

"Church" Used in two Primary Senses:

- **Universal sense, Matthew 16:18; Hebrews 12:22-23**
 - Concerned mainly with fellowship with God, I John 1:1-4.
 - One enters the universal church upon forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38,41,47.
 - One Universal church, Eph. 4:4. Consists of saved individuals.

Two Senses – continued:

- **Local sense, i.e., the local church, I Corinthians 1:1; I Thess. 1:1**
 - Concerned with fellowship with other Christians, Phil. 1:5.
 - There are many local churches.

Important Fact:

- The Lord wants His followers to be members of sound local churches.
- Implied by the saints at Jerusalem; they constituted the church there.
- Implied by Paul's example, Acts 9:26
- Inferred by Acts 14:21-23; Acts 20:17,28 (elders over local church)

Many Blessings in Universal and local church

- **Universal church, Eph. 1:3; Heb. 12:23.**
- **Local church**
 - cf. Parentless refugee versus a child with good parents. Both belong to the human race, but one has a specific family.
 - Members are a part of a family

Blessings of Local Church Membership

- **Of Worshipping with others of like precious faith, Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25.**
 - Some things to be done *collectively*
 - Lord's Supper, Acts 20:7
 - Teaching, admonishing one another, Eph. 5:19.
 - Of being edified, I Cor. 14:26

"Blessings" – continued

- **Of Being loved, Col. 2:2; I Pet. 1:22**
- **Of knowing that people want to help me:**
 - If I falter, Galatians 6:1-2.
 - If I err from truth, James 5:19-20
 - If I get hungry, I John 3:17-18

More "Blessings"

- **Of Sounding out the word, I Thess. 1:8**
 - As a Christian, I should teach others. But in a local church, through the treasury supplied by all, I can help sound out word over vast area
- **Of Genuine Friendship – people who weep as I weep, who rejoice as I rejoice, Rom. 12:15**

Why Many are *conditioned* not to accept responsibility:

- Calvinistic doctrine of "original sin"
- Calvinistic doctrine of predestination & foreordination
- Increase of atheism, which mentally eliminates necessity of human accountability

Why Many Do Not accept responsibility

- Humanism – which denies the existence of an absolute moral standard.
- Increase of "Big Government" which makes the "system" responsible for success or failure.
- Legal system which allows accident victims to sue others for accidents caused by their own carelessness!

A Self-evident Fact:

- **Human Accountability necessitates the fact of Human Responsibility.**
- **Genesis 1:27; Romans 14:12**

Responsibilities of Local Church Membership

- **Responsibility to worship God, John 4:24; Matt. 4:10; Acts 2:42**
 - With attitude of gladness, Ps. 122:1, reverence, Hab. 2:20, humility, Luke 18:13, and of submission to will of God, Matthew 26:39
- **To attend all the services of local church, Hebrews 10:25**

Responsibilities – continued

- **Maintain Harmonious Relationships, I Thess. 5:12-14**
- **Give of our means, I Cor. 16:1-2**
- **Proper conduct, I Tim. 4:12-13,16**
- **Support the action of the church when scriptural discipline is exercised**
- **Pray for the saints, James 5:16; I Thess. 5:17**



And to personally seek the lost – Because:

- **Of the responsibility placed upon me by the Great Commission, Mark 16:15-16; 2 Tim. 2:2.**
- **Of the value of one soul, Matt. 16:26**
- **To be like Christ, Luke 19:10**
- **For Self-Preservation, John 15:1-2**