
Basic Disciplines for Believers

Discipline #5: Committed Gathering

Because I am part of THE Body, I faithfully gather with a local body in accordance with God's design to be grown and help the body to grow.

Heb 10:24-25 ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Two Churches?

The UNIVERSAL Church

THE Church – The one (universal) assembly that is composed of all believers of the church age. THE Church is the body of Christ. This body has never met together, and does not function as a unit (as of yet).

- **Matt 16:18** "...on this rock I will build My church..."
- **1 Cor 12:13** "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body..."
- **Eph 5:23** "...the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church..."

The LOCAL Church

A Church – Any group of believers gathering together in a specific, geographical area, and functioning as a Bible-defined local church. A Biblical church has qualified leaders, and works together as a local body as defined by God.

- **Matt 18:15-17** ¹⁷ And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen... .
- **Gal 1:2** "...To the churches of Galatia"
- **Rev 2:1** "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write..."

What Is the Church?

What the Church Is NOT:

1. The Church Is Not a Place

- Biblically speaking, "Let's go to church" is erroneous and leads to false ideas.
- Thus, "church" involves more than just "going somewhere."
- "Where do you want to go to church this Sunday?" misses the Biblical teaching of what a church is and does.
- A church building is not "God's house," or a modern-day OT temple.

2. The Church Is Not a Time

- "Let's do church at 11 AM," and "I attend 11 AM church" are both concepts not found in the Bible.
- Thus, "church" involves more than just going to a "service" sometime.

3. The Church Is Not a Service

- "Let's go to church at _____ Church this Sunday," or "Let's have church at home this Sunday."
- Attending a service does not constitute "church" in light of the Bible.

4. The Church Is Not a List

- "I'm a member @ _____ Church, but I don't attend very often," is not a Biblical view.
- Not a merely a list, but active participation in a group of people as structured and designed by God (Mt 18)

Northridge Baptist Church – Pastor Kevin Subra – April 25, 2010

What the Church IS:

1. A Group of Believers in Jesus' Death & Resurrection

- **John 3:18** He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
- **Acts 2:40-41** ⁴⁰ And...he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." ⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added [to them].

2. A Specific Assembly Committed to One Another

- **Acts 2:42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

3. Led by God-Appointed, God-Approved Leaders

- **Eph 4:11-12** And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry... (1 Tim 3:1-7)

4. Proclaiming the Gospel to Unbelievers

- **Matt 28:19** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- **2 Cor 5:20-21** ²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore [you] on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin [to be] sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

5. Pursuing the Training of Believers to Full Maturity & Service

- **Matt 28:20** [teaching] them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, [even] to the end of the age." Amen.
- **Eph 4:11-16** ¹¹ And He Himself gave some [to be]... some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head— Christ— ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

6. Perpetuating Leadership to the Next Generation

- **2 Tim 2:2** And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

7. Preserving the Truth in the Face of Falsehood

- **1 Tim 3:15** ...the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.
- **Jude 1:3** ...exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.