

## The Church The Local Congregation

### Lesson #49

1. Everyone who trusts Christ BY FAITH is a member of the BODY OF CHRIST and the true Christian will seek the fellowship of OTHER BELIEVERS.
2. Every Christian should, therefore, IDENTIFY himself and JOIN the fellowship of a LOCAL, BIBLE BELIEVING church.
3. It is in the local congregation that you have your GREATEST OPPORTUNITY to study the Word of God and thereby grow in GRACE and KNOWLEDGE.
4. The New Testament scriptures are FILLED with references to the LOCAL church.
  - A. The churches AT JUDEA.
  - B. The churches OF GALATIA.
  - C. The churches OF MACEDONIA.
  - D. The SEVEN churches of ASIA.
5. The Apostle Paul ESTABLISHED LOCAL churches everywhere he went.
6. The LOCAL ASSEMBLY is the physical body by which the BODY OF CHRIST, the church, is manifested.
7. When Peter preached in Acts, Chapter 2, over 3,000 people were ADDED TO THE CHURCH. Acts 2:41 and 47.
8. The book of Acts has no FORMAL ENDING because the WORK GOES ON and will go on until all THE GENTILES who are going to be saved are saved. Romans 11:25
9. Christ's OUTLINE for the local church is found in ACTS 1:8.
10. Luke FOLLOWS CHRIST'S OUTLINE as the book of Acts unfolds.
  - A. Jerusalem Acts 2:1 and 14
  - B. Judea and Samaria Acts 8:1 and 5
  - C. The uttermost part of the world. Acts 8:26; 10:1
11. With the coming of the Holy Spirit came THE POWER TO ESTABLISH the local body of Christ. Luke 24:49; John 14:16 and 26; and Acts 1:4
12. Of the 3,000 promises in the Bible the promise of the Holy Spirit is the only one called the promise OF THE FATHER. (see above verses)
13. The local church was VISIBLY established on the Day of Pentecost with 120 brethren. Acts 1:15

14. The MANDATE of the Lord to LOCAL CHURCHES is found in the GREAT COMMISSION.  
Matthew 28:19 and 20

- A. MAKE disciples
- B. BAPTIZE them
- C. TEACH them

\* See also Luke 24:47-51

15. We know that this mandate was for the local assembly because His instruction was given to a VISIBLE local group of people residing IN JERUSALEM.

16. Acts, Chapters 1 and 2, begins the HISTORY and DEVELOPMENT of the local congregation.

17. The local church is a FELLOWSHIP with Christ as its LIVING CENTER. 1 Corinthians 1:9

18. It is also a fellowship of BELIEVERS based on a MUTUAL love for Christ.  
1 John 3:14 and 16

19. As members of a local fellowship we have a command for PEACE AND UNITY.  
Ephesians 4:3; 1 Thess. 5:12 and 13; 1 John 1:7

20. The local church is designed to SUSTAIN BELIEVERS with comfort, love, teaching and admonishing. 1 Thess. 4:18; 1 Peter 1:22; and Colossians 3:16

21. The church should be ACTIVELY INVOLVED in reaching out to WIN PEOPLE to Christ.  
1 Peter 3:15; Romans 10:14 and 15

22. The NEW TESTAMENT refers to a local body of believers approximately 100 TIMES.  
Here are about one half of those references which you should look up on your own.

Matthew 18:17  
Acts 2:41 & 42  
Acts 2:47  
Acts 5:14 & 42  
Acts 6:7  
Acts 8:1 & 3  
Acts 9:31  
Acts 11:19-26  
Acts 14:23  
Acts 13 & 14  
Acts 14:27  
Acts 15:41  
Acts 16:5 & 6  
Acts 16:11-40

Acts 17:1-4  
Acts 18:2  
Acts 19:8-10  
Acts 20:7 & 17  
Acts 28:17-31  
Romans 1:7  
1 Corinthians 1:2  
1 Corinthians 4:17  
1 Corinthians 7:17  
1 Corinthians 16:19  
2 Corinthians 1:1  
2 Corinthians 8:1  
2 Corinthians 12:28  
Galatians 1:2 & 22

Philippians 1:1  
Colossians 1:2  
Colossians 4:15 & 16  
1 Thess. 1:1  
2 Thess. 1:1  
1 Timothy 3:15  
Philemon 2  
James 5:14  
3 John 6 & 10  
Rev. 1:4, 11 & 20  
Rev. 2:1, 8, 12 & 18  
Rev. 3:1, 7 & 14  
Rev. 22:16

## Conclusion

Have you ever thought of living in a world with no local churches? The local church is not perfect - far from it -- but it is the instrument of God to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are many good Christian organizations with great causes, but they do not take the place of the local church. Most of them would fade away were it not for the support of Christians in local churches.

Jesus loved the church and gave Himself for it. He blesses the church that is true to the Word of God -- in its teaching and preaching ministries. Paul says, "Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word" (Ephesians 5:25-26). The word for "wash" is the same word used for "laver." In the Greek the word is "loutron" -- in Hebrew "kiyor." In the tabernacle or the temple there was the laver where the priests washed before entering the sanctuary of God. That is the word Paul uses, the laver of the Word. Our Lord washes His church with the laver of the Word.