

southcitychurch

As Christians, we are members of God's household (**Eph 2:19**) called to function, participate, and minister in a particular place within the body of Christ. A healthy body requires that each member does its part well. A healthy church requires the same: members who are sacrificially committed and well-equipped to do the works of service that God has prepared in advance for us to do (**Eph 2:10**; 4:12).

The church holds its members in high regard; we expect them to lead as missionaries of the Gospel to the culture. God, in His sovereignty, has placed us in this city, among these people, in this century, for a reason (**Acts 17:26-27**). Our members carry our DNA, value the same things and live gospel-centered lives, training up and teaching others as **2 Timothy 2:2** tells us to.

Being a member of the church is really about being part of a family. All members are disciples of Jesus, unified by their identity in Christ. This unity is expressed in the way they collaborate in loving God, loving fellow Christians, and loving non-Christians. Members who enter into a commitment with their local church are called to a higher degree of responsibility and service. At the same time, the elders and deacons are committed to assist members first and foremost, to love and lead, provide counsel and aid, and pray for, teach, and guide them.

Being part of the local church is not just about regular attendance or membership. It is an issue of commitment. We do not just meet, but commit to one another's welfare, growth and holiness as well as to the work of the gospel through the church corporate. As **Ephesians 4:12** says, it is the saints – every believer – who does to work of the ministry.

The church is a body that needs its members. Just as we need it, it needs us. When we are missing, the whole body suffers. It is not as healthy without us, as other parts need to compensate for the part we should be playing. **Ephesians 4:16** elaborates on this “from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love”. The church is not complete without you. **1 Corinthians 12:22** says “the parts of the body that seem weaker are indispensable”.

Our time, resources and energy are needed by the local church to fulfill the work and mission of the church. To be on Jesus' mission to reach the world is an essential part of the church, and we need every hand on deck in order to achieve this! Jesus said we should pray for labourers, (**Matt 9:37**) and this means that we should be actively involved, not sitting on the sidelines!

The New Testament shows us that the normal pattern for Christians is to meet together regularly (**Heb 10:25**). Those who are saved are not just to be satisfied that we are a part of the church universal, but are to love and be an active part of the local church.

Just as the local church needs us, we also need the local church. It is within such a community that we are fed the Word of God, worship with other believers, are watched over by loving, mature, gifted and godly shepherds and become involved in God's mission to the world through the local church – a pattern we see throughout scripture.

Being part of a local church also puts us in a face-to-face relationship with fellow Christians, this gives us the opportunity to be held accountable to leaders and to one another, have relationships where we are vulnerable so that we can be honest, confess our sins, and grow together in holiness. In these relationships, we find those who can bear with us in our weaknesses, constantly encouraging us to press on in our Christian walk.

A local church meets all these needs for us. It is in the local church that we are fed the word of God, it is where we regularly meet with other believers to worship God. The local elders are accountable to God for watching over our souls. Relationships are formed where we can become vulnerable about our struggles, and we can be helped by those who are stronger than us in areas where we are weak. We are members of one body that need each other, one part cannot say to another part that they have no need of the other! (**1 Cor 12:21**). We are to work together for the 'common good' (**1 Cor 12:4-7**).