

Lesson #4

The Necessity Of The Church

Christianity is a faith of relationships. This means that we were created to be with one another. From the beginning of creation when God saw that the first man, Adam, was alone he said, "It is not good that man should be alone" ([Genesis 2:18](#)). Then God created a woman, and the two began a family, and that family expanded and eventually became a group of societies.

Church is a group in society that is purposed to teach and encourage believers and allow them to experience their relationship with God corporately. Christians who are not part of a group of believers (church) are not experiencing all that the Christian life has to offer. Every Christian needs encouragement and training. Church is where we go to acquire these important benefits. It is also where we gather to take part in sacraments that are designed to turn our affections toward Jesus in remembrance of all he has done for us.

This study will look at the three basic functions of a body of believers:

- Teaching the Bible
- Worshipping God
- Encouraging one another

These basic functions of a local body of believers help the Christian grow in his or her faith into spiritual maturity. Without church the Christian cannot experience all that God has for him or her.

Let this study encourage you to get involved with other Christians and together, to grow in your faith.

What Is Church?

Church is where a group of believers in Jesus meet together for Bible teaching.

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers...And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts” ([Acts 2:42,46](#)).

Since the foundation of Christianity, groups of Christians have met together weekly to learn the principles taught in the Bible. Knowing the Bible is an important part of the Christian experience. Learning together under the leadership of a pastor increases our knowledge of God.

Have you been reading the Bible on your own? Do you meet regularly with other believers to study the Bible? Would you like to start?

Church is where a group of believers in Jesus partake in the sacraments of Jesus—this is part of our worship of God.

“And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood” ([Luke 22:14-20](#)).

“For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also he took the cup, after

supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" ([I Corinthians 11:23-26](#)).

The Christian sacraments include Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Obeying these practices is part of our obedience and worship of Jesus. Because Jesus commanded them, we do them.

Have you been baptized? Do you take part in the Lord's Supper? Talk with your local pastor or church leader about taking part in these rites.

Church is where believers in Jesus meet for encouragement in their walk with God.

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" ([Hebrews 10:23-25](#)).

Christianity was never meant to be a faith that people practice alone. Christianity is a relationship with God through Jesus. So too, Christians must be in active relationship with other Christians to encourage one another in our following of Jesus.

Do you need encouragement in your faith? You can find that encouragement with a group of other believers! Are you part of a group of believers now?

Why Go To Church?

The Bible commands us to be part of a local group of fellow believers.

In the Old Testament God commanded Israel to gather at certain times for worship in Jerusalem. After many centuries the Jews practiced weekly gatherings in local houses of worship called synagogues. Christians continue

this practice by meeting weekly in church gatherings. The Bible commands us to take regular part in this practice.

How often do you meet with other believers in church? Are you prepared to make a commitment to participate in church?

Christians must be involved in the corporate worship of God.

Throughout the history of the Bible God's people have gathered together for corporate worship. This happens through reading the scripture, singing songs of worship to God, and observing certain rites that remind us of God's commitment to his people.

Taking part in church is an expression of worship to God. How do you express your worship to Jesus? Is corporate worship missing in your life?

Believers in Jesus are all part of the body of Christ and thus we should function together—this encourages believers.

"I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness" ([Romans 12:3-8](#)).

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit...that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together" ([I Corinthians 12:12-14,25-27](#))

No Christian is to live as an island to himself. We are meant to live and worship together in unity. Read the passages above. You will recognize that all Christians have a role to play in our corporate church life.

Read the passages above. What role motivates you? What role would you be interested in playing with a group of fellow believers? How can you serve the needs of others?

What Do I Do At Church?

We take part in regular Bible study to build up our knowledge of God.

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” ([II Timothy 2:15](#)).

Paul encouraged Timothy to teach the Bible in his church. From this we see that God intends for us to meet together and sit under the teaching of the Bible. The more we learn, the better we come to know God.

How much do you want to know God? How can attending church help you learn more about Jesus?

We spend time corporately worshipping God.

“Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! ([Psalm 95:6](#))

“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations” ([Psalm 100:1-5](#)).

The book of Psalms was written for both private and corporate worship. Worship is both a private and a shared experience. It encourages us when we can meet with like-minded people to worship our Savior. Singing songs of praise and reading scriptures that extol the Lord brings honor to God. And only he is worthy of such affection and worship.

What kind of commitment are you prepared to make to your local group of believers? Will you join them for regular, weekly worship of Jesus?

We encourage one another in our common faith.

“Exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin” ([Hebrews 3:13](#)).

“Do not neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” ([Hebrews 10:25](#)).

Church isn't just about worshipping God. Church is also about encouraging fellow Christians in their spiritual service. Everyone needs like-minded people to encourage them. You can encourage others in their relationship with Christ—and you can receive the same encouragement from others!

Make a commitment today to take part in regular, weekly church gatherings.

For more information or help please write to info@twrafrica.org or our WhatsApp number +27 72 641 4475.