

SERMON SERIES: *We Are One*

SERMON TITLE: *Church Basics*

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 12

DATE: 8.8.21

BIG IDEA:

Active involvement in a local church is a nonnegotiable component of discipleship to Christ.

1. What is the Church?

A. Universal Church

- The universal church is the collection of people from all times and places that have been united to Christ through repentance and faith and have received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

B. Local Church

- The local church is a group of people in a specific time and place that have been united to Christ through repentance and faith, received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and, together, are committed to living out the purposes of the church in their community.

2. Why does the local church exist?

The local church exists to:

A. Worship God

- Corporate worship pleases God and fuels Christians to be worshippers in their daily lives.

B. Edify Believers

- Edify means to build up, strengthen.
- The Holy Spirit gives each individual member of the local church at least one spiritual gift to be used to build up the other members of their church.

C. Reach their community for Christ

- God establishes local churches in specific locations and at specific times in order to increase the quantity of disciples being made in that area.

3. How should a local church be organized?

A. Elders

- As the Apostles planted churches, they were sure to establish a group of elders that would lead the new churches.
- Elders are to know their members and ensure that they are led in the ways of God, fed the Word of God, protected from the lies of the enemy, and prayed for.
- Members should willingly submit to the elders' leadership.

B. Deacons

- So that elders of the church could focus on shepherding the church, the office of deacon was created to lead the effort of ensuring that the practical needs of the local church and its surrounding community were met.

4. Do I need to be actively involved in a local church?

Yes!!

A. To obey God

- The New Testament assumes Christians are members of local churches.

B. To grow spiritually

- The local church provides the spirit empowered leadership, teaching, accountability, resources, and support that we need to grow.

C. To help others grow spiritually

- If you are not actively involved in the local church God has called you to, you not only suffer, but so does that church. You have at least one gift that they need to be in optimal health.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between the universal and local church?
2. How has corporate worship in your local congregation fueled your daily worship?
3. How have you been edified through participation in a local church? How have you been able to edify others?
4. Why is it better for Christians to work together with other Christians in their local church to reach a community for Christ?
5. Why do many local churches become inward focused?
6. When was the last time you shared your hope in Jesus with a nonbeliever?
7. Why is it important for local churches to be led by shepherd elders?
8. What makes the deacon role a critical component of the local church?
9. Why do so many believe that active involvement in a local church is optional? How can this be corrected?