

CHAPTER 6 LET'S GO TO CHURCH

Many people today feel the only need they have spiritually is to accept Christ as their Savior. If they have done this, they feel they have fulfilled all that God desires. They feel they do not need to go to church, for after all, the church is full of hypocrites.

The first thing we must realize is that the church is not made up of people who profess to have reached perfection. In fact, it is made up of people who have admitted openly their imperfections. They have confessed their sinfulness and called upon God to save them out of it. The church is made up of people who have varied backgrounds but all of whom have all placed their faith in a loving Savior who has redeemed them through His grace. Christians, realizing their weaknesses, come together regularly for mutual encouragement and strength.

Some have stated they would gladly join a local church if it were like the New Testament churches in the book of Acts. However, it is evident that even these churches were not without their difficulties. The church at Jerusalem had a couple, Ananias and Sapphira, who conspired together to deceive the rest of the church about their piety. They agreed together to state that they sold their property for a certain price when, in fact, they had received more for it.

The church at Corinth received more of the Apostle Paul's attention and instruction than most of the churches he founded. Yet, it was the church at Corinth which was accused by the apostle of being carnally motivated. There were divisions among the people over who was the greater man of God. There was a case of immorality in the church that would not be permitted even in most of the very liberal churches today. They were also abusing their privileges at the Lord's Supper.

With all of these sins and abuses, the people were still addressed as "Saints." We think of "saints" as those who have reached perfection, but this is not so. A saint is one who has placed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and has been forgiven all his sin by the shed blood of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 1:2, we see that the letter is addressed to the "church of God." It speaks of these saints as having been "sanctified" in Christ. "to be sanctified" means to be set apart to God. It is obvious that the people who were part of the church at Corinth were following some of the old habits that they were involved in before they came to Christ. Therefore, we see this

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sanctification to be a positional sanctification. They were not set apart to God because of their holy lives. They were considered set apart to God because of their relationship to Jesus Christ. They were "sanctified" in Christ Jesus, called "saints" because they had called upon the name of Jesus Christ.

Since the members of the church have a positional sanctification in Christ, they should also have practical sanctification in the conduct of their lives. In 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4, the apostle exhorts the believers to please God by the conduct of their lives. For "this is the will of God," he states, "even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication." He continues in verse 7 by saying, God has not called us to uncleanness, but unto "holiness." The word translated "holiness" is exactly the same word as is used in verses 3 and 4 and translated "sanctification."

The local church body is the one group of people God has designed to help the individual believer to change his conduct from one of uncleanness to one of holiness. Even the church at Corinth, with all of its internal problems, helped many of the believers to conform their lives to that intended by God.

In the second book written to the church of Corinth, the apostle Paul explains the purpose and the effect of the first letter upon at least one brother within the church. It is evident that there was the change of conduct and rest of the body was to forgive the man of his sins of the past.

Look up Reference Groups Number 1 and 2

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|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Ananias and Sapphira. | Acts 5:1-4 cf. v. 9 |
| 2. The Corinthian church | |
| a. Paul's ministry | Acts 8:1 cf. v. 11 |
| b. Carnality | I Corinthians 3:1 |
| c. Divisions | I Corinthians 1:10-13; 11:18 |
| d. Fornication | 1 Corinthians 5:1 |
| e. Abuses at Lord's supper | 1 Corinthians 11:17-22 |
| f. Called "saints." | 1 Corinthians 1:2 |

All believers are sanctified by the blood of Christ 1 John 1:7

1. Our positional sanctification. 1 Corinthians 1:2

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2. Our practical sanctification. 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7
3. Evidence of a changed life. 2 Corinthians 2:3-10

When we talk about the church, we might be thinking of any one of the following: A building used for religious worship, a denominational group (like the Baptists), the universal body of professing Christians, or a local congregation of professing Christians.

Our English word "church" is derived from a Greek word meaning that which "belongs to the Lord." The church became the place where believers met together; denoting it as a place belonging to God.

The Greek word most commonly translated church would be best translated by the English word "assembly." The Greek word is a compound word meaning "to call out." This word supports the Biblical doctrine of the church being a people called out, or separated from the world to God. This is clearly manifest in the letters to the churches of the New Testament time.

The apostle Paul addressed the believers at Thessalonica with this term "church"; indicated a "called out" people in verse 1. In verse 9, this is graphically illustrated as they "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God." The letter of 1 Thessalonians is addressed to one local church, and that is the church at Thessalonica. Often we speak of a universal church which is made up of believers of all nations of all ages from the time of the apostles until Christ returns for His Church. Thus, the universal church is often termed the invisible church. The concept of belonging to the invisible church without fellowship with a local church is never contemplated in the New Testament.

Before the church was founded, Christ declared He would build His church. This, of course, refers to the universal church made up of all believers of all the ages. This church started on the day of Pentecost as the Holy Spirit descended upon one hundred and twenty disciples who were waiting for His coming. Christ had promised to send the Holy Spirit to baptize and empower the believers who waited in Jerusalem for His descent.

The day of Pentecost was a feast of the Jews kept fifty days after the Passover feast. At this feast, Jews came from all parts of the world to Jerusalem to keep this holy convocation to the Lord. As they gathered in the temple area, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples and they began to

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declare the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, to these people in their native languages.

When some of the people began to question the activities of the disciples, Peter stood up to explain to the multitude what was taking place. He, too, declared that Jesus was the Messiah for whom they had longed, but the Jewish leaders had put Him to death. However, God raised Him up to life again.

Many of these Jewish people became convinced that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Christ, and they cried out "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." About three thousand of those gathered believed and were baptized by the apostles to make the nucleus of the Church of Jesus Christ.

The church at Jerusalem grew but soon met opposition which caused the Christians to scatter into the world in an ever-widening circle of influence. Christ had wanted the church to penetrate the world around them. He had given specific orders to the disciples before He left this earth to be a witness unto Him "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." They enjoyed the fellowship and the common faith they held with one another. They did not want to leave each other even to keep the command of Christ. God permitted a persecution to be raised against the church to break them up and to spread His message into areas outside Jerusalem and its immediate vicinity. This was the beginning of the spread of the gospel into communities throughout the world. Subsequently, we have churches at Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, and many, many other cities.

Each of these churches was considered the church of Jesus Christ in a local area. When the term "church" is used in the New Testament, it is primarily used to designate the local assembly of believers in a given area.

The word "church" is used approximately 110 times in the New Testament. Around ninety times, it refers to the local church in a local area.

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Look up these verses in Reference Group 3

1. The Church

- A. Meaning of the term: that which "belongs to the Lord."
- B. The Greek word for church would best be translated "assembly."
 - 1. Compound word meaning "called out."
 - 2. Believers are "called out" of the world.
 - a. to be separated from the world.
 - b. To be separated to God. I Thessalonians 1:1 cf. v. 9
- C. Founding of the church.
 - 1. First promised by Christ Matthew 16:18
 - 2. To accompany the descent of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Disciples to wait for the descent. Luke 24:49
 - b. Christ's last promise of Holy Spirit's descent
Acts 1:5 & 8
 - 3. At the feast of Pentecost.
 - a. Holy Spirit descended Acts 2:1-8
 - b. Converts join original 120 disciples Acts 2:36-41
 - 4. Original church at Jerusalem scattered by persecution.
Acts 8:1
 - 5. Local churches were founded throughout Roman Empire.
 - a. The term "church" is used about 110 times in the New Testament and refers to the local church about ninety times.
 - b. Local churches
 - (1) Church at Antioch Acts 13:1
 - (2) Elders ordained in every church Acts 14:23
 - (3) Church at Corinth 1 Corinthians 1:2
 - (4) Churches at Galatia Galatians 1:2
(Galatia was a province.)
 - (5) Church in Thessalonica I Thessalonians 1:1
 - (6) Church in Philemon's house. Philemon 2
 - (7) Seven churches of Asia. Revelation 1:11

2 The Nature of the Church

- A. The Church (universal) revolves around Christ, it's founder.

We must remember there would be no church without Jesus Christ. He called the church into being. He is the one around whom the church exists, and He is the one upon whom all of the church's hopes are fixed.

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The Scriptures speak of the church as a body of which He is the Head, a bride of which He is the Husband, a building of which He is the Foundation, a priesthood of which He is the High Priest, a flock of which He is the Good Shepherd and branches of which He is the Vine. As the apostle Paul said to the people of Athens about God the Father; we, the church, can say about Christ: "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

Christ purchased the church with His own blood and has "begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Therefore, we are sons of God by the new birth. In John's gospel, it states "as many as received Him, to them gave He power (or authority) to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This new birth is of the Holy Spirit and it makes us alive to God. In the flesh, we cannot please God and are dead to God. But it is while we were dead in sin that the Holy Spirit makes us alive by the Holy Spirit when we put our faith and trust in our Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior.

When we commit our lives to Christ, we are baptized into the universal body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. Everyone who has been born again of the Spirit of God has the Holy Spirit. He comes to reside in us and makes us a part of Christ's body.

We are then one in Christ and one with Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12:12, the scriptures say, "For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body, so also is Christ."

The church of Jesus Christ is a unity because there is union. This makes the church absolutely unique in the world today. It cannot be classed along with clubs, societies, lodges, or associations. These are only organizations, but Christ's church is an organism; made up of those who are "members of His body of His flesh and of His bones."

We are placed in the church by the Holy Spirit, and we are considered to be the children of God; thus making the church a brotherhood. Since we have a relationship with God through Christ by the new birth, we are made a spiritual brotherhood. We are members on one family in Christ, having been united by the bond of the spiritual life and a divine nature imparted by God. The Bible speaks of believers as brothers, Christians are addressed as brethren. That is because we have been born again by the same Holy Spirit.

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Over and over again in the New Testament, there are phrases like "Now I beseech you, brethren," "Know ye not, brethren," and "my brethren." The term is used over 130 times by the apostle Paul alone in his writings in reference to a spiritual brotherhood.

In light of the fact that we are children of God and considered brothers and sisters in the Lord, we ought to love one another. It is a tragedy when there is bitterness, jealousy, or evil communication between those in the church of Jesus Christ. In this world which is filled with hatred and mistrust, Christians should stand out by their love for one another. Love should be our badge of discipleship.

When our Lord was about to depart from this earthly scene, He gave His disciples a new commandment saying, "Love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another," The law of the Old Testament had commanded the Israelites to love their neighbors but never before had an entire group of people been given the distinguishing mark of love to set them apart from other people.

The love which church members show for one another should set them apart. Love should distinguish us rather than our style of dress or our form of worship. Love for one another should overcome all ethnic and social barriers. Love should surmount the distinctions of office, rank, or wealth. We who are born of God and made brothers and sisters in Christ, should demonstrate love for one another.

To demonstrate love for one another, we must be careful to deny ourselves to promote each other's welfare. In the first epistle of John, he asks the question "Whosoever hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassions for him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" John quickly gives the admonition, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth," All too often, members of the church look out for their own interests to the hurt of a brother in Christ. If we love someone, we will try to do the best thing we can for him. What father or mother would not give up their coat to wrap their freezing child and hold that child close to them to warm him? Yet, fellow-Christians do things which needlessly hurt others in the body of Christ.

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The love for one another should be a reflection of the oneness we have in the body of Christ. In Philippians 2:2-4, the apostle Paul exhorts the believers to:

"Be like-minded, having the same love, being in one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others."

The church is being built by Christ. There is one characteristic that stands out in those organisms which are created by God. They are orderly! This is true of the universe, and it is true of the atom. So it is true with the church of Jesus Christ. The church is pictured as a body in the book of Ephesians, and it is stated that the whole body is "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part," "increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." The body is being constantly joined more closely together and growing together into a vital, organic Union. This is brought about by the joints which bind members of the Body together. The life of the Head, Jesus Christ, is channeled to the various members and causes each member to grow in the organic union.

As the apostle Paul traveled about establishing churches, it is obvious that he was not convinced that his missionary work was finished in any community until the converts to Christianity were formed into a local assembly and were meeting on a regular basis. He returned to these cities to encourage the believers and appoint elders or leaders for every congregation. The term elder, bishop and pastor seems to be used interchangeably in the New Testament for men holding the same position. In Acts 20, we have a good illustration of this. In verse 17 the leaders are called "elders," but in verse 28 it speaks of the same men calls them "overseers" which is also translated bishops in other places. In the same verse, these "overseers" are "to feed" the church of God. The word "to feed" is the word from which we get our English word "pastor." One translation has translated the phrase "to shepherd the Church of God which He purchased with His own blood." (NASV)

These church leaders are given "for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ." (NASV) The saints are to do the work of service; building up the entire body of Christ.

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Although all members are to be involved in this work, those who particularly should take the lead are the deacons. The word in the Greek text translated deacons simply means "one who serves." The office of deacon originated when there arose a murmuring among the Hellenistic believers in Jerusalem because "their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." The apostles felt they should continue to give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word, therefore, they encouraged the church to appoint men from among them who were men of honest report and men who were full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. This the church did successfully, and the action caused the advancement of the entire body of believers. Later, in the book of 1 Timothy, the apostle Paul outlines in some detail the qualifications for those who aspire to this office.

The church, then, should be an organized group of believers meeting in a local area serving the Lord Jesus Christ. The necessity of membership in a local church is never questioned in the New Testament for it is taken for granted. Every believer became a member of a church. In this way, every believer can both give himself to the Lord and to fellow believers and get from them that which is necessary for spiritual edification. The gifts of the Spirit which are given to each member can best be expressed when believers meet together. This sharing ministry, believer to believer, both contributing and receiving, requires what is known as "church membership."

Some have doubted whether there was a formal roll of members kept which is similar to what churches have today. However, there are several facts which argue for a formal membership roll even in the early church. First of all, the early church was composed of Jews. They kept records of their family relationships from earliest times. This family relationship was kept because they were the covenant people of God. The church now was the new manifestation of the people of God. Therefore, they may have kept a record. Secondly, the numbers were known. First, there were one-hundred and twenty and then three thousand baptized and then the believers numbered five thousand. Thirdly, special lists were kept. In 1 Timothy 5:9, it states "Let a widow be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old." (NASV) There were particular social reasons for this in New Testament times for this admonition. Simply note that there were lists kept. Fourthly, church discipline assumes a church record. In 1 Corinthians 5:13, we have the command to "put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Surely, this does not mean sinners are to be excluded from the ordinary meetings of the church. Obviously, it meant a formal severance of

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the guilty party from the membership of the local church at Corinth. Last of all, the election of officers assumes a record of the membership.

Look up Reference Group Number 4 -- look up the verses.

1. Christ purchased the Church with His own blood. Act 2:28
 - a. We become the children of God John 1:12-13
 - b. Spiritually, we were dead to God in flesh. Romans 8:6-8
 - c. We were made alive spiritually by new birth.
Ephesians 2:1 & 5
 2. We are baptized into the body of Christ
 - a. The Holy Spirit is the agent of baptism.
1 Corinthians 12:12-13
 - b. Every believer has the Holy Spirit Romans 8:9
- B. The Church is one in Christ.
1. We are a brotherhood. Romans 7:1 & 4; 15:30
 2. We are to love one another. John 13:34-35
 - a. We are to demonstrate this love. 1 John 3:16-18
 - b. We are to esteem others better than ourselves.
Philippians 2:2-4
- C. The Church is created in an orderly fashion. 1 Corinthians 14:40
1. The Church is a "body." Ephesians 4:16
 - a. Christ is the Head Ephesians 4:15
 - b. Members all have different functions
like a body 1 Corinthians 12:12-27
 2. The local churches were organized. Acts 14:21-23
 - a. Pastors were chosen Acts 20:17 & 28
 - (1) Qualifications 1 Timothy 3:1-7
 - (2) Given to train church to do the work of ministry.
Ephesians 4:11 & 12
 - b. Deacons were elected.
 - (1) Qualifications 1 Timothy 3:8-13
 - (2) Purpose to serve Acts 6:1-7
 - c. Membership in local churches.
 - (1) Traditionally Jews kept records.
 - (2) Membership numbers were known
Acts 1:15; 2:41; 4:4
 - (3) Lists were kept of members 1 Timothy 5:9
 - (4) Church discipline assumes a roll I Corinthians 5:13

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(5) Officers were elected assumes a roll. Acts 6:2-5

Now, let us look at the purpose of the church. Basically, the purpose of the church falls under two headings-- evangelism and then edification. Throughout the New Testament, this is always the order. Even before the church was born, our Lord gave to His disciples the commission to go make disciples, baptize them and teach them to observe all things He had instructed. In the book of Acts, always the apostles evangelize and then they build up the saints so they can evangelize some more. It is always this cycle that is followed--first, evangelization and then edification.

Look up Acts 2:41-47, it here that we find the purpose of the church set forth at Jerusalem.

Notice verse 41. First of all, there is evangelization. Three thousand souls were added to the original 120 of Acts 1:15. Then these new believers, along with the 120, continue to learn of the apostles' doctrine. In the New American Standard Version of the Bible, it states "they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles teaching." It is through the teaching of the Word of God that obedience to the faith is engendered. So important is the Word of God to the church that its growth is practically synonymous with its declaration. For this reason, the apostles did not allow themselves to get side-tracked by the problems which arose from their numerical growth. They appointed deacons to take care of these details so they might continually minister the Word of God. The teaching and preaching of the Bible should be central to the ministry of the church. If social concerns, political philosophies, or humanistic philosophies take the place of the instruction of the Word of God, the church has failed. The instruction of the Word was placed first in importance in the early church, and it should be placed first in importance in every church today.

The next purpose of the church is to provide a base of fellowship. This word "fellowship" means "to share in common." We find these believers taking this to its ultimate in verses 44 and 45, "and all that believed were together, and had all things in common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need." Even though their attitude was correct, the selling of their possessions and dividing to every man proved to be impractical even for the church. The sinful nature of some of the believers made the practice short-lived. However, the attitude of the believer should be to share what he has with others of like faith.

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Fellowship involves, first of all, the common faith and heritage as believers. We should share spiritual truths one with another. Then we are to share in meeting the needs of one another in the church; whether these needs be spiritual or physical. We can comfort one another when there is pain or hurt. We can help meet a physical weakness of another if God has given us strength.

Every church I know receives an offering in some way to carry on its work. Most churches do not have any other income to help them meet their expenses. They are solely dependent upon the gifts of God's people to pay for their buildings, the light, heat and other physical needs. Out of the same offerings comes the expenses for the staff that might be hired; whether it is just a pastor or a multiple staff consisting of custodian, secretaries and several pastors. Most churches have funds for missionary enterprises beyond the immediate area in which it serves. They want to spread the Gospel as far as they can with the funds which are available to them. Be faithful to share with others as God has prospered you.

We see the church "shared in common" in the breaking of bread. Note: Acts 2: 42 and 46, it says they were breaking bread from "house to house", and did eat their food "with gladness and singleness of heart." Many interpret this to mean a particular love-feast that was kept by the early Christians along with the Lord's Supper as they remembered the Lord's death. Whether this was the case or not, it seems to me hard to prove. However, one thing is true and that is they ate in each other's homes and shared one with another with a singleness of heart. That is, a good reflection of their attitudes toward one another-- they had an attitude of oneness in the body of Christ. All too often, the only fellowship believers have with one another today takes place at the church functions. Even believers shut their homes off from other believers simply to watch television or to carry on with their own hobbies. Endeavor to make your home a place where there can be Christian fellowship. Invite your friends in for fellowship around a meal or snack. Learn to share with one another.

There is one more purpose we find for the church in this passage of scripture and that is worship. Our English word "worship" is a compound word from the two words "worth" and "ship." It means "to attribute worth" to an object. To worship God means to ascribe to Him the supreme worth to which He alone is worthy. True worship is the sincere expression our devotion to God. In John's gospel, he says "God is spirit; and those who

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worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth." (NASV) The phrase "in spirit and in truth" means much more than just worship from the heart. It means it is worship based upon the life-giving Holy Spirit which makes us alive to God through Christ. Jesus Christ is truth. Thus, worship through His merit makes it true worship.

All activities, whether performed in private or in public meetings, are only worship as they are directed toward God through Christ. These early Christians continued steadfastly in prayers according to Acts 2:42. I believe this has special reference to their group prayer meetings. They believe they needed to pray together. The needs of the church body should be brought before the Lord together. When Peter was cast into prison, the entire church at Jerusalem prayed for his deliverance. God miraculously honored their prayers even though they lacked the faith to believe He would perform the release.

We find these believers at Jerusalem were together praising God as well. See verse Acts 2:47. In the book of Ephesians, we are told to be filled with the Holy Spirit. One of the evidences of a person being filled is the fact they will be "singing and making melody" in their hearts to the Lord. All too often, as one looks over the congregation as a hymn is being sung, we see people standing with the hymnbooks open but never opening their mouths to sing a song of praise to our God. For many who have not been raised in a church atmosphere, we realize this is a new adventure and sometimes difficult to develop. May I assure you that the longer you wait to start singing, the harder it will become.

Also, in the book of Ephesians, it states that they were "giving thanks always for all things unto God." In the light of this, it is evident that God was active in their lives. They always had something for which to give thanks to God. Develop a thankful heart. Count your blessings. You'll find them to be many.

Look up Reference Group Number 5

3. The Purpose of the Church

A. Evangelism

1. Great Commission Matthew 28:19-20
2. First order of events for birth of church Acts 2:41

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B. Edification

(Example of the church at Jerusalem)	Acts 2:41-47
1. Doctrine	Acts 2:42
a. Numerical growth dependent upon it.	Acts 6:7
b. The apostles put teaching first.	Acts 6:4
2. Fellowship	Acts 2:42
a. Means to "share in common."	Acts 2:41-45
b. Physical needs met.	1 John 3:17
3. Worship	John 4:23-24
a. They prayed together	Acts 11:5 cf. v. 12
b. They sang together	Ephesians 5:19
c. They gave thanks	Ephesians 5:20

SELF CHECK TEST

(Ask your facilitator for the answers to this Self Check)

1. True or False Those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ are considered to be "saints."
2. What Jewish feast became the occasion for the birth of the church?
The Passover, Feast of Pentecost, or the Feast of Tabernacles.
3. When the term "church" is used in the New Testament, it usually refers to (a) the local church, or (b) the Universal church?
4. Which term best describes the church? (a) an association, (b) a brotherhood, (c) a society, or (d) an organization?
5. What should be the distinguishing badge of the Christian? -
_____.
6. True or False. Since we are placed in the universal church of Christ by the Holy Spirit, it is not important if we join a local church.
7. Which of the following should be given top priority in the church?
(a) The teaching of the Word of God, (b) Social concerns of our neighborhoods, or (c) the political philosophies of government.
8. The term "fellowship" would best be defined as (a) partying together,

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(b) eating together, or (c) sharing in common with one another.

9. Which of the following describes worship when directed to God?
(a) Praying, (b) giving thanks (c) singing, or (d) all three of these things mentioned, or (e) none of these mentioned.

If you are looking for the perfect church before you start attending anywhere, forget it. Churches have their own personalities just like people. This is because the church is a living organism. The people in a church should come together for the mutual strength and help they can receive and give to one another. If you don't participate, you not only rob yourself of strength but you are not contributing to anyone's growth.

If you haven't started attending, start this Sunday to a church where the Word of God is preached and taught and where Christ is honored as the Head of the Church.

God will bless you as you do.