

## Should I be a member of a local church?

The online blog asked the question, "Should I be a member of the local church?" The responses were across the board. One said that real Christians are not part of institutions that are run by men. Once you get a group of people together there will be politics and power struggles.

Another response stated that church membership is not in the Bible. It encouraged the person asking the question to just read his Bible and pray on his own. All that matters is his relationship with God.  
(continued on opposite page)

The concerns listed in the comments above are true. But they leave out the fact that Jesus said that He would build His Church. There is an intended culture, an identifiable group of people that Christ wants for His people.

Below are 4 reasons why we should be members of a local church. They spell the word **PAIR**. Just as Jesus sent His disciples out in pairs to do ministry, God wants us to be paired up with others through the ministry of the local church.

Matthew 16:18



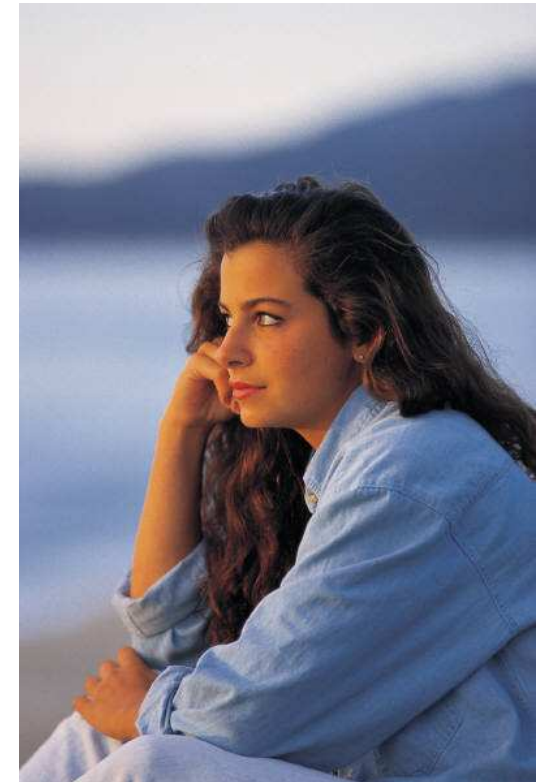
### *Should I be a member of a local church?*

Deer Creek Christian Church  
425 Exchange Street  
University Park, IL 60466

Phone: 708-672-6515  
Fax: 708-672-6580  
E-mail: [deercreek@deercreek.org](mailto:deercreek@deercreek.org)

0208njpubp4r

## Should I be a member of a local church?



## Participation with others

There is a synergy, a combined power in being with others. The sum total of those present is multiplied when you consider that Jesus promises to meet with His Church whenever two or more are present. Imagine what it was like on the first day of the Church in Jerusalem when over 3,000 were together.

We are taught to not miss opportunities to meet with other Christians. Just like wood in a fire when it is touching other wood, it burns brightly. But when you separate the pieces of wood from each other, they begin to smolder and the fire goes out. The same is true with our spiritual energy. No one can live the Christian life at the highest level without being with other Christians.

We are all called to be ministers, servants of others. In the church, there are many opportunities to partner with others to make a greater impact on the community. Jesus said that His followers are like the glow of the light of a city on a hill, not a bunch of individual candles. The brighter we shine, the greater God is glorified.

Matthew 18:20, Acts 2:41-42, Hebrews 10:25, Matthew 5:14-16

## Accountability to others

People have a tendency to take the easy way. If there is a shortcut we will find it, or create one. The problem with this thinking in reference to spiritual growth is that there are no shortcuts! Once we have received the free grace of God's love, living the Christian life is a challenge. In fact Jesus said that going with the flow will not get us to Heaven, but only by taking the road less traveled, the narrow path, will we find eternal life.

We can improve in every area of our lives when we are willing to take advice. In fact the Proverb says, *"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."* From business to fitness, from marriage to finances, our lives improve as we take advice and are coached to take things to the next level. The same is true with spiritual growth found in the fellowship of a church. The leaders of local churches have been appointed by God to help people grow to maturity.

Matthew 7:13-14, Proverbs 15:22, Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13



## Identity with a team

The invention of the free agent in professional sports has hurt team loyalty. When a player spends an entire career with one team, the name of the team and the player are synonymous. You can picture that player in one color jersey with the same number. When an athlete becomes a free agent and someone mentions his name we ask, "Who does he play for now?"

Who do you play for? What is your team? There are many churches and ministries that are doing great work. Other Christian organizations are not enemies. They are all working toward the same purpose for Christ.

In the Bible we read the phrase, "the church at" this town and "the church at" that town. They were local churches that groups of people identified with as their church. In fact the book of Revelation was written to 7 different churches for them to read and then pass on to the next one. Pick a team. There are plenty to choose from.

Mark 9:40, Acts 11:22, Acts 13:1, Revelation 1:20



## Responsibility for others

One of the most important reasons for being a faithful member of a local church is to help others out. There are many references in the Bible that use the words *"one another."* We are told to, *"love, honor, live in harmony with, accept, instruct, greet, serve, submit to one another,"* just to name a few.



Our responsibility for each other helps us through the tough times. Sometimes our faith is tested and we have doubts. Our concern for each other carries us through those times successfully. When we see this happening to other Christians, we are to help restore their faith. We really do need each other.

John 13:34, Romans 12:10, Romans 12:16, Romans 15:7, Romans 15:14, Romans 16:16, Galatians 5:13, Ephesians 5:21, Galatians 6:1, James 5:19