

The Local Church

- We will be teaching today from the bible.
- The bible is the only real truth.
- It is the inspired word of God.
- Today we will endeavour to correct a misconception in understanding as to “what really is the **local church**”



The Local Church

-
- Previously we talked about “The Church”
- - that’s the Church Universal
- - The Gathering of all the believers
- - the Body of Christ
- - The called out ones
- – the ecclesia.
- Now let us look at the Local Church



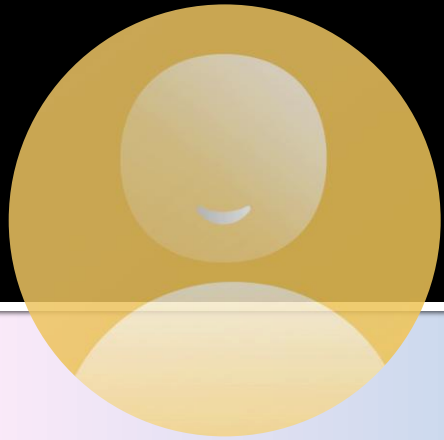
The Local Church

- Paul the Apostle wrote to the believers in a certain place.
- He wrote letters to “the Ephesians”, “the Colossians”, “the Corinthians”, “the Romans”, “the Galatians”, “the Philippians” and “the Thessalonians”.
- These were all groups of believers in a certain geographical region – and within that region were groups who met together in local towns. They were assemblies of believers.
- The equivalent of these assemblies today would be called “the LOCAL Ecclesia” or “local church.”



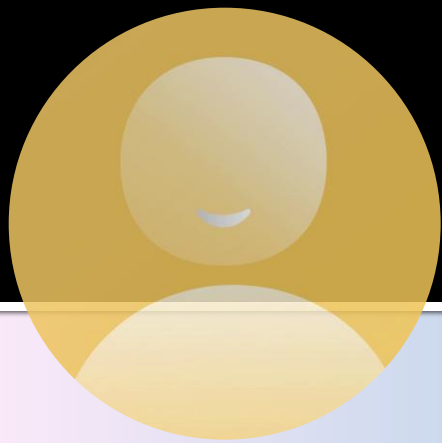
The Local Church

- Church is not a hierarchy.
- BUT it is organised according to God's instructions.
- God has given offices of service to those men and women who are willing to serve and take responsibility for the believers in their area.



The Local Church

- In Ephesians 4 it says:
- *And His gifts were varied; He Himself appointed and gave men to us-*
- *Some to be apostles (special messengers)*
- *Some prophets (inspired preachers and expounders)*
- *Some evangelists (preachers of the Gospel, traveling missionaries)*
- *Some pastors (shepherds of His flock) and teachers.*
- His intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people), that they should do the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body (the church)



The Local Church

- The Ecclesia (the church) is not static – it is dynamic.
-
- It is growing.
-
- Let us look at a few scriptures that confirm the purpose of the Ecclesia.
-
- We are to make disciples
-
- Matthew 28:19
- *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations help the people to learn of Me, believe in Me, and obey My words, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"*
-

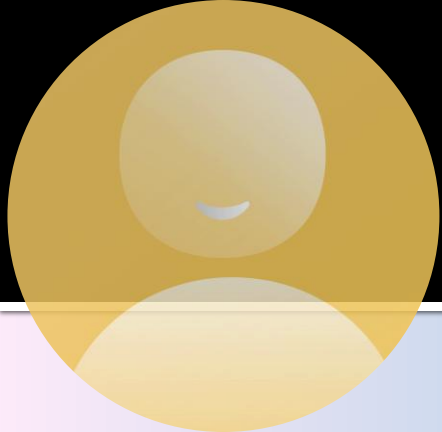


The Local Church

- We are to accept Jesus as Lord and follow His teaching – we are “fishers of men”

Matthew 4:19 Mark 1 : 17

- *And He said to them, “Follow Me as My disciples, accepting Me as your Master and Teacher and walking the same path of life that I walk, and I will make you fishers of men.”*



The Local Church

- We will abide in His Word.

- John 8:31

- *The Truth Will Make You Free . So Jesus was saying to the Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word continually obeying My teachings and living in accordance with them, then you are truly My disciples..*



- So as members of the Ecclesia we **are all disciples** and we have a purpose.



- Each local gathering of believers will reach out to its community demonstrating the power of the "kingdom of God".

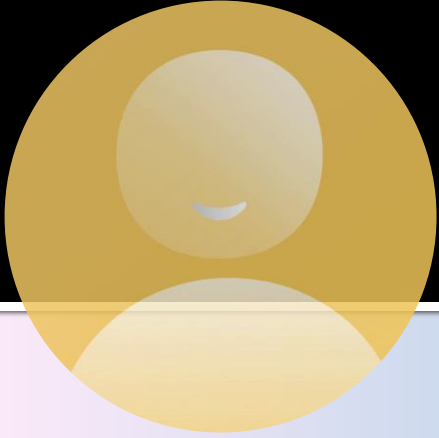


- They will witness the salvation of the lost. They will witness healings and deliverance..



The Local Church

- In the old testament we see that priests were appointed from the tribe of Levi to represent the people before God.
- They were to carry out many rituals involving blood sacrifices to atone for the sins of the people.
- In Leviticus 6:7 it says:
- *The priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD, and he will be forgiven for any one of the things which he may have done to incur guilt.*
- Once a year the chief priest would enter into the most holy place in the temple, the Holy of Holies. He would pass through the heavy curtain which separated the people from the Ark of the Covenant, where God dwelt and into the very presence of God on their behalf.
- Some false Christian religions have carried over the tradition of the people needing a priest to represent them before God and rituals have wrongly been made part of some churches meetings.



The Local Church

- Jesus is now our High Priest
- In Hebrews 2:17 it says:
- *Therefore, it was essential that He had to be made like His brothers (mankind) in every respect, so that He might by experience become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things related to God, to make atonement (propitiation) for the people's sins thereby wiping away the sin, satisfying divine justice, and providing a way of reconciliation between God and mankind.*



The Local Church

- And in Hebrews 9 and 10 we see that when Jesus died on our behalf, He made a way for us to enter the presence of God **without** the necessity for an earthly priest to represent us. (I encourage you to read Hebrews 9 and 10 for yourself right now)
- When we accepted Jesus as our saviour, we became spiritually alive (born again) and we became part of the ecclesia, the church, the body of Christ and a chosen people, **a royal priesthood.**



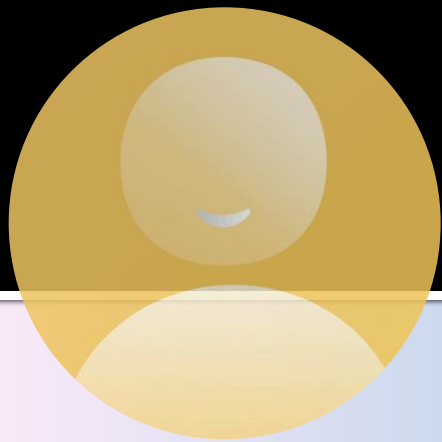
The Local Church

- This is what the bible says in [1 Peter 2:9](#)
- *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a special people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies the wonderful deeds and virtues and perfections of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.*



The Local Church

- So can you see that the church is not a building, an organisation, a system, a denomination but it is those born-again believers of every nation who are set apart for God.
- So, **what is** the church for? What is it all about.
- The church has a job to do!
- The church is to bring glory to the Lord Jesus
- How?



The Local Church

- Consider this scripture from Matthew 28:18
- *18 Jesus came up and said to them, "All authority (all power of absolute rule) in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.*
- *19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, help the people to learn of Me, believe in Me, and obey My words, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*
- *20 teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, remaining with you perpetually—regardless of circumstance, and on every occasion, even to the end of the age."*



The Local Church

- That is known as **The Great Commission**.
- Jesus gave authority to His disciples to go duplicate themselves, teaching others what He had taught them and to reveal the power of the Kingdom of God.
- That commission has been passed down to us – the church, the believers, the called out ones, the modern day disciples.



The Local Church

- Church is something that happens in our daily lives, at work, in the supermarket, in school, in the street, fellowshiping with friends. It is not about sitting in a building every Sunday doing rituals and engaging in vain repetition.
- The people of God will assemble together.



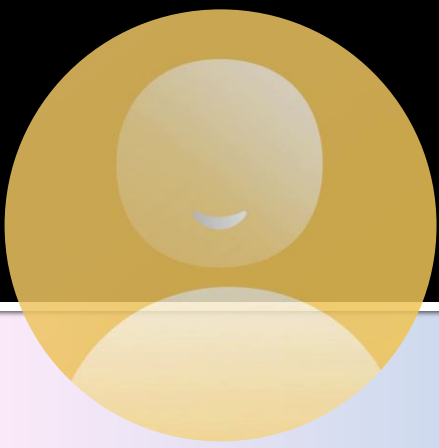
The Local Church

- So, what form will the meeting of the Assembly of the believers take?
- Look at these scriptures.
- 1 Corinthians 14:26
- *What then, brethren, is the right course? When you meet together, each one has a hymn, a teaching, a disclosure of special knowledge or information, an utterance in a strange tongue, or an interpretation of it. But let everything be constructive and edifying and for the good of all.*



The Local Church

- Ephesians 5:19
- *Speak out to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, offering praise with voices and instruments and making melody with all your heart to the Lord*
- Colossians 3:16
- *Let the word spoken by Christ (the Messiah) have its home in your hearts and minds and dwell in you in all its richness, as you teach and admonish and train one another in all insight and intelligence and wisdom in spiritual things, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody to God with His grace in your hearts.*



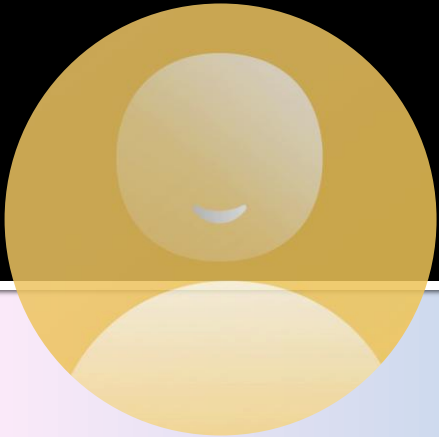
The Local Church

- So in conclusion:
 - The church is the totality of the born-again (spiritually alive) believers.
 - When the believers gather together they will worship God.
 - They will minister healing and deliverance to each other.
 - They will be taught from the word of God so that they grow into mature Christians.



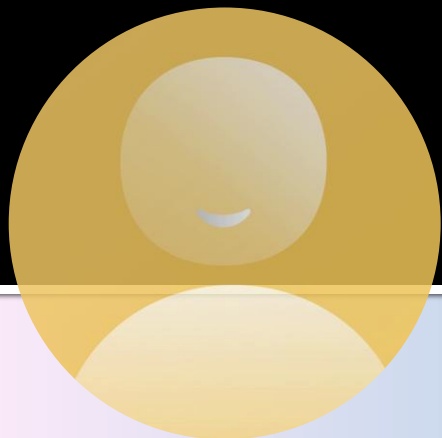
The Local Church

- They will love each other and love those outside their number.
- They will provide for each others needs.
- They will encourage each other.
- They will provide financial help.
- They will go out into the community ministering, healing, deliverance and salvation to the lost, demonstrating the real living power of the Kingdom of God..
- And
- The church will be judged on how it dealt with the weakest most needy members of the local church and society in general.



The Local Church

- It is important that we are grafted into a living fellowship in our local community.
- Many so-called local churches practice religion without the life of Jesus – they are dead and lifeless – just a mere social gathering.



The Local Church

- We need to find a fellowship where we can be disciplined and where this will lead to we ourselves becoming disciplers.
- We wish you blessing and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your search.
 - Thank you for listening.