



**ASHLAND**  
**MEN**

**THEOLOGY OF MANHOOD**

**SESSION 7**  
**THE CHURCH**



## The Church Needs a Masculine Presence

### 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

“<sup>13</sup> Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. <sup>14</sup> Let all that you do be done in love.”

## What is the Church?

“*Ekklesia*” – “called out ones;” assembly; gathering

### The Old Testament and “church”

- Two words very similar to church are used throughout the Old Testament
  - *Quhal* - assembly, called out, gathering, or congregation → 123 times
  - *Edah* - congregation company or community → 150 times

(The Septuagint translates *quhal* to *church* (*ekklesia*) 100 times and *edah* to synagogue 130 times).

### The New Testament and “Church”

- “Church” is used 114 times in the New Testament
- Paul uses the term the most → 62 times
- The book of Acts references the church at least 23 times
- Revelation uses the term 19 times

## Jesus and “Church”

### Matthew 16:18

“<sup>18</sup> And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

### Matthew 18:17

“<sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to **the church**. And if he refuses to listen even to **the church**, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

## **The Promise of the Church**

### **Genesis 28:3**

“...that you may become a company of peoples.”

### **Deuteronomy 4:10**

“ ‘Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.’ ”

### **Deuteronomy 9:10**

“...on the day of *the assembly*.”

### **Deuteronomy 23:2**

“... *the assembly of the LORD*.”

### **Psalm 22:22**

“in the midst of *the congregation* I will praise you...”

### **Psalm 74:2**

“Remember your *congregation*...”

## **The Spirit and the Church**

### **Ezekiel 11:17-20**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’ <sup>18</sup> And when they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations. <sup>19</sup> And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, <sup>20</sup> that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. <sup>21</sup> But as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, declares the Lord GOD.’

### **Jeremiah 31:33-34**

<sup>33</sup> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup> And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

### **The Promise Fulfilled**

#### **Acts 2:38-39**

“And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’”

#### **Acts 2:42-44**

“... And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles... And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

### **Questions**

1. How does the presence of the church in your life remind you of God’s faithfulness to fulfill all His promises?
2. What would it look like for you to lead in embracing the joy and privilege of being included in this promise?

## **Jesus is One with the Church**

### **The Church is the Bride of Christ**

#### **Ephesians 5:25-33**

“<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church...<sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives...<sup>29</sup> just as Christ does the church...”

#### **2 Corinthians 11:2**

“<sup>2</sup> For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.”

#### **Revelation 19:7-8**

“...for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready...”

### **The Church is the Body of Christ**

#### **Colossians 1:18**

“And he is the head of the body, the church.”

#### **1 Corinthians 12:27**

“Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”

#### **Romans 12:5-6**

“...so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. <sup>6</sup> Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith...”

### **If Jesus is Incomplete Without the Church, So Are You**

#### **Ephesians 1:22-23**

“...which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.”

## **Questions**

1. How should the oneness of Christ with the church affect your view of the church and service in the church?
2. What skills and abilities has God equipped you with to serve the church?

## **The Universal Church**

### **One Church**

#### **Ephesians 4:4–6**

“<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all”

#### **1 Corinthians 12:12–13**

“<sup>12</sup> For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”

### **Gathered from the Nations**

#### **Revelation 7:9**

“from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands...”

## **The Local Church**

### **The Church Made Visible by Gathering**

#### **Hebrews 10:25**

“...not neglecting to meet together...”

### **The Church Made Visible in Specific Locations**

#### **1 Corinthians 1:2**

“To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours...”

### **Other Examples**

- The churches of the Gentiles (Rom 16:4)

- The churches of Galatia (1 Corinthians 16:1; Galatians 1:2)
- The churches of Asia (16:19)
- The churches of Macedonia (2 Corinthians 8:1)
- The churches of Judea that are in Christ (Galatians 1:22; 1 Thessalonians 2:14)
- The churches of God (2 Thessalonians 1:4)

## **What is a Local Church?**

A community of believers who covenant together as witnesses of the Lordship of Jesus in the world.

### **Practice**

Believers in a local church gather on the Lord's Day for worship, where they practice the ordinances and hear the preaching of God's word.

### **Authority and Leadership**

The local church exists primarily under the authority of Christ *by His Spirit according to His Word*. Under His authority, the local church is to be led by qualified men called to offices of pastor and deacon.

### **Mission**

The mission of the local church is to *make disciples of all nations*.

### **Doctrine & Accountability**

Each local church is responsible for defining and preaching doctrine. Each local church protects the witness of Christ through accountability and the practice of church discipline.

## **What is Church Membership?**

Church membership is a covenant you make with a local church who recognizes your profession of faith through your baptism. Through church membership you are identifying yourself as a Christian. Church membership makes your profession of faith public. The covenant sustains faithful gathering and the practice of the ordinances. The covenant is carried out through genuine fellowship accountability and service in the church.

## **Why should you join a local church?**

- You can't join the universal church
- You can't be held accountable by the universal church
- You can't gather with the universal church
- You can't practice ordinances with the universal church
- You can't be shepherded or served by the universal church
- You can't carry out "one anothers"

## **How will you serve your local church and lead your family to the same?**

The Essentials / Connect Card

## **How to establish a masculine presence in the church...**

### **Have the courage to:**

- Join a local church where the gospel is preached and doctrine is biblically solid.
- Gather each Sunday, avoiding trivial excuses for missing worship.
- Lead your family to love the local church by modeling love for the church.
- Get involved in a small group, engage in the discussion, and volunteer to serve.
- Pick at least one ministry that you give time and energy to make great.
- Lead and challenge others to use their gifts with joy.
- Establish accountability with other men.
- Be an encouraging presence for your pastors and leaders.
- Stand for truth and oppose division by tamping down any gossip and slander.
- Give from the resources you work to earn for the sake of the mission.
- Take ownership in meeting the physical and spiritual needs of others.
- Dig in and take discipleship seriously; learn and teach others theology.
- Commit and don't leave, even when your preferences are not perfectly met.

## Homework

Are you a member of a local church? If not, why not? If yes, how has being a member of our church helped you grow as a Christian?

How would you answer the following question to your family? “Why do we go to church?”

How would you answer if a lost family member, neighbor, coworker, or friend asked you, “*Why do you go to church?*”

How would you answer the question, “Do I have to join a local church?”

How could you cultivate an attitude of joy when it comes to attending and serving the local church?

How could you cultivate an attitude of joy FOR YOUR FAMILY when it comes to attending and serving the local church?

How are you serving our church? List the ministries at Ashland you are regularly serving in. How has serving at our church helped you grow as a Christian?

Are there areas of ministry in which you are interested in serving? Are there ways in which you are personally gifted to serve that your church would benefit from?

*(Fill out a connect card or speak with a leader ASAP).*

How are your wife and kids serving the church? If they are not serving, how could you lead them to serve? What do they like to do? How are they gifted? How can they use their desires and talents to serve the church?

*(Get them to out a connect card or speak with a leader ASAP).*

What does your level of commitment to the church communicate to your family?

The church is

- My highest priority
- A very high priority
- Important
- A good thing when we have time
- More of an afterthought
- Kind of a nuisance

Are there lesser priorities that take time, energy, and resources from you and your family that could be given over to your local church?

Sunday church is a Saturday decision. How will you prepare yourself and your family on Saturday night to be at church on Sunday? What practical steps can you take to help your wife and/or kids arrive early on Sunday mornings focused and ready to worship Jesus?

Read through Paul's prayers for churches in Ephesians 1:15-23, Philippians 1:3-11, Colossians 1:3-14, and write down some specific ways you will pray and lead your family to pray for our church.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, 1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:7, and Hebrews 13:17. List some practical ways to respond to the leadership of our pastors.

Do you aspire to the office of pastor or deacon? Why or why not? Review the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-11 and Titus 1:5-9, and write down some specific ways you can grow toward being a mature, godly man.

*(Make sure to speak with one of your pastors or church leaders about this desire in your life).*

