

We ought to accept our responsibilities as members of a local congregation

Paul wrote, “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” (Rom. 12:4,5). To be a “member” of Christ’s body is not merely to have an official status as a “Christian,” but rather it is to be a working part of the body. The body as a whole has a function to fulfill, and all of us as individuals are to be parts of that work. And as for our fellow workers in the local congregation, we are to see ourselves as “members one of another.”

In Christ, we have obligations not only to the Lord Himself but also to the others who make up the Lord’s church, and *we ought to accept our responsibilities as members of a local congregation*. We can’t have a saved relationship with the Lord and not have a working relationship with His people.

Wherever we live in this world, we are sojourners, or pilgrims, on our way to heaven. We are “saints,” the unique possession of God and those devoted to Him and His work. As such, we need to seek out an assembly of the Lord’s faithful people where we live and “join” ourselves to them (Ac. 9:26-28). The local church will benefit — and so will we — from our commitment to assume the responsibilities of being a “member” of the Lord’s body.

This week, let’s think about our relationship to the local church. Let’s be reminded that it is a blessing to have siblings in God’s family, and we can’t love the Lord without loving those brothers and sisters. “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him” (1 Jn. 5:1). A proper relationship to Christ involves properly relating ourselves to others who have the same relationship to Him that we do, especially those who are near enough to us locally that we can work and worship with them.

It is easy to talk about the importance of our responsibilities, but the challenge is to put our talk into action. Do we really love our brothers and sisters in the local church? If we say we do, then we need to hear John’s admonition about love: “Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth” (1 Jn. 3:18).

Monday: Ephesians 1:22,23

Key Idea: The universal church is a relationship of saints to God through Christ.

Questions for Family Growth: Who gave Christ the authority that He has over the church? If the church is the “body,” who is the “head” of it? What does it mean that the church is “the fullness of him who fills all in all”?

Wisdom for the Day: Proverbs 3:7,8.

Tuesday: Ephesians 1:1,2

Key Idea: The local church is a relationship of saints with one another in Christ.

Questions for Family Growth: What does the word “saint” mean? How is the relationship of the saints in a local place, like Ephesus, different from the relationship of the Lord’s people in a universal or worldwide sense? What does it mean to be “faithful in Christ Jesus”?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 3:9,10](#).

Wednesday: Romans 16:16

Key Idea: A faithful local church is a church that is “of Christ.”

Questions for Family Growth: If Christ only has one church ([Mt. 16:18](#)), how can there be “churches of Christ” ([Rom. 16:16](#))? What does it mean for a congregation to be “of Christ”? What eventually happens if a local church becomes unfaithful to Christ? Consider [Rev. 2:4,5](#); [3:15,16](#).

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 3:11,12](#).

Thursday: Acts 9:26-28

Key Idea: We ought to “join” ourselves to the Lord’s disciples, if there are any, where we live.

Questions for Family Growth: What did Saul desire to do when he came back to Jerusalem as a new convert to Christ? What mistake did the saints in Jerusalem make? What would it mean today to “join” ourselves to the Lord’s disciples in a particular place?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 3:13-18](#).

Friday: Romans 12:5

Key Idea: We ought to conduct ourselves properly as “members” of Christ and of one another.

Questions for Family Growth: How can we show that we are “one body in Christ”? What does it mean to be “individually members one of another”? What do we learn from [1 Cor. 12:12-26](#) about our responsibilities as “members”?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 3:19,20](#).

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