



FIRST STEPS

a core course of Life Transformations

Del Wells

INCLUDES STUDY GUIDE

Lesson 5: Church – Devoted to the Fellowship

The Big Deal!

Belonging to a local church brings responsibilities and benefits to you.

**“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 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 10:24-25**

Benefits of Belonging

1. What benefits are there from being an active member of a local church?

The church is made up of every born-again believer in Jesus Christ. As Saviour and Lord, Jesus is the Head of the church. Your Christian life matures as you grow in your relationship with Christ and His church.

As the verses above indicate, we as social beings need one another to spur each other on toward love and good deeds and to encourage one another to persevere in the faith. Christ’s universal church is made up of millions of local churches to help the members develop and mature as Christians. Becoming an active part of a Christ-centered, Bible-teaching church is indispensable in helping you grow and develop in your Christian life.

2. What two things is the church referred to as in 1 Timothy 3:15?

Notice that the church is not only the family of God, but it is also the guardian of the truth of God’s Word. The Bible is the standard by which you are to measure your life and conduct. The Christian church is charged with the responsibility of preserving the priority of God’s Word in the world. You will benefit greatly by systematically hearing and applying the teaching of the Bible to your life.

3. Read Matthew 16:18

- a. What did Jesus say He was committed to doing?
- b. What would try but fail to prevent Jesus from keeping His promise?

Responsibilities of Belonging

4. What are some of your responsibilities as a church member?

a. John 13:34-35

b. Romans 12:1

c. Romans 12:10

d. Galatians 6:10

e. Ephesians 4:2

f. Ephesians 4:29

g. Colossians 3:13

h. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

i. James 5:16

j. 1 Peter 4:9

k. 1 Peter 4:10

l. Hebrews 13:17

Choosing a Church

You should attend a local church that:

- openly proclaims Jesus Christ as Lord
- teaches and preaches the Bible as God's Word
- practices prayer in faith

- encourages and trains its members to serve in ministry
- reaches out to a lost world with the gospel
- worships the Lord together regularly.

Be involved in and support the church's leadership and mission.

Your Response

Take some time to think about and pray for the church you attend. Remember that the church belongs to Christ and that He is actively building it to endure.

Quote Hebrews 10:24-25 by memory if you can and thank the Lord that He has placed you in the church to encourage others to grow in their Christian faith. Think of those that you are spurring on to growth and maturity and pray that God will continue to use you to bless their lives.

Thank the Lord for what you have learned from the teaching of the Word of God. Pray that the Lord will continue to give you an increased appetite for learning and applying biblical truths as they are taught and revealed.

Be familiar with the mission of your church. Support your pastors and leaders and be willing to be used by God to see the mission accomplished.



LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

STUDY GUIDE

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The Big Deal!

Emphasize the responsibilities and benefits of belonging to a local church for you and the other members.

Benefits of Belonging

Question 1 – Benefits include:

building our faith / to receive encouragement and give it to others

growing in the giving and receiving of love in the Body of Christ which is a witness to the world

teaching in the Word of God / a place of accountability

fellowship

It is impossible to be a Christian without being part of a local Body because we need the benefits of belonging to mature. The New Testament church stressed the importance of staying connected to the Body.

This is a good time to give personal examples of how you benefit from belonging to a local church.

Question 3 – Matthew 16:18 – Jesus is committed to building His church. Christ is the head of the church and nothing can stop Him. The gates of hell—Satan and his forces—will try to defeat the church but will not succeed.

Responsibilities of Belonging

Questions 4 – Responsibilities include:

- a. John 13:34-35 – Loving one another
- b. Romans 12:1 – Learning how to worship God
- c. Romans 12:10 – Being devoted to and honouring one another
- d. Galatians 6:10 – Doing good to others
- e. Ephesians 4:2 – Being patient with one another
- f. Ephesians 4:29 – Speaking helpful words on every occasion
- g. Colossians 3:13 – Forgiving grievances against one another
- h. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 – Encouraging and building up one another
- i. James 5:16 – Confessing sins to and praying for one another
- j. 1 Peter 4:9 – Offering hospitality to others
- k. 1 Peter 4:10 – Serving one another
- l. Hebrews 13:17 – Obeying your leaders.

Encourage people to belong to a local church and to get involved in its life and ministry. Be careful not to give positions of great responsibility or leadership too quickly to new believers. They can easily become discouraged through dealing with difficult issues. They need time to be discipled in the Word and equipped for mature ministry.

Discussion Group Questions – Lesson 5

1. What are some benefits of being an active member of a local church for you and for others?
2. What is the significance of our church being:
 - a. Part of the family of God?
 - b. A guardian of God's Word (the Bible)?
3. What encouragement do you receive from knowing that Jesus Christ is the Head of our church?
4. Describe in practical terms some of your responsibilities in belonging to our church.
5. With so many different churches, how do you choose one?
6. What is the mission of your church and what do you like about it?
7. What are some ways you can help your church to accomplish its mission?