

THE LOCAL CHURCH



THE CHURCH IS GOD'S IDEA

- A. The word church is used _____ times in the Bible; nearly all of them refer to the local church.
- B. Most of the instructions for the church can only be fully carried out by a group of people that _____ one another.
- C. God calls _____ Christian to be part of a local church because it is not possible to live out the Christian life without being part of a local church.

WHAT IS THE LOCAL CHURCH?

- A. The New Testament three word pictures to describe the local church **Family, Army & Body**. What do all these have in common? Individual parts or members combine together to create something that is _____ than just a sum of the parts.

I. THE CHURCH IS A _____.

II Corinthians 6:18 I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty
I Timothy 5:1-2 Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

- A. God's family values _____.
Ephesians 4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
Philippians 1:27 ...stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel.
- B. God's family has life transforming _____.
 1. The _____ verses contain 33 different commands given over 50 times. Examples...
John 13:34 A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.
Romans 12:10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.
Romans 15:7 Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.
Ephesians 4:2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.
Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
Ephesians 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
- C. God's family is _____ to one another.
Hebrews 13:5 ... God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'
John 13:34 As I have loved you, so you must love one another.
Hebrews 13:1 Keep on loving each other as brothers.

II. THE CHURCH IS AN _____.

- A. An army has an _____.
Matthew 28:18-21 All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciple of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.
Matthew 5:13, 14 You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.

B. An army has an _____.

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

I Peter 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

C. An army makes _____.

II Timothy 2:3 Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

III. THE CHURCH IS A _____.

Romans 12:4 (LIV) Just as there are many parts to our bodies, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of it, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other, and each needs all the others.

A. The church grows through its connection with _____, the Head.

Ephesians 4:15-16 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

B. Each part has been given a _____ purpose.

I Corinthians 12:7 (selected) Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ... The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable ... God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ... Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

C. Each part exists for the sake of the _____.

Romans 12:4-5 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

I Peter 4:10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.