NASB)

In Matthew 18:17, you do not have a local church, but a synagogue called an *ekklēsia*. In Acts 19:25, we have a meeting of a union for business or political reasons. The word “church” does not appear in the passage, but it does in secular background.

""If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." (Matthew 18:17, NASB)

"these he gathered together with the workmen of similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that our prosperity depends upon this business." (Acts 19:25, NASB)

The Local Church Ultimates

The local church is the ultimate authority from God and for the communication of His thinking to believers in the Church Age. This includes the precept which is the categorical imperative of Isaiah 28:9 and the lines of Scripture, which furnish the fuel for the precepts.

""To whom would He teach knowledge, And to whom would He interpret the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just taken from the breast?" (Isaiah 28:9, NASB)

The local church is the ultimate means of communication from God through His Word. Matt. 28:19-20.



""Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."" (Matthew 28:19-20, NASB)

The local church communicates Bible doctrine authoritatively through a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher. He eventually will teach on a daily basis. Heb. 3:13; Heb. 10:25.

"But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." (Hebrews 3:13, NASB)

"not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:25, NASB)