



The Church: Who?

7th in the “Church on Mission” Series
Hebrews 10, 2 Timothy 4, p. 1007, 996
August 19, 2018
Pastor Mickey Klink

Introduction

In this sermon we define the local church and the nature and roles of the congregation and its leadership.

The Text: Hebrews 10:19-25 / 2 Timothy 4:1-5

1) It is important to correctly define “church.”

Definition of the universal church: *An international and eschatological community of the new covenant between God and humanity, who Christ creates and rules, who the Spirit indwells and directs, through whom the Father is glorified, and in whom the Christian belongs and participates in a local gathering as a family and in the mission of God.*

2) The Congregation: What does it look like to “belong and participate” in a local church?

Definition of a local church: *A group of Christians who weekly gather in Christ’s name to officially affirm and oversee one another’s membership in Jesus Christ and his kingdom through the gospel preaching, ordinances, and authority of Jesus Christ.*

There are several key aspects of a Christian’s relationship to the local church:

- a) Everything is based on the Gospel – a work of the Spirit, personal faith in Christ, adoption by the Father.
- b) Baptism is the grace ceremony of initiation.
- c) The Lord’s Supper is the grace ceremony of continuation.
- d) The relationship involves discipleship and discipline.
- e) Membership is the discipleship mechanism.

Definition of church membership: *A discipleship mechanism that administers the formal relationship between a Christian and their local church, involving affirmation and oversight of a Christian’s discipleship by the church and submission and participation in the local church by the Christian.*

3) The Leadership: What does it look like to be “ruled by Christ” and “directed by the Spirit” in a local church?

Definition of church leadership: *The local church selects from its members qualified individuals to serve in its two offices, Pastor-Elder and Deacon, in order to provide spiritual and physical ministerial care to the congregation and local community, among whom the church serves as a loving family and an embassy of Christ.*

There are several key aspects of a leader’s relationship to the local church:

- a) Church leaders are “under-shepherds: of Christ who are empowered by God through the congregation to serve and lead a local church (1 Peter 5:1-4).
- b) There are two leadership “offices” in the church (Acts 6:1-6): Pastor-Elder (spiritual needs) and Deacon (physical needs).
- c) Church leaders are servant-leaders who model Christ in character and suffering with the support and supervision of the congregation (1 Timothy 3:1-13).
- d) Church leaders are selected and confirmed by the congregation who they represent and oversee.
- e) Church leaders comfort and challenge the people assigned to them by God with the message of the Gospel and the authority of Christ the Lord.

Response

Hope Church is an eschatological community created by God to receive and declare the love of God in our area.

- Pastor-elder challenge – an announcement!
- Congregation challenge.

Sunday Text Questions for Hebrews 10:19-25 and 2 Timothy 4:1-5

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- 1) Starter Question: What reasons (biblical, sociological, etc.) can you give for a Christian to have a healthy participation in a local church?
- 2) Read the texts aloud and discuss together any significant observations or issues needing clarification.
- 3) How does Hebrews 10:19-22 depict the significance of Jesus in our spiritual lives and the nature of his work on our behalf?
- 4) What does it look like to obey Hebrews 10:24? How does this require active participation in a local church family?
- 5) How does Hebrews 10:25 make Sunday morning gatherings and corporate worship significant?
- 6) What does 2 Timothy 4:1-5 reveal about the ministry of leaders/pastors in a local church?
- 7) How do you see 2 Timothy 4:3-4 taking place in our world and even in our churches today? How can Hope Church not fall victim to such wandering from the truth?
- 8) What does the opening line of 2 Timothy 4:1-5 (“I charge you in the presence of God...”) tell you about the importance and responsibility of the leaders in your church? How can you both sit under but also support the leaders assigned to you by God?
- 9) Thinking big picture, how do these texts make a Christian’s healthy participation in a local church a very important (even necessary) part of their Christian life?
- 10) What are some of the ways you have a healthy participation with your church, Hope Church? In what ways can you or should you become healthier?

Further study this week: 1 Peter 5:1-4 on the under-shepherds of Christ (Mon); Acts 6:1-6 on the two leadership “offices” in the church (Tues); 1 Timothy 3:1-13 on the qualifications for church leadership (Wed); 1 Corinthians 5 (esp. v. 4) on the authority of the local church gathering (Thurs); 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 (esp. v. 18) on how a church is defined as a “gathering” (Fri).