

Practical Questions to Consider

1. Have you made a profession of faith but have not taken the step of becoming directly involved in the work God is doing in this world through His church?
2. Have past or present issues with things about the church overshadowed the plain Scriptural teaching about what the church is and how you are to be involved?
3. Do you understand how you as a part of this local body are vital to the work of God and the health and spiritual wellbeing of the rest of the church?

Recommended Reading

- Matthew 16:13-18, 18:15-17, Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, Ephesians 2-4, Hebrews 10:19-25.
- Foundations book 1; Chapter 10-11 (<https://baptistfoundations.com/materials/foundations-1/1-10>)
- Duesing, Jason G., Thomas White, and Malcolm B. Yarnell. 2010. Upon This Rock: A Baptist Understanding of the Church. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic.

*These books contain similar content with *Money, Possessions, and Eternity* being the longer and more thorough of the two.

Five Spiritual Disciplines Schedule

8/1 – Introduction & Overview

8/7 - Bible Reading/Study

8/14 - Giving

8/21 - Church Attendance

8/28 – Prayer & Fasting

9/4 - Annual Missions Conference

9/11 - Witnessing

 CORE SEMINARS

The Five Spiritual Disciplines

Seminar 4: Church Attendance

August 21st, 2024

Spiritual Disciplines. What we call spiritual disciplines can all be found in one place in Acts 2:42-47 as a pattern of practice left for us by the disciples then explained and reinforced in the epistles. The disciples met daily.

A path in Scripture to understand the importance of church attendance.

- The founding and purpose of the church (Matthew 16:13-18). The Founder is Jesus.
- The message and administration of the church after the Founder departed (Acts 1:8-11, 22).
- A well-developed theological challenge to faithful church attendance as a discipline (Hebrews 10:19-25).

1. **What is the purpose of the church?** Matthew 16:13-18

- a. Jesus is the most misunderstood person to this world (Matt 16:13-14).
- b. It is critical that you get the answer to this question correct (Matt 16:15).
- c. The nature of the revelation of God is not fleshly or academic (Matt 16:17).
- d. Peter provides the statement of faith, *not* on which the church was founded, but around which *we gather* on the foundation laid by Jesus (Matt 16:16).

- e. The building of the church is the work of God.
 - i. Church means assembly (much like jury, or congress) it functions when it is together.
 - ii. Assembly provides community, strength, and protection against the gates of Hell.
 - iii. Membership is completely inclusive – anyone can join. At the same time it is absolutely exclusive – only believers (Eph 2:19-22).

2. **What is the role of the members of the church?** Acts 1:8-11, 22

- a. At the ascension of Christ, some things happened regarding the church.
 - i. The Holy Spirit became the administrator – first act was a fiery baptism (Acts 2, Acts 20:28).
 - ii. The members became the official stewards of the church – which was about to go global (Matt 18:15-17).
- b. Our mission was formalized: (Acts 1:8)
 - i. Go witness of Jesus (The gathering statement of Peter)
 - ii. Here and around the world
- c. Our key message (understanding Jesus) was summarized: Acts 1:9-11
 - i. This same Jesus – The resurrected, exalted Jesus, who saved you (Acts 1:11)
 - ii. Will come again in like manner (Acts 1:11, John 14:1-3)
- d. After this, they assembled, then began the work of preaching his resurrection (1:22)

Why is church attendance so important: Hebrews 10:19-25 (Consider how this is phrased, having *these things*, brethren, “let us” draw near, hold fast, and consider one another – not forsaking the assembly)

1. **It is what believers were taught to do by Jesus** – *be together* (Heb 10:22)
 - a. Considering what we have in Christ (Heb 10:19-21).
 - b. “Let us” draw near (Heb 10:22) to God and each other (I John 1:3)
 - c. Family language – family closeness, family loyalty (Heb 10:19)
2. **It is what we promised we would do** – keep our promise, our profession of faith without wavering (Heb 10:23)
 - a. “Let us” hold fast our profession of faith.
 - b. Without wavering – Because Jesus didn’t waver – neither should we.
 - c. Faithfulness is the bedrock of the promise (Heb 13:5, 8).
3. **Church is not just about me – we are family, we are a body** (Heb 10:24).
 - a. “Let us” consider one another (as a family Heb 10:19 – brethren)
 - b. Provoke (nag you) to love and good works - that is what we were saved to do (Eph 2:10)
4. **We are commanded to be faithful to church** (Hebrews 10:25).
 - a. Not forsaking (abandoning, deserting) the practice of assembly.
 - b. Much more as we see the day (of Christ’s return) approaching.