

Lesson 9

THE CHURCH: FELLOWSHIP AND WORSHIP

Prepare for Your Assignment

1. Download message #9, "The Body of Christ," from www.gty.org/fof.
2. Use your notebook to take notes on the message.
3. Work through the questions and tasks on the following pages.

Memorize Hebrews 10:24–25

And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

I. The Universal Church

"The Church is not a physical building, but a group of believers; not a denomination, sect, or association, but a spiritual Body. The Church is not an organization, but a communion, a fellowship that includes believers."¹ —John MacArthur

A. Read Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 5:23.

1. What is Christ's position in the church? He is the head of the body (church).
2. How is the church described? As His body

B. At what cost did Christ purchase the church (Acts 20:28)? His own blood

C. How does a person become a member of the body of Christ?

1. Colossians 3:15: We are called into the body.
2. 1 Corinthians 12:13: We are baptized into the body.

II. The Local Church

The New Testament describes how believers came together in small groups to worship Christ, receive instruction from the Scriptures, meet one another's needs, pray, and evangelize.

A. The local church illustrated

1. Where did the believers meet before they had church buildings (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19)?

in houses

2. On what day of the week did they meet (Acts 20:7)?

the first day of the week

¹ Quote taken from *Body Dynamics* by John MacArthur, © 1982 by Scripture Press. Used by permission.

3. List four things to which the early church was devoted (Acts 2:42):

- a. teaching c. breaking of bread
b. fellowship d. prayer

B. The local church organized

1. Gifted men

According to Ephesians 4:11-12, God gave four types of gifted men to the church. List them:

- apostles evangelists
prophets pastors/teachers

God gave these gifted men to the church to equip the saints for what purposes (verse 12)?

"Equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ."

2. Elders/overseers

The qualifications of an elder or overseer are stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

a. What are the two major responsibilities of an elder (1 Peter 5:1-2)?

(1) "Shepherd the flock"

(2) Exercise oversight

b. What is the responsibility of believers to the elders (Hebrews 13:17)?

"Obey your leaders and submit to them,

Why? for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this

with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you."

3. Deacons

The word *deacon* means "servant." The deacons are to minister to the needs of the flock under the direction of the elders of the church. The qualifications of deacons are stated in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

4. Members of the body

a. What does Hebrews 10:25 warn believers not to neglect?

assembling together

b. Hebrews 13:7 instructs us concerning those who teach us God's Word. What should be our response? (Select the correct answer.)

- We should encourage others to come and hear them.
- We should not hope to have the kind of faith they have.
- We should observe their godly lives and follow their example of faith.

c. How should we act toward other members of the body (1 Corinthians 12:25)? "There may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another."

5. How should those who are appointed to preach and teach be supported?

a. 1 Corinthians 9:14 "The Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel."

b. Galatians 6:6 "The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him."

III. Fellowship

The Bible uses the Greek word *koinonia* to describe fellowship within the body of Christ. That word means "participation with others in a common purpose." The Latin equivalent is *communion*, pointing to the communion that is shared with other believers as well as with God.

A. Unity within the church

1. What is God's desire for every local church (1 Corinthians 1:10)?

unity in the faith

2. Read Ephesians 4:2-3.

What will promote unity (verse 2)? "Humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love."

What is our responsibility (verse 3)? "Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

3. Read Philippians 2:1-4. What is the key to maintaining unity within the body (verse 3)?

"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves."

B. Fellowship with God and with other believers

Scripture is clear that the believer enjoys fellowship with:

1. God the Father (1 John 1:3)
2. God the Son (1 John 1:3)
3. The Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14)
4. Other believers (1 John 1:7)

However, with whom is true fellowship not possible (2 Corinthians 6:14–15)? Unbelievers

C. Fellowship involves ministering to other believers.

1. Fellowship within the body of Christ involves sharing in each other's lives. According to each verse below, how should Christians minister to one another?

◆ Romans 14:19 "Building up of one another."

◆ Galatians 5:13 "Serve one another."

◆ Galatians 6:2 "Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ."

◆ James 5:16 "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another."

2. What has God given to each Christian to help him or her minister to others within the church (1 Peter 4:10–11)? a special gift

IV. Worship

The English word *worship* originally was spelled "worthship," meaning to acknowledge the worth of someone or something. We worship when we give honor to God for who He is. Worship acknowledges God's person, nature, attributes, and works. It stems from a grateful heart and renders adoration, devotion, and submission to God.

A. God seeks genuine worshipers.

Read John 4:23–24. How are we to worship God (verse 24)? in spirit and in truth

If we are to worship God in truth (not in error), we must seek to know Him by learning about His attributes and actions.

B. We worship God because only He is worthy of our highest devotion.

Read Revelation 4:10–11 and answer the following questions.

1. What is God worthy to receive? glory, honor, and power

2. Why? Because God created all things

C. Worshipping God involves praise.

How did the psalmist say God should be worshiped (Psalm 66:4)? “All the earth will worship You, and will sing praises to You; they will sing praises to Your name.”

D. Worshipping God involves reverence.

1. What did Moses do when he worshiped God (Exodus 34:8)?

He bowed “low toward the earth.”

2. How is reverence for God revealed in the following verses?

a. Exodus 34:8 bowing the head

b. Luke 7:1–7 in humility; unworthiness before Him

c. Revelation 1:17 falling at His feet

“O come, let us sing for joy to the Lord, let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God and a great King above all gods, in whose hand are the depths of the earth, the peaks of the mountains are His also. The sea is His, for it was He who made it, and His hands formed the dry land. Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.” —Psalm 95:1–6

V. Ordinances of the Church

The Ordinance of Baptism

Baptism was instituted by our Lord and practiced by early believers. As explained in the Scriptures, baptism was a declaration of the believer's identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Clearly, baptism was practiced by the early church, and therefore, we believe this ordinance should be practiced by the church today.

Why baptize?

We baptize because:

- ◆ Baptism was commanded by our Lord—Matthew 28:19
- ◆ Baptism was practiced by the early church—Acts 2:41; 8:26–39; 10:44–48; 16:31–33; 18:8

Who should be baptized?

In the Scriptures we find examples of disciples (or followers) of Christ, believers, and those who had received the Holy Spirit being baptized:

- ◆ Disciples (or followers of Christ)—Matthew 28:19
- ◆ Believers—Acts 2:41; 8:30–38; 16:33–34
- ◆ Those who have received the Holy Spirit—Acts 10:44–48

Therefore, we conclude that those who have personally confessed Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord (i.e., Christians) should be baptized.

What does baptism mean?

Baptism is a declaration of the believer's identification with Christ:

- ◆ Identification with Christ in His death—Romans 6:3
- ◆ Identification with Christ in His burial—Romans 6:4a
- ◆ Identification with Christ in His resurrection—Romans 6:4b

Baptism is an acknowledgment “that our old self was crucified with Him” (Romans 6:6) and a profession that henceforth we “might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4b).

How should we baptize?

We believe that a person should be baptized by being fully immersed in water:

- ◆ The word *baptism* was transliterated from the word *baptizo* meaning to “make fully whelmed; to dip or to sink.”
- ◆ Baptism took place where there was *much water*—John 3:23
- ◆ When they baptized they went *down into the water* (Acts 8:38) and *came up from the water* (Matthew 3:16).

Also, when baptizing by immersion, the picture of going down into the water and coming up out of the water symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

Have you confessed Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior? _____

Have you been baptized as a believer? _____

The Ordinance of Communion

The Lord's Supper, or Communion, is one of two ordinances given to the church by Jesus Christ (the other being baptism). The Lord's Supper is an act of remembrance of Christ's death.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 and fill in the blanks below.

1. The bread is in remembrance of _____ His body _____.

2. The cup is in remembrance of _____ His blood _____.

3. Every time you partake in Communion, you proclaim the Lord's death (1 Corinthians 11:26). In light of that truth, what is the warning stated in 1 Corinthians 11:27–30?

"Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner,
shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself,
and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks,
eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason
many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep."

VI. Application

A. Are you a member of the body of Christ?

B. Are you a member of a local assembly of Christians?

C. What have you learned from this study to improve your worship of God?
