

THRIVING IN THE CHURCH

The Church is God's idea

(Mat 16:18 NIV) And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

The Universal Church

(Acts 2:41 NIV) Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The Local Church: Jerusalem

(Acts 15:4 ESV) When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.

The Local Church: Antioch

(Acts 13:1 ESV) Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Other local churches mentioned...

- Cenchrea, (Rom. 16:1).
- Caesarea, (Acts 18:22).
- Cilicia, (Acts 15:41).
- Corinth, (1 Cor. 1:2).
- Ephesus, (Eph. 1:22);
- Galatia, (Gal. 1:2).
- Galilee, (Acts 9:31).
- Judaea, (Acts 9:31).

More Local Churches...

- Laodicea, (Rev. 3:14).
- Pergamos, (Rev. 2:12).
- Philadelphia, (Rev. 3:7).
- Samaria, (Acts 9:31).
- Sardis, (Rev. 3:1).
- Smyrna, (Rev. 2:8).
- Syria, (Acts 15:41).
- Thessalonica, 1 (Thess. 1:1).
- Thyatira, (Rev. 2:18)

Within the church there is...teaching

(Acts 2:42 NIV) They devoted themselves to the apostles' **teaching** and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Within the church there is...participation

(Acts 2:42 NIV) They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Within the church there is...spiritual gifts

(Acts 2:43 NIV) Everyone was filled with awe,
and many wonders and miraculous signs were
done by the apostles.

Within the church there is...giving

(Acts 2:44-45 NIV) All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they **gave** to anyone as he had need.

Within the church there is...fellowship

(Acts 2:46 NIV) Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and **ate together** with glad and sincere hearts,

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Within the church there is...protection

(Acts 20:28-29 NIV) Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.

Matthew 28:15-20

Implication #1

There is a Biblical procedure for handling offenses .

Steps for handling offenses

1. “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault” privately (vs. 15)
2. If he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' (vs. 16)
3. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church (vs. 17)
4. If he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. (vs. 17)

Implication #2

The church is the last recourse in handling such matters.

Tell it to the church

Mat 18:17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

How this is walked out

(1 Cor 5:1 NIV) It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present.

How this is walked out

(1 Cor 5:4-5 NIV) When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

put out, expel, excommunicate

*(1 Cor 5:13 NIV) God will judge those outside.
"Expel the wicked man from among you."*

Implication #3

The church provides a spiritual covering for its members.

Salvation is the goal

(1 Cor 5:5 NIV) hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

Handed over to Satan

(1 Tim 1:20 NIV) Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.

Protecting the purity of the church

(1 Cor 5:6 NIV) Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?

The Results

(2 Cor 2:7 NIV) Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him.

Implication #4

Heaven affirms what is done in the body.

Affirmed in Heaven

(Mat 18:18-19 NIV) "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.

Consider Marriage

:(Mat 19:6 NIV) *So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."*

Consider excommunication

(1 Cor 5:5 NIV) hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

A dwelling place of God

(Eph 2:21-22 NIV) In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Lets not give up...

“(Heb 10:25 NIV) Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Conclusion