Step 5: Why is the church so important?

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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 immerge 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? ________
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What does the phrase “prove me now herewith” 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 “agitator”] 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 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. _______________________________________________________

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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
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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

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 ¿?_____________
      E______________ of each member.
   c. There should be programs for M______________ y

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?_________________