

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

— Lorton —

Christ's Glorious Church

Various Scriptures

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9/13/26

This morning, we'll aim to answer two basic questions that every follower of Jesus should have clear: Why the Church Matters, and Why Belonging to a Local Church Matters.

Ekklesia – An assembly of people who have been called out for a purpose.

The church, by definition, is communal; an assembly of people gathered as followers of Jesus Christ.

1. Why does the church matter?

The Universal Church – All believers in Jesus Christ of all time.

Local Churches – Visible local gatherings of believers who are mutually committed to gather in worship, to celebrate baptism and the Lord's Supper, to hear the Word of God taught, to serve one another, to fellowship and pray with one another, and to submit to a biblical form of leadership.

Questions

1. From God's dealings with Adam, Abram, and Moses, what are some ways in which we stress on community? How is this emphasis on community seen in the writing of the New Testament letters?
2. The church belongs to Jesus. He is building it. It is His body. He is Lord over His church. How do these truths shape your view of church and your relationship to the church?
3. What's an example of a household rule you have today or grew up with, that is/was to be a reflection of your family's identity? In what way(s) might your life – especially as it relates to the church – better reflect belonging to God's household?
4. Read 1st Timothy 3:14-15. What is the church's role with respect to God's truth? What does that mean for you?
5. If you are trusting in Jesus Christ, have you been baptized in a way that has clearly identified you as one committed to following Jesus? And if you've professed faith and been baptized, does your participation in a local church give clear evidence of your identity as someone who is intimately connected to Christ's church?
6. Read Spurgeon's quote included in the sermon notes. Does your affection for Christ's church parallel what he described? Is there room for growth?

Need prayer?

*Someone will be up front by the piano
to pray with you after the 1st & 2nd services.*

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Creation – the church is God's design and creation (Matthew 16:18; Colossians 1:16-18). Jesus is its cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20) and foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11; cf. Isaiah 28:16).

Members of that first church were identified by:

Baptism (as Jesus commanded in Matthew 28:19)

Devotion to the church's beliefs and practices

Creed – The church holds to and proclaims an established body of doctrine that is firmly grounded in God's Word (1 Timothy 3:14-15).

Charles Spurgeon giving an example of what it means to give yourself first to the Lord (2nd Corinthians 8:5):

"In the next place, follow this example, and give yourself to the church. You that are members of the church have not found it perfect, and I hope that you feel almost glad that you have not. If I had never joined a church till I had found one that was perfect, I should never have joined one at all; and the moment I did join it, if I had found one, I should have spoiled it, for it would not have been a perfect church after I had become a member of it. Still, imperfect as it is, it is the dearest place on earth to us."

2. Why does belonging to a local church matter?

From the birth of the local church in Jerusalem, we see an example of numbering and identifying those who belong to the church (Acts 1:15; 2:41-42)