

LESSON 8

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Introduction: The church is God's organization to accomplish His will in the lives of believers and through its work brings glory to Him.

Ephesians 3:21 *"Every Christian Should Belong to a Local Independent Church!"*

A. The Essence of the Church:

1. Defined: The Church - a body of called-out believers immersed after salvation, having two offices, Pastor and deacons, sovereign in policy, and banded together for worship, work, observance of baptism and communion, and the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. It should be: (indigenous and independent)

- a. Self governing. **Acts 20:28**
- b. Self sustained or supporting. **Acts 20:32-35**
- c. Self propagating. **II Corinthians 5:18-20**
2. Designed by God. **Ephesians 1:4; 3:1-6**
3. Disclosed by Jesus Christ. **Matthew 16:18, 18:17**

4. Developed by the Holy Spirit. **Acts 1:5, 2:4 5:14; I Corinthians 12:13**

Note Ephesians 4:7-16; Apostles Ephesians 2:20; Acts 14:23.

B. Active Membership is Essential for:

1. A testimony of Salvation. **Ephesians 5:30-32; Galatians 3:26; Acts 5:11-14.**
2. A trial of Separation. **Acts 5:13; II Corinthians 6:14-16**
3. A test of Submission. **Hebrews 10:24,25; 13:7,17**
4. A training ground for Spiritual Growth and Service:
 - a. No group have ever lasted or stayed pure in practical righteousness or purpose that was not under the independent local church!
 - b. Local Church is the Center of Christian Activity.
Acts 5:11, 8:1, 9:31, 15:4,22,41; I Corinthians 16:1-4.

(1) Spritual Growth. **Acts 11:25,26, 16:4-5; Ephesians 4:11-16; Acts 20:28**

(2) Service. **Acts 13:1-4; Matthew 28:19; James 1:22.**

5. A tabernacle of Safety. **Matthew 16:18, "...the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!"**

C. The Election: (choosing) of a Chruch for you.

1. Pray and seek God's peace and guidance. **Colossians 3:15; Philippians 4:6,7; Romans 12:1,2**

Characteristice of the kind of church that can help you:

2. Use of King James 1611 Bible only.

3. Doctrinally sound; in line with the teaching of the lessons in this course (Basic Beliefs For Bible Believers). **Romans 16:17**

4. Family oriented: Pastor's family **I Timothy 3:4,5** and other families in line with Bible teaching. **Ephesians 5:22, 6:4.**

5. Soul Winning and Evangelistic through visitation, tracts, radio, missions, etc. **Acts 1:8; Romans 10:13-15.**

6. Separation from wordly practices and attitudes. **II Corinthians 6:14-16; I John 2:15-17**

Conclusion: The Church is God's incubator and institution to found and ground Christians in the faith.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 8

1. Christians who belong to a local independent church and are actively participating in the church bring _____ to God who established the church.

2. A local church that is truly doing the will of God and is scriptural will have these three characteristics. It will be self _____, self _____ and self _____.

3. According to Eph. 1:4 and 3:1-6, the church was _____ by God.
4. According to Mat. 16:18 and 18:17, the church was _____ by Jesus.
5. According to Acts 1:5; 2:4; 5:14 and I Cor. 12:13, the church was _____ by the Holy Spirit.
6. According to Eph. 5:30-32, Col. 3:26 and Acts 5:11-14, active church membership is a _____ of one's True Salvation.
7. According to Acts 5:13 and II Cor. 6:14-16, active church membership also pictures a Christian's _____ from the world and dedication to God.
8. Active church membership according to Heb. 10:24,25 and 13:7-17 is also a test of the Christian's _____ to the church and its authority.
9. The local church and its activities are a training ground for the Christian for his spiritual _____ and _____.
10. Last of all, active membership in a local church according to Mat. 16:18 is a tabernacle of _____ for the Christian.