



Certainty Conference 2019

The Church is a BODY – MEMBERSHIP

Session 2 | James DeKoker

THE STATEMENT OF CHRIST IN JOHN 14:6	THE “REPLACEMENT” OF CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF ACTS	THE FULFILLMENT PRACTICALLY IN OUR LIVES
<p>“I AM the <u>Way</u>”</p> <p>The way to get to where we are to GO... CANAAN... the Promised Land</p>	<p>The <u>church</u> of God.</p> <p>Phil 3:6 Saul persecuted <u>church</u> Gal 1:13 Saul persecuted <u>church</u> Acts 8:3 Saul persecuted <u>church</u> Acts 9:4 Saul persecuted <u>ME</u> Acts 22:1-4 persecuted <u>THIS WAY</u> Acts 9:2; persecuted <u>THIS WAY</u> Acts 18:26; expound <u>THE WAY</u> Acts 19:9, 23 – <u>THE WAY</u> Acts 24:14 – <u>THE WAY</u></p>	<p>The church is our <u>vehicle</u> to get us where God wants us to go.</p> <p>Get outside the vehicle and it’s really windy.</p>
<p>“I AM the <u>truth</u>”</p>	<p>The <u>word</u> of God.</p> <p>Acts 2:42; John 17:17</p>	<p>The Bible is our <u>road map</u> to show us where God wants us to go.</p>
<p>“I AM the <u>life</u>”</p>	<p>The <u>Spirit</u> of God.</p> <p>Acts 2:4; John 6:63</p>	<p>The Spirit is our <u>guide</u> to keep us moving in the right direction.</p>

**credit: Mark Trotter

Ephesians 3:3-6, 9-11

The Jews knew to some extent that the Gentiles would be saved, but they didn’t realize they would be equal heirs... and in ONE BODY.

The Old Testament teaches:

- Gentiles would be blessed by God – Gen 12:3, 22:18, 26:4; 28:14
- Gentiles would bless God – Psalm 72
- Messiah would come to Gentiles – Is 11:10, 49:6, 54:1-3, 60:1-3
- Gentiles would be saved by Messiah – Hos 1:10, Psalm 18:49; Deut 32:43; Is 11:10
- Gentiles would receive the Holy Spirit – Joel 2:28-29

Some may have understood (to varying degrees) some of those, but no Jew anticipated the Jews & Gentiles being one.

Ephesians 1:22-23

Colossians 1:18

I. CALLED TO BE: _____

Ephesians 5:30

Reasons for membership:

A. The principle.

B. The picture.

C. The practicality.

Acts 2:41

Romans 12:5

II. CALLED TO DO: _____

A. United despite our _____ 1 Corinthians 12: 4-13

Galatians 3:28

Ephesians 2:15-16

Colossians 3:15

Colossians 3:12-15

Every church struggles with division:

- The Corinthians were divided and suing each other (1 Cor. 1:10–13; 6:1–8).
- The Galatian saints were “biting and devouring” one another (see Gal. 5:15),
- To the Ephesians, Paul wrote about keeping the unity. (Eph. 4:1–3).
- In Philippi, two women were battling it out in the church (Phil. 4:1–3)
- Paul called the Laodiceans to be knit together in love. (Col 2:1-2)
- The Colossians were commanded to stop quarreling and forgive each other. (Col. 3:13–15).
- The Thessalonians were instructed to be at peace among themselves (1 Thess 5:13).

B. United for our _____ 1 Corinthians 12:14-20

Romans 12 confirms that the local church is comprised of many members, and the different members have different offices (v.4). Those members need to be connected to each other (v.5), and exercise their unique gifts (v.6-8).

Ephesians 4:16

C. United by our _____ 1 Corinthians 12:21-25

D. United for our _____ 1 Corinthians 14

1 Corinthians 14:4, 12, 26

The role of the pastor in the Body: Perfecter of the body

A pastor is a gift to his flock:

- Watches for the souls of the flock (Hebrews 13:17)
- Feeds the flock (1 Peter 5:2)
- Ensample (pattern) for the flock to follow (1 Peter 5:3)
- Knows his sheep and is known by them (John 10:14)
- Seeks & rescues the one lost sheep (Luke 15:4-6)
- Watches out for wolves (Acts 20:29-31)
- Gives his life for the flock (John 10:11)
- Prays for the sick (James 5:14)

Ephesians 4:11-12

E. United in our _____ Colossians 2:16-22
1 Corinthians 11:3

Ephesians 1:22-23

Ephesians 5:23-24

III. CALLED TO AVOID: _____

Splits of the Local Church

When God speaks about the body, He speaks about unity (Ephesians 4:3-6, 16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Romans 12:5; Colossians 3:15). Jesus, in His “high priestly prayer” prays the unity of the disciples – the embryo of the church (John 17:20-23). Church splits are rarely over doctrine but over authority, money, tradition, preference, and feelings.

Consumerism of the Local Church

The selfishness of this world has permeated the church, however the church isn’t to be viewed by what we get from it but how we fit in it.

Abandonment of the Local Church

As you were baptized into the universal body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13), God sets you as a body member in a local church (1 Corinthians 12:13, 18, 27). Without you the local body is handicapped, but outside the body, you are useless and dying. All that you are – including natural abilities, personality, resources, experiences, opportunities & capacity to develop skills – were all given by God and for His glory. Specifically, He desires you to exercise yourself within the local church body.

Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. - 1 Corinthians 14:12

The purpose & context of spiritual gifts is the BODY of Christ, the local church. Your gift is not valid outside the body of Christ.

Counterfeits of the Local Church

A local church is clearly & tightly defined. By those who:

- Identify themselves as a church
- Are led by qualified, ordained leaders
- Gather together for preaching, prayer & worship
- Fellowship with each other
- Observe the ordinances of the church
- Carry out the mission of the church

Parachurch fellowship organizations

Consider some attributes of New Testament churches:

- Had church officers (Ac 6:1-7; 13:1; 14:23; 20:17; Php 1:1; Titus 1:5), considered elders a necessity for proper functioning of the church (Titus 1:5) appointing them as soon as possible (Ac 14:23).
- Had stated times of meeting (John 20:19, 26; Ac 20:7; 1 Co 16:2)
- Regulated church decorum (1 Co 14:34) and exercised church discipline (Mt 18:17; Ro 16:17; 1 Co 5:13; 3: Jn 10)
- Raised money for the Lord's work (Ac 11:29; 24:17; 1 Co 16:1-2; 2 Co 8-9; Ro 15:25-28);
- Sent letters of commendation to the other churches (Ac 15:22-29; 18:24-28; Ro 16:1-2; 2 Co 3:1)

“Loose Church” groups

Bible study and fellowship groups do not meet this description of a church.

Most “2 or 3 are gathered” only fulfill 2 or 3 of the requirements.

One that is most pressing is the lack of qualified, ordained leaders. Common 2 or 3 characteristics

- Immaturity - When there is no pastor, there is little if any maturity (because he perfects).
- Apathy – without a bishop, no one is provoked to the Great Commission.
- Heresy – predictably, children are tossed by every wind of doctrine. When there is no shepherd, wolves come in. False teaching comes. The believers do not get fed, led.
- Carnality – without an elder, everyone does what's right in their eyes (Jud. 17:6; 21:25) and no one has the right to judge anyone.
- Apostasy – Sheep go astray (Isaiah 53:6). The shepherd restores and keeps them travelling together (1 Corinthians 1:10; Matthew 12:25).

Should the local church be an organization or an organism? It's a false dichotomy.

That the church is a living organism is unquestionably illustrated in scripture.

That the church is a organized organism is equally illustrated.

Even in the first church at Jerusalem, when there had been little time to organize, a structure already occurs:

- Doctrinal standard (Ac 2:42)
- Fellowship (Ac 2:42)
- United in worship, prayer (Ac 2:42, 46)
- Observed the ordinances of Baptism & the Lord's Supper (Ac 2:41, 42, 46)
- Kept account of membership (Ac 2:14, 41; 4:4)
- Provided help for their own needy (Ac 2:44-45)
- Received offerings (Ac 5:1-2)
- Added deacons to be over the BUSINESS (Ac 6:1-7)