

The Local Church – Why Plug In?

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching” Hebrews 10:25

Jesus desires a growing relationship with us, and there are things we can do to cultivate our relationship with Him (e.g. talking/praying with Him regularly, reading and following His word, enjoying inspiring music and personal worship, serving people, etc). One important component is to be actively a part of a local church. Jesus wants us to be part of a church – and intends for the Christian life to be lived in community, not isolation. Jesus loves the church and so should we.

We are a part (member) of God’s “household”, His “body” and His “family” (Luke 8:19-21; Romans 8:13-17; Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 1:5, 2:19). Every member is important, and has a role to play for the good of the whole and God’s Kingdom (2 Corinthians 12:12-27).

There are many scriptures that directly or indirectly speak about the importance of being involved with a local church, including Malachi 3:8-10; Matthew 16:18, 18:20, 22:34-40, 28:18-20; Luke 4:16, 11:42; Acts 2:42-47, 11:26, 20:7; Romans 12:1-16, 15:5-6; I Corinthians 11: 23-26, 12:12-27, 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; Galatians 3:26-29, 6:2, 10; Ephesians 2:19-22, 3:10-11, 4:11-16, 5:25-27; Colossians 3:16; I Thessalonians 5:11; 2 Timothy 4:1-2; Titus 2:1-8; Hebrews 3:13, 10:24-25; James 5:13-16; I Peter 4:10, 5:1-2.

From these scriptures we can identify at least 20 benefits of being actively involved in a local church including:

- 1) Shows obedience to God and His word (Hebrews 10:25).
- 2) Follows the example of Jesus Himself who made it a practice to attend church (synagogue) regularly (Luke 4:16).
- 3) Sets a good example for others; shows our priorities. Follows examples of dedicated believers through the years (Acts 2:46, 11:26, 20:7).
- 4) Opportunity for Corporate worship. Opportunity to experience Jesus' presence in a special way (Matthew 18:20; Acts 2:47; Romans 15:5-6; Colossians 3:16).
- 5) Opportunity for Corporate fellowship; connecting with and building relationships with other believers (Acts 2:42-47).
- 6) Benefit from the talents and spiritual gifts of others – we receive God’s grace in its various forms (Romans 12:4-8).
- 7) Benefiting others by using our talents and spiritual gifts in serving (Romans 12:4-8; I Corinthians 12:12-27; I Peter 4:10).
- 8) Learn from biblical teaching and be equipped by Pastors, Elders and Teachers (Acts 11:26; Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 4:1-2; I Peter 5:1-2).

- 9) Be sparked to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24).
- 10) Participate in the Lord's Supper (communion) – a time of reflection, remembrance, cleansing and unity building (I Corinthians 11:23-26).
- 11) Opportunity to pray for and pray with others (Acts 2:42; James 5:13-16).
- 12) A place to receive and give out encouragement. An opportunity to encourage others by our presence (Romans 12:10-13; Galatians 6:10; I Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13).
- 13) A place to be positively influenced by godly/mature men and women (Titus 2:1-8).
- 14) An opportunity to “mourn with those who mourn, and rejoice with those who rejoice” (Romans 12:15).
- 15) A place to care for the poor and needy of the church and community, and receive help if we ever need it (Acts 2:45; Romans 12:10-13; Galatians 6:10).
- 16) An opportunity to bridge across age, race, economic status and other differences and build relationships and make friends with people we normally would not (Romans 12:16; Galatians 3:26-29).
- 17) Place to bring our tithes and offerings and make eternally significant financial investments (Malachi 3:8-10; Luke 11:42; I Corinthians 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5).
- 18) Support corporate outreach and seeing people get saved, baptized and growing in the Lord. Helps fulfill the Great Commission to make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20).
- 19) A unique opportunity to fulfill the Great Commands Jesus gave us to Love God and Love People (Matthew 22:34-40).
- 20) Our engagement and support including the giving of our love, time, talents and treasures makes the church healthier and stronger. This makes the church more attractive to people that need the Lord and can benefit from being part of a church family (Acts 2:42-47).