

Will You Help Us?

How does it feel to be among the most giving people in the world? It is said that Americans give to more causes than any people on the planet. It may be argued that the reason we do so is because of the wealth here. This may be true in part, but more basic to this is that people of this country give more than anyone else because of a fundamental connection we have with all humanity. If we see someone who is destitute or in need, there is an overwhelming injustice that envelops our minds. We can not just sit by and do nothing. The call of help inspires us, so we give!

Connectivity is important within the church as well. The blood of Christ links all believers throughout the world to one specific body, the church, 1 Corinthians 12:12ff. That connection pulls members together in such a powerful way, spiritually, mentally and physically. Nowhere is it greater seen than in the local congregation. Though we are joined universally, we see connectivity best carried out locally.

Consider the model of the Jerusalem congregation. The founding of that congregation was simultaneous with the founding of the church itself. The Bible says, “. . .all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need,” Acts 2:44,45. What a powerful group of people! See what the unity of that group was able to accomplish? See what the sense of togetherness and oneness meant to the provision of the entire group!

How do we capture the Jerusalem church sense of unity and ability to minister to the needs of all the people in the flock? Our congregation's ability to help those in need is only as strong as the willingness of each participant to connect to the local body.

We need you! We need your commitment to this congregation! We need you to be a contributing part! We need you because we need your help. We need you because we want to help you.

Sometimes we use the words, “placing membership,” to describe a person's willingness to commit to the local congregation to be able to fulfill God's will in a local setting. Other words could be used like “committing to associate,” or “attaching to the work,” or “empowering relationships.” Or, it might be best described biblically as being among “all who believed,” and “were together and had all things in common.”

Some say they see nothing in the Bible that says you have to commit to a local work. Not true! Not only is that wrong, but the flip side is wrong as well. It is wrong to say that there is nothing in the Bible that says a local work has to commit to you! The fact is, in Christ we are together, not by our own decision, but by the placement of God in the church, Acts 2:47. Wherever you are in this world, and you find that your neighbor is your brother, you should be together that you might fulfill the sense of oneness and unity that Christ expects.

In the first century churches were organized locally. God came up with the rationale of a local congregation with a plurality of elders overseeing each work, Titus 1:5. If you live in that location, the elders have a duty to shepherd over you. Yet, how often the hands of the shepherds are tied because sheep are unwilling to be a part of the local fold! James said, "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him . . ." James 5:14. But how can elders pray for the sick in their location about which they have no knowledge? How can they administer to those who refuse to connect with the local work?

Again, we need you! How many there are who often visit the church, and never make a formal connection with the body. In so doing, shepherds are prevented from shepherding, members are prevented from connecting, needs are prevented from being made known, and God's plan for the local church fails in its mission.

Did you know that when you formally unite with this congregation it allows your precious soul to be watched over by divinely appointed men who are committed to nourish and protect you? Acts 20:28. Did you know your brothers and sisters in Christ in this congregation desire to help you in time of spiritual, physical, medical, emotional, and even financial need? Did you know that they want to rejoice when you rejoice, and weep when you weep? Did you know that they want to pray for you and with you? Did you know they want to enjoy fellowship with you outside of the worship services? Did you know that they need your help in carrying out the local work?

Your soul is important, and so are ours! If you are not a member of this congregation, would you be willing to join with us that we might carry out the cause of Christ in a better way? Approach an elder today, or sign an attendance card saying you want to be recognized as a member of our church family, and then one of our elders will contact you for an appointment. If you are a member, seek out those who visit and ask them to unite with us in carrying out the mission of Christ.

Remember, we are Americans, we rise to the occasion! But more importantly, we are Christians, we ascend to the Call! Will you help us?

—Scott