

## **I Need The Local Church** **1 Corinthians 12:20–27**

### **Continuing Our Look At Fellowship**

Do I have a responsibility to the local church?

Local churches or congregations are prominent in the New Testament

**Corinth - 1Corinthians 1:2; Thessalonica - 1Thessalonians 1:1; 7 churches of Asia - Revelation 1:4**

**Jerusalem - Acts 2:46-47; Antioch - Acts 11:26**

Local churches were well organized functioning units. God did not organize the universal church into a functioning unit, He left the work up to the individual local churches in any given area.

Should I be a member of a local church?

Some contend that, once baptized, they are a member of Lord's church and no other action is necessary - \* Universally - Yes; Locally - No (Must join the church)

Saul, after his conversion, went to Jerusalem. What did he do? - **Acts 9:26**

Greek for "join" or "associate" "kallao" kol-lah-o means "to glue, to stick - cleave, join (self), keep company" (Strong's)

One doesn't join church universal - are added to it - **Acts 2:47**

So what does one join? local church

Paul desired to be part of this group. After initial reluctance they accepted him as part of congregation - **Acts 9:28**

Peter was a member of a local church - **1Peter 5:1**

Why is it necessary for a Christian to join himself to other Christians?

### **Necessity Of Local Church Membership**

Early Christians did things together for mutual benefit - **Acts 2:41-42**

Important to worshiping with sound church, not apostate group.

If there is no sound church to be found, no choice but to start one.

Hebrew writer exhorted Christians not to forsake assembly so they could admonish and be admonished - **Hebrews 10:23-25**

Our assembling together with other Christians is for our good! Scriptures teach we have obligation to one another in this regard.

Our attitude toward life itself should manifest itself in our work and worship of God.

When we fail to assemble with a local work then we are selfish, not considering our brethren.

How can we provoke one another to love and good works if we are at the lake, golf course, or at home instead of with the saints worshiping God?

Another aspect of local church membership is discipline.

God put discipline in government and in the home. All of man needs discipline. Discipline is for own good - **Hebrews 12:6**

God put a system of discipline within the local church **1Corinthians 5**

Church was instructed to withdraw from an erring brother - why? - **1Corinthians 5:5**

Not retribution, or punishment, but cause to realize error that might be saved! For his own good!

Should see blessedness of church discipline. I want to go to heaven. Local congregation can help.

Added to Lord's church (universal) thru baptism, but "join" local

Why deny self access to that which God designed for his own good? Do we doubt God's wisdom?

Or are we seeking to avoid God's discipline because we have a heart problem?

If we do not join with a local congregation, how carry out Jesus' instructions? - **Matthew 18:17**

We are responsible for promoting Unity in local congregation.

Why be part of body and not promote unity? - **1Corinthians 1:10**

Each strive to keep unity of Spirit bond of peace. Promotes unity among brethren! - **Ephesians 4:2-3**

Clearly, God intends that every Christian join himself to a local church.

Provided local church as vehicle for feeding & oversight of sheep

Considering this: Should you be an active member of a local church?

## **Blessings of Local Church Membership**

### **Fellowship in Worship.**

Draw strength from one another meet to worship heavenly Father! - **Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16**

Gained as partake of Lord's Supper on first day of the week - **1Corinthians 11:26**

Working alone, worshiping, standing & serving alone discourages - **Romans 11:2-4**

### **Fellowship in Work.**

"Fellowship" is joint participation. Fellowship in work means all are working. If you are not working, then you are not in this fellowship.

It is blessing, to share work. Some I can't reach, but you can, thankful that I have others to work with me.

### **Blessings of Brotherly Love.**

In times of physical problems, I thank God for brethren who care. In times of spiritual crisis, some care enough to be there. Some love enough to reprove, rebuke, exhort when it is needed -

**2Timothy 4:1-2; Proverbs 27:5**

Helps when one says "We missed you!" Knowing they truly mean it!

We have responsibilities in encouraging & loving one another - **Colossians 2:2; John 13:34-35**

In a world of turmoil it is good to come to God's family where there is love & happiness & everyone wants to be here and be part of it.

## **Thankful For Local Church**

We need to be thankful to God for all of his blessings to us

Be thankful for blessings associated with being child of God, member of body of Christ, church of Christ.

Thankful for blessings associated with member of local congregation

All of us have responsibilities in local congregation - **1Corinthians 12:20-27**

Be loyal to Christ & responsibilities He has given to each of us.

Only function as unit God designed when we each do our part. - **Ephesians 4:16**

Are you doing your part or have you failed God, & His family?

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