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Step 5: Why is the church so important?

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The importance of the Local Church

A. What is the Church?

1. The Body of Christ 1 Co 12:1-27

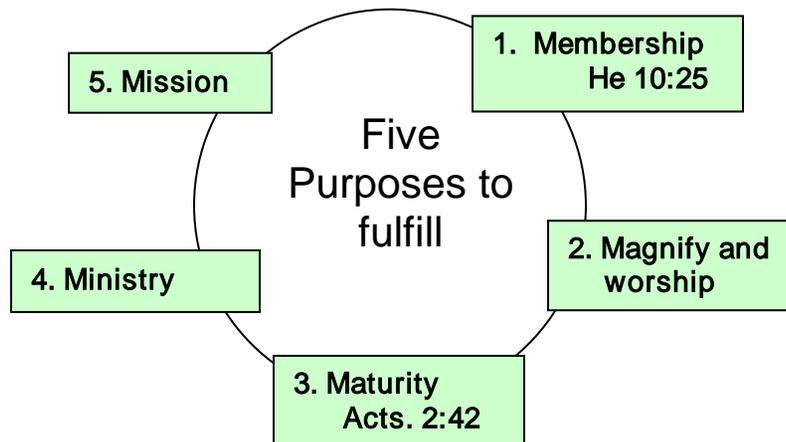
2. Local



Universal



B. ¿Why is it necessary?



C. Why should we participate in the Church?

1. A mature life requires all five elements.
2. God commands us to be part of His Church (Heb. 10:25)
3. It protects us from extremes
4. Advice of mature Christians is available.

D. What kind of church should we attend?

- Where the Gospel is preached
- Where training is given
- Where love abounds
- The doctrine is biblical
- Where the members are filled with the Spirit

Whoever you are or wherever you were saved, it is the same experience for everyone anywhere in the world.

The first work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to baptize us (that is, “put us into...or immerse us”) into the Body of Christ with all other believers. Even without knowing it, we were made a part of the Body of Christ the moment we believed by being put into [baptized into] Him. This is not based on our feelings, but we know it happened because the Bible declares it.

II. Why is it necessary to involve ourselves in a “local” church?

Obviously, the Universal Body of Christ is not visible here on earth, nor does it function as an organization. In separate communities around the world, members of the Body of Christ gather for very important reasons. Meeting together is essential in order for the believers to grow spiritually. There are more than fifty commandments in the New Testament that can be obeyed only by being part of a local church.

A. It is necessary to commit to MEMBERSHIP

Communion does not happen only when the believers are meeting together. “Communion” means “share, have in common, or participate”. Communion is to learn from others, give to others, and share the same beliefs.

1) This implies that it is important to protect UNITY in the church by...

- Eph 4:3 "Maintain the bond of _____"
- Eph. 4:29 Be careful with our _____
- Heb 13:17 Obey and subject ourselves to _____

2) We should assume part of the responsibility for...

- Lu 14:23 Make an effort to _____
- 1 Thess 1:2 Remember to _____
- Ro 15:7 We should _____ one another

3) We should commit ourselves to ministries in the church in order to...

- 1 Pet 4:10, Discover our _____ and _____
- Eph 4:12, Be _____ by church leaders

4) My commitment includes helping the church ...

- 1 Cor 16:2 Each week I should _____
- 2 Cor 9:7-8 How much should I give? _____
- Mal 3:8-11 How did Israel rob God? _____

Step 5: The Importance of the Local Church

What does the phrase “prove me now herewith”^{KJV} mean? (vs. 10)

Heb 10:24-25, I must _____ the services.

If we want to be obedient to Christ, we should attend church because it is a command. When we meet together, three things should occur. (1) *Consider one another*, that is, take care of each other; (2) *provoke one another* [literally it means “agitate”] to show love and good works; (3) *exhort one another*, [“motivate or console one another”].

Many believers do not mature for lack of contact with other believers for the purpose of mutual giving and receiving of spiritual blessings, being accountable to one another and for being motivated by others to obey.

Write below the four activities of the early church found in **Acts 2:42**.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

The step of committing to the Family of God in membership to a local church is vital to our growth in the faith.

B. It is necessary for our MATURITY

In **Acts 2:42** we saw that the early church continued in “the doctrine of the apostles.” What are the three aspects of the ministry of the Word in **1 Timothy 4:13**?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

After *reading* a passage, exhortation is the application of that passage to our lives; *teaching* is the discovering the meaning of a passage and forming of principles for our lives.

In **2 Timothy 3:16-17**, what are the four uses of the Word that are necessary for us to be “*perfect*” or “*complete, mature*,” and prepared to do good works for God?

1. _____
2. _____

Step 5: The Importance of the Local Church

3. _____

4. _____

Each aspect of the use of the Word (*doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness*) should be exercised in the local church. Our attitude in going to church should be to learn everything possible so that we may be effective Christians for the next week. What was the problem with the believers in **Hebrews 5:12**? _____

They had been taught well, but did not want to share what they had learned; they did not want to be involved in the ministry. If we do not share what we are learning, what happens to us? (**Hebrews 5:11**). _____

They lost their desire to know the Word. They became “*dull of hearing*” that is, *lazy and slow, lacking interest and motivation*. This was probably the result of being absent from the church meetings.

They lacked the desire to apply the Bible to their lives and the maturity to guide them in their expressions of praise to God.

C. It is necessary to MAGNIFY or worship God.

True worship happens when a person responds in obedience to what God says. Less that this is “lip service,” and nothing more. What are the two characteristics for worshipers that the Father seeks in **John 4:23-24**?

The two concepts of worshiping in *spirit and in truth* means:

- (1) To be sincere, desirous of genuine submission to the will of God.
- (2) Have a clear understanding of the Truth (without error) responding with joy and obedience

Israel showed the opposite of this attitude in **Isaiah 29:13**. What was their problem? _____

The local church must teach for understanding and for application of the Word, not “*precepts of men*.” Those who worship come with their spirits conditioned to accept the truth and acts accordingly. These are the worshipers that the Father is seeking.

To see believers praising the Lord for His truth and grace, and singing for His glory, honors God and is beneficial for our growth. Those who only

Step 5: The Importance of the Local Church

occupy a seat rarely desire to learn from the Word of God. Those who take advantage of the teaching and then apply it to their lives become equipped to invest their energies in ministry to others.

D. It is necessary to be involved in MINISTRY

God will never ask something of us without providing what is necessary to do it. He has given each believer "gifts" or capacities and the motivation to serve Him in some area of the church. It is His investment in our ministry for the Kingdom. However, we must involve ourselves in a ministry in order to discover the gifts He has given us. God made us with gifts, talents, passion and temperaments together with our experiences. Our unique profile will determine where and how we can serve effectively in the church.

1 Pet 4:10-11 What does the imperative in this verse mean? _____

E. It is necessary for our MISSION in life.

What was the Apostle Paul's principle motivation in Acts 20:24?

His *career* was his *mission* in this life, which God had prepared for him to accomplish in the Kingdom of God. Paul did not want to fail God. The purpose of the church is to help us mature and to train us while organizing opportunities of service so that we can accomplish our mission in this life.

III. What is the requirement to be a member of the church?

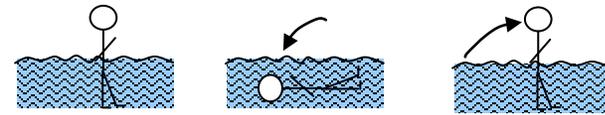
Each Christian should follow the biblical example of identifying himself with Christ and His Church through water baptism. This symbolizes what Christ has done in our lives: He joins us to Himself and his death, burial and resurrection. We are then made a new creatures-- *resurrected!* (2 Co 5:17). The MODE of baptism that symbolizes what saves us (union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection) is IMMERSION.

1. Read Romans 6:3-4. What puts us into the death, burial and resurrection of Christ? _____

If it is the "*baptism*" that puts us into Christ, it must be the *baptism of the Spirit* (1 Co 12:13). If the Spirit unites us with Christ in such a way that His death is our death, His burial is our burial and His resurrection is our resurrection, then water baptism should symbolize this same operation of the

Step 5: The Importance of the Local Church

Spirit. Write below each diagram the three steps of baptism: DEATH
BURIAL RESURRECTION



Review #5: The Local Church

1. What is the Church? It is the B _____ of Christ.
2. If the Church is the Body of Christ, why is a local church necessary?

3. There are five reasons that make it necessary to be involved in a local church. Complete each sentence below without reading the lesson, if possible.
 - a. It is C _____ that we meet together.
 - b. It is for C _____ among believers.
 - c. It is for E _____ of the believers
 - d. It gives us the opportunity to W _____ God.
 - e. We also have the opportunity to _____
4. To become involved in a church, what should we do first?
Be B _____
5. In order to choose a good local church where we can grow and invest our time and money, what should be the requirements of that church?
 - a. There should be P _____ of the Gospel.
 - b. The leaders should be committed to the ζ ? _____
E _____ of each member.
 - c. There should be programs for M _____ y
E _____
6. How much total time should the ministry in a local church require each week? _____ hrs. to _____ hrs.
7. Is optional that each believer support the church financially? Why?

8. How does God see our lack of giving to the church?

9. Water baptism symbolizes what great work of the Spirit? _____
