

“Knowing what your church believes”

New Member's Class – Pt. 2

NEW MEMBER'S CLASS Outline ...Getting to Know You

Week 1 - ***Knowing Your Local Church*** ...Defining the setting and mission; Local church governance and SGC association;

Week 2 - ***Knowing what your church believes*** – Doctrines, beliefs, teaching emphasis

Week 3 - ***Knowing what your church practices*** – ministries, serving settings, outreach, etc.

Week 4 - ***Knowing Your Role in the Local Church*** – Being Disciples and making disciples; Taking ownership of membership; Stewardship of your membership

INTRO ... “What *locates* a local church”?...Where is it? What is it based on?

A brief look at the “first” church: Acts 2:42-27

- ❖ Context: 50 days after crucifixion; Holy Spirit has come; Peter has preached; three thousand become Christians (v. 41)
- ❖ *[42] And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. [43] And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. [44] And all who believed were together and had all things in common. [45] And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. [46] And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, [47] praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (ESV)*

So what characterized this first church?

- ❖ Loved God's word, loved each other (even sacrificed belongings for each other).
- ❖ Praised God, shared good news with others.
- ❖ And as is so often the case, the exciting fruit that we see **is supported by some important things underneath.**

- V.42 – *Apostle's teaching* (A set of God-inspired doctrinal beliefs)
- V.44 – *Believed* (in something objective; outside of their own subjective preferences or spiritual ideas)
- V.46 – *Attended the temple* (continued to receive teaching)

Consequently, they:

- ❖ *Gathered* together regularly to ***receive the teaching of God's word.***
- ❖ Lived life together in *intentional relationships* (met in homes, shared with each other) ***because God's word*** had penetrated their hearts.
- ❖ Enjoyed and supported *leadership* God gave them (apostles), as a way of ***acknowledging the authority of God' word.***
- ❖ Spent time together in *prayer* as they were moved and affected by ***God's word.***

In short – a church is located by the Word of God and around the Word of God!

(1) LOCATED BY THE WORD OF GOD

A local church is centrally located BY the Word of God.

- ❖ Church leadership has as its primary purpose the teaching of God's Word.
 - ***Titus 1:5-9*** [5] *This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—...[9] He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.*
 - ***1 Timothy 1:3*** [3] *As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine,*
- ❖ Church membership has as its ultimate purpose the proclamation of God's Word.
 - ***Matthew 28:18-20*** [18] *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the*

Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (ESV)

(2) LOCATED AROUND THE WORD OF GOD

*A local church is centrally located **AROUND** the **Word of God**.*

❖ *1 Corinthians 15:1-4 [1] Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, [2] and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. [3] For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, [4] that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,*

❖ *Places to receive the Word of God:*

It is the expectation of the Elders and Pastors of LCC that its members be committed to weekly, corporate gatherings around the teaching of God's word!

- Sunday morning. (*This represents the essential time of doctrinal teaching at LCC*)
 - School of the Word
 - Worship Celebration
- Mid-week opportunities:
 - Small-groups
 - Women's Bible Studies
 - Senior Adult Bible Studies
 - Beta
 - On-site Bible Study
 - Men's Bible Studies
 - Youth Gathering
 - Miscellaneous Gatherings

❖ *What does LCC Believe?*

- **Statement of Faith**
- **7 Shared Values**