

# What Is The Local Church

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[ 0 : 00 ] And today I'm preaching on what is a church and how the church functions.! And to protect myself, I have to say this is not an exhaustive list.

! One sermon cannot exhaust what the church is. I have 12 points, however, and each of these 12 points could be a sermon in themselves.

I was commissioned by Josh to do 15 points, but I cut it down a little. However, this sermon serves as an overview of what Christ Church believes, as we have some new people who are coming, how we function, and how we relate to one another in the body.

Before I jump into what the church is, I wonder, do you have a working definition of what the church is? If you consider yourself, you know, maybe you've gone to the church for years, maybe, you know, a month, maybe like today's your first church service. What is the church?

Do you have a working definition of what that is? If you go into a random church, you're like, oh, this is a healthy church. And throughout church history, the church has been called many things, right?

[ 1 : 22 ] Including rapists, pedophiles, murderers, swindlers, master manipulators, greedy, harsh, and so on, right?

All of these things throughout church history and even now. And if you're called and striving towards apostolic ministry or even eldership, it's not optional for you to not have a definition of what the church is.

You must have a definition. How can you govern God's church without knowing what it is and how it functions? And this applies to all of us who are Christians, right?

And who don't know what the church is. How can you give a defense for the church, a defense for your faith when the occasion arises? You don't have a definition, right?

And so without further ado, my first point, which is that we are sons and daughters possessed by God, right? And there's a lot of Bible passages for all of these points that I'm going to skip over.

[ 2 : 32 ] And I've just selected a few for all of them. These are not exhaustive, but just a few. So the first is 1 Peter 2, 9-10. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people. So in other words, a people who is possessed by God is owned by God. I possess this phone.

I own this phone. My phone. Do with it as I please. And that's pretty self-explanatory. But I want you to consider what that really means for who you are and who God is.

You are no longer your own. You belong to God. And you are to act in accordance to how God wants you to act.

Why? Because he bought you. He owns you. You are his. You are his. You are his. Paul often refers to himself as a bondservant of Christ doing the will of the master.

[ 3 : 42 ] And it's not wrong for us to consider ourselves the same way. But not as a slave, not as a servant. But as a servant, that's not how our father relates to us.

He relates to us as sons and daughters. And we get to share in the glorious inheritance of our savior. Right? We are sons and daughters who are possessed by God.

We are owned by God. Yet he doesn't relate to us as mere property, but as sons and daughters. Right? Among the few that I've already named the heinous names the church has been given in church history.

So, you know, pedophiles, thieves, murderers, master manipulators. The question we have to ask is, if that's what the church is being given, if that's a label of the church, are those people actually possessed by God?

Right? Right? Christ says, if you love me, you will obey my commands. Right? And in your life, if there's a pattern of sin in your life that's kind of defining, are you acting in accordance to how God would possess you?

[ 5 : 00 ] You know, are you following the father of truth, his will? Or the father of lies, Satan, his will?

Who are you possessed by? Right? If we are sons and daughters possessed by God, then what we are seeking is to follow his will and not Satan's.

My second point, keep chugging along here, is family. There are lots of churches that talk a big talk about family and the family of God, yet there's no experience of family.

None whatsoever. I've seen it firsthand. I've been a part of it. And what drew me to Bellicose, the church that helped plant Christ Church, was that there was family there.

Right? Not just a mere talk of family, but it was palpable. You could touch it. You could experience it. And it's a marker of Christ Church as well.

[ 6 : 08 ] And so we don't want to just talk big about family. Right? We don't want to just hold hands and sing Kumbaya. So what does that look like?

Right? What does family look like? Mark 3, 31 to 35 says, And his mother and brothers came standing outside. They said to him and called him.

And a crowd was sitting around him. And they said to him, Your mother and your brothers are outside seeking you. And he answered them, Who are my mother and my brothers? And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, Here are my brother, my mother and brothers.

For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother. Right? Jesus says if anyone does the will of God. Right?

Very familiar. Right? If anyone does the will of his father and his mother, they are his family. The scripture says, test yourself to see if you are in the faith.

[ 7 : 11 ] Right? What does your obedience to God's will look like? Right? This is related also to the first point. Right? Are you possessed by God? What does your obedience look like?

If you are doing the will of God, then you are considered Jesus' brother, his sister, his mother. What does your obedience to God look like?

What does communing with God look like? If you consider, when was the last time you picked up God's word and studied it? Right? What does your prayer time look like? What does your intimacy with God look like?

Is it like relating to a family member? To your father? Right? In other scriptures, like 1 Timothy 5, 1-2 says, Do not rebuke an older man, but encourage him as you would a father.

Younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters in all purity. Paul says in Romans 16, 13, Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.

[ 8 : 19 ] The apostle Paul has someone who is related to him as a mother. That's not his own mother. She's commended for treating Paul like a son.

1 Peter 2, 17, Love the brotherhood. Right? These are all very familial languages. And a family, especially a healthy family, is one that knows one another, knows their likes, knows their dislikes, how they're doing, what their struggles are.

They're open in heart and vulnerable as well. Vulnerable to receiving correction. And in the family of God, we must be in one another's lives so that we know one another.

Right? I would have a very bad marriage if I didn't know my wife in that way, including with my kids. Here's an example to think about. Let's think about eldership. Can you just be an elder in a vacuum? Right? No one knows you. Right? You must consult God's word and then consult the people of God.

[ 9 : 37 ] Right? If the people of God don't know you, who you are, what you do, how are you going to be able to tell if you're qualified or not? We all have blind spots.

We must be in family. Another example, if you're seeking marriage, you're a young man, but you're addicted to pornography and your finances are out of order, right?

Right? It is the burden of God's people to rebuke you and call you to Christ. Right? But you would not be able to know that if you're not in that person's life.

Sure. Sure. You're so dull and so distant from the church and from the body and you're not enjoying anything right now. It is the burden of the church to pray for you. It is the burden of the church to

pray for you.

To question why you are so dull. Why there's no joy in you. It's the pro to understand, to commune with you.

[10:39] To understand that maybe you haven't communed with God in the past five months. And if you're celebrating an adoption or if you're having a birthday party and all things in life is going well, it is the burden of the church also to celebrate with you.

Right? That is what a family does. And in a family, it rings in Christ's church that the mission of our church is the kingdom of God in all of life together.

And it would be hard to do that mission if we're not rightly relating to one another's family. I came from a very poor, very unhealthy family, a very abusive mother, very abusive father.

And we really don't communicate a whole lot. And if we do communicate, it's very surface level. And everyone just cares about their own interests. That's not what we're pursuing.

Right? A personal example at Christ Church is when Sarah and I were trying to buy our house in last November. I got grilled so hard about all of my finances by different brothers.

[12:01] Zamir, what happens if you lose your job? How much do you have saved up? What happens if your boiler goes out? It's like 10 grand to replace those things.

Asking all of these questions, having multiple conversations. And, you know, if all of those things were to happen, my finances were in order, I lost my job, my boiler goes out.

Do you know who I could rely on? Those same brothers who were grilling me. And that's the family of God. And that's the family of God. That's the expression of the family of God.

To bear one another's burdens. And remember, there's no perfect church. Even if there's a strong family in a church, there's no perfect church.

And even if you found a perfect church, once you joined it, it would cease to be perfect. Because you joined them. Number three.

[13:05] The church of God is God's bride. Christ's bride. Revelation 19, 17 says, Let us rejoice and exalt and give glory.

For the marriage of the Lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready. Revelation 21, 2. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from the heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Revelation 21, 9. Then come one of the seven angels who had seven bowls full of seven, the seven last blanks, spoke to me, saying, Come, and I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

This bride that is being talked about is the church. Right? The church of God. As Seth preached two weeks ago, Christ is the head of the church.

And if you haven't heard that sermon, I would highly recommend it. That the church of God acts in a feminine way towards God, towards Christ.

[14:14] Right? We are his bride. Our affections are towards him. We are to prepare ourselves for him. Right? Our desires are to be for him.

And that begs the question, where are our desires? Right? If we are his bride, if our affections are to be for him, if our preparation is to be for him, are we making ourselves ready?

Following the commands that he left for us. You know, namely, the great commission that he left for us. Make yourself ready. Go and make disciples of all nations.

Have you considered that you are his bride? Are you making yourself ready? When Christ returns, he returns for his bride.

Right? Right? And those who are not founded in the church, and even those who despise his bride, must reconsider.

[15:19] Because Christ returns for his bride. Imagine this. I have a group of friends who love me dearly. Right? Love hanging out with me. Love talking with me.

You know, great friends. I love talking to them. But they hate my wife. Or they think really ill of my wife. What would I have to do with them?

Right? My wife and I are one. Right? Yeah. Right? Yeah. Yeah. So Christ likewise loves his bride. Do not despise his bride. His bride is the church. Point number four, fellowship.

The Greek word koinonia, bear with me, is meant to describe fellowship.

[16:19] Right? It's usually translated. It can be translated fellowship. It can also be translated partnership or joint participation. Right? So, Acts 2, 42.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. Right? That fellowship there is koinonia.

It's partnership. It's joint participation. Right? They devoted themselves, if you want to just say, they devoted themselves to fellowship. The last word says, I thank my God in all remembrance of you, always in the prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

2 Corinthians 6, 14 says, Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers, for what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Right?

As Josh is doing a series on partnership, suffice it to say that the kingdom of darkness rages against the church, and we cannot stand isolated fighting by ourselves.

[17:48] In this partnership that Paul talks of, we need to be joined together. Right? There are many who believe that they can just do church by themselves.

You know, I can just go fishing, spend time with the Lord and pray and be good. If that were true, I wouldn't be here right now. But don't take my word for it.

Listen to what I just read. They devoted themselves to fellowship. Right? That is what the church did. They partnered together with Paul for the gospel.

They did that together. It's not in a vacuum. That is not how God has set up his church to be.

Elsewhere in the Proverbs, it says, The man who isolates himself is a fool.

That's what the scripture says. Right? We are not meant to be isolated. We are meant to be yoked together in partnership. Even the common phrase, no man is an island.

[18:55] Right? Brings that every man, even unbelievers, need community. And the nature of God himself, the triune God is one of fellowship.

We would not have fellowship if our God didn't have fellowship. So, on to one number five, flock.

The flock of God. Church is the flock. In the New Testament, usually when flock or the flock of God is mentioned, it's usually in relation to leadership or shepherding.

Right? Acts 20, verse 28. Pay careful attention to yourselves and to the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to care for the church of God, which he obtained by his own blood. Peter, 1 Peter 5, 1-5. So I exhort the elders among you as fellow elders and a witness of sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed.

[20:07] Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you, not for shameful gain, but eagerly, not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

And when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders.

Close yourselves, all of you, with humility towards one another. For God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Christ is our head. He is our shepherd. He is the great shepherd.

He's the one leading us, ultimately. And truly, we are stupid sheep. Right? I'd admit that. And we need his defense, and we need his guarding. Right?

Like David, before he fights Goliath, he talks to Saul, and he talks about how he protects the flock. He fights the lion and the bear to protect his flocks.

[21:14] And there's no difference in what Jesus does for us, in how he leads us, guides us, and protects us. He defends us from the kingdom of darkness.

He guards us. He leads us in the paths of righteousness. In the name, in his name, darkness must flee.

And for those who are considering eldership, overseeing an epistolic ministry, this is the labor of the shepherd. Protecting the flock. Fierce wolves are coming.

If you're thinking, I'll just kick my feet up, I'll preach a few sermons, breakfast here, dinner there, that's not it.

You protect the flock of God by ultimately looking to the head shepherd. By praying, by fasting, weeping for the salvation of your flock's souls.

[22:18] Doing meetings at 6 a.m. After you've been up all night. Showing up to people's houses when they're in the middle of sin. When they've drunk, they're filled.

And it's midnight, and you're tired, and they're calling you. Guarding the flock from stupidity. A foolish young man who's about to make a stupid decision.

Mothers, sisters, brothers, old men in folly and need encouragement. That is the task. If you don't enjoy dwelling with the sheep, if you don't enjoy smelling like the flock, then you shouldn't consider being an older.

And you, flock, me, all of us, remember, the Lord is our shepherd. We have what we need. Number six.

Body. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ.

[ 23 : 31 ] And individually members one of another, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us. Let us use them. Seth again, which is a great sermon on Christ being the head of our body.

And a body without a head is dead. And it's dead faith, right? If you come to church and you do all the stuff, but Christ is not your foundation, he is not your head, then you have a dead faith.

And we cannot put Christ out of order. And according to our giftings and according to how God has called us, we also must act in accordance.

I think, as I was preparing for the sermon, of the hilarity of the liver if we're trying to take the place of the hands. Right?

Because it wanted to be seen more. Right? Liver is like, I really want people to see me more. So I want to be the hands. Like, no liver, that's not your function.

[ 24 : 41 ] Your function is to filter. It's to metabolize nutrients and produce critical protein. To take out the toxins of the blood and filter those chemicals like red dye 40 and yellow 6.

And to make the body feel better. Right? And the body would implode and die without the liver. If it tried to be a hand. And in the same way, the question must be asked for you believers who make up the body.

Your giftings, your calling, are you acting according to how you are called, according to how you are gifted? Are you prioritizing what the Lord has called you to?

How the Lord has gifted you? Are you acting like how you must be acting? If you're not, then you're hurting the body. The body is not functioning the way it's supposed to be.

Because you are not. Don't despise the giftings and the callings that the Lord has given to you. Like how Jonah despised going to Nineveh.

[ 25 : 52 ] Don't despise the Lord has called you to. But look to your master and say, You have redeemed me. You have purchased me. Your will be done.

Not my own. So onto number seven. House, building and temple. First Peter says, You yourselves. I'm just going to read four scripture verses. You yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Living stones is what I want you to take hold of. Matthew 16, 18. 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 them.

The confession that Christ is Lord. Mark 11, 17. And he was teaching them and saying to them, It is written, my house shall be called a house of prayer for the nations.

[ 26 : 57 ] First Corinthians 3, 16 to 17. The you here is plural. Plural. Plural. Plural, by the way. Do you know, do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwell in you?

If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy. You are that temple. God no longer dwells in a house built by human hands.

He built, he dwells in houses bought by his blood. Right? His people, his possessions. No longer do nations come to a temple to pray.

We are a house of prayer for the nations. The greatest gift that God could have given to us is himself, which he did.

God has built his church. And the blocks that are used for his church are living stones. You are those stones.

[ 28 : 06 ] And we are his temple, which leads to the next point. Priesthood, which are, we are his priests. Right? We are God's house.

We are the priests in his temple. And like I already read, we are living stones being built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood.

To offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ Jesus. Not only are we temple in the house of God, but in the service of the temple, we are the priests.

However, we don't rely on the blood of bulls and goats. The one great man has already offered himself up as a sacrifice. No more does one man have to go behind a curtain.

He has torn the curtain. We have full access to God. We can go before the throne of grace, the throne of God, and not die because of Christ Jesus.

[ 29 : 13 ] He makes us priests. Not just sons and daughters. We are also priests. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care.

Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care.

Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care. Take care.

Take care. Take care. before obeying his commands and trusting them, not leaning on ourselves, but leaning upon him, leaning upon the everlasting arm.

Number nine, pillar of truth. 1 Timothy 3, 15. If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God.

[ 30 : 19 ] A pillar and buttress of truth. I have no clue what a buttress is, but it's kind of a funny word. It's a support kind of for a wall.

It's like a triangle almost in architecture. It supports the wall, and it's what you'd see in really old cathedrals. But it's a support.

It holds it up like a pillar, right? Same word, pillar, buttress. But the church of the living God is a pillar and buttress of truth.

John 17, 17 says, Sanctify them in your truth. Your word is truth. John 4, 23. The hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

For the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth. Do your best, 2 Timothy 2, 15.

[ 31 : 25 ] Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. We are a pillar of truth.

As a church, we hold truth. We defend it. Teeth and nail. Our Father is truth. His word is truth. Jesus, our Savior, is the way, the truth, and the life.

We worship the Father in spirit and in truth. This world with its woke ideologies and lies about so many things, especially about who men and women are, about how to find our value and dignity, about how to find worth.

Search for work, not work possessions, not possessions, riches, not riches, go smell the roses.

Brothers and sisters, we hold the truth of the Bible, which is the great sword to defend against these lies.

Right? Do you recall who Satan is? What's the name? The Father of Lies. If we're actively defending and fighting for truth and holding on to what is truth, the Father of Lies seeks to deceive us.

[ 32 : 48 ] He seeks to deter us like Adam and Eve. You're naive to think if he's not. So how do we guard against Satan's schemes?

How do we safeguard against despair in the midst of temptations, in the midst of believing lies? We turn to God and His word, and we worship Him in spirit and truth.

Very simple. Where there's confusion, where there's gray, where there's deception, we must turn to God. Satan seeks to deceive, but God seeks to bring clarity and truth.

We have to be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. That's the only way. Number 10. A holy nation. There's three things.

A holy nation, light of the world, and salt of the earth. Okay? Three heavy hitters. I put these three together, mainly because I think they convey the same idea, which is, though we are in the world, we are not of the world.

[ 34 : 01 ] And first would be nations, right? Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, making His appeal. God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God.

An ambassador is someone from another country, right? We are, these churches are like little embassies. Embassies of the heavenly kingdom.

Philippians 3.20 says the same idea, but our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. No longer are we just people of the earth, people of heaven, right?

We are a new creation. Born again. We are in the world, but we are not of the world no more. And so, being in the world, and not of the world, we seek to fight against the darkness, the kingdom of darkness, which means that we are the light of the world.

Right? You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and gives light in all the house.

[ 35 : 22 ] In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Right? We are in this world as ambassadors to shine the light, this new creation, this gospel that is inside of us, to proclaim it and bring light to this kingdom of darkness that Satan has corrupted.

And then on top of that, we are also salt. You are the salt of the earth.

But if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under feet. Right?

There is nothing so good as salt on a stake. Right? Like, if I just had a stake with no salt, ugh. Right?

But we are to be different. We are not to conform to this world. We are to overcome this world. Christ has already overcome this world. We are to be the light of this world. Right?

[ 36 : 31 ] We are to God and proclaim His mercies. His mercies are more. Right? Onward. We are a field.

Number 11. 1 Corinthians 3, 5-9. What then is Apollos? What then is Paul? Servants through whom you have believed.

As the Lord assigned to each, I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

He who plants and he who waters are one. Each one will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field.

God's building. Right? This field that Paul and Apollos and we also are working in is God's field. Right? And we are also in God's field.

[ 37 : 35 ] Right? Planted by God. By the use of our someone who preached the gospel to us planted and being grown by the Lord. Right?

You know, that shows that this field that's being talked about, it's God's field. He plants the seed. You know, are you stuck in despair?

Tired of the mundane of lies? And no longer feeling joy in your salvation? Do you know who gives growth in that? God. Ask him to grow you up in the faith.

Ask him to grow your salvation. Not salvation, but your joy. Ask him to grow your pleasures. If God's word has been planted deep in your heart, then it takes root everywhere.

Right? There's no longer a secret part of your life that you want to keep. Right? It takes root everywhere. And you must give those secret things up to the Lord. Have you been seeking to grow?

[ 38 : 48 ] How have you been seeking to grow? Right? Have you sought discipleship? Have you sought to be father? Have you sought to prepare yourself by listening and receiving teachings of doctrine?

Have you sought to know God and his word? God is generous to give growth. I know. He's given me tons of growth.

And anything that is healthy grows. He is the owner, he is the gardener, and he protects the garden. He guards, but he also prunes you. The word says, no discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful.

Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. We need pruning. We need discipline.

[ 39 : 59 ] It's God who prunes. Do not despise his discipline. Number 12. Almost there. The church is God's army.

Right? I think it's way cooler to think of an army like a Spartan army like a Roman army like a sword and shields than like an army with guns.

I just think it's way cooler. Maybe I'm a romantic of swords and shields, but I just think it's so much cooler. And Paul agrees because he's never seen a gun before. But there are three foes that we fight against in the army of the Lord.

Right? There's two external foes and one internal which is our own flesh. Right? Paul tells us in Ephesians 6, finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to withstand the schemes of the devil or stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against authorities, against cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

[ 41 : 33 ] Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand firm.

We are in these evil days. These days are evil. Right? And our battle, we must remember, is not against flesh and blood, but the cosmic powers.

We need to see that. We fight against Satan and his lies who tempts us away from the Father of Truth. So what do we do in his lies?

We fasten the belt of truth. And we wrestle. And as we wrestle in the world of unrighteousness, we must wrestle with the breastplate of righteousness.

Right? The two foes that are external is the world and the devil. Right? And then our flesh loves the devil.

[ 42 : 33 ] Loves the world. When Satan tempts us, our flesh is like, oh, bro, just give it. You know you want it. That is your old man coming out and saying, you used to be like this.

You can be like this again. Remember how sweet it was? But we must beat that old man in submission. We must take up our cross and crucify our flesh and follow Christ.

I recently read *The Old Man in the Sea*. Good book. I dropped out of high school so I didn't get to read it in high school.

But most of you have probably read it. But there's there's a the scene that I want to describe is when he's fighting against the marlin.

This great big fish that's 18 feet long. Right? And it's just himself in a small skiff and his left arm is cramping the entire time and his back like he has the cord on his back and he's wrestling against this great fish day and night and he seeks the glory and the prize of getting this fish.

[ 43 : 51 ] So we must wrestle. So we must fight. But our prize is not a great fish. And the great fish ends up being eaten.

Our prize is an eternal crown. Crown of glory. And as the old man wished throughout the entire story for that boy who would help him a lot we have men and women who must link arm with us in this army of God.

Right? We are not in this army by ourself. Right? We must fight together. We must be praying for one another. We must be communing with one another.

That's why family is so important. Finally, point number 13. The ekklesia. Sorry for all the Greek. Ekklesia is the word that is often translated church. church. Right? And I want to put in parentheses legislative body.

[ 45 : 01 ] Right? But before anything I want to read Acts 19 23 and 38 to 41.

And I want to read this mainly to show that ekklesia was a common word that was used. Right? Acts 19. Now some cried out one to another some another for the assembly was in confusion and most of them did not know why they had come together.

If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have complaint against anyone the courts are open and they are pro-council. Let them bring charges against one another.

But if you are seeking anything further it shall be settled in the regular assembly the regular ekklesia. for we are really for we really are in danger of being charged with rioting today since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion.

And when he had said all these things he dismissed the assembly the ekklesia. Ekklesia is simple in definition can be translated assembly which is what it was there.

[ 46 : 12 ] It is not a word that was invented by Paul not a word that was invented by Jesus but a very common word that was being used already.

And in antiquity the Greeks would use the word ekklesia for political events right? It would mean there an event that occurred for the meetings of citizens where they would vote on various things. I bring this up because the word ekklesia is also translated to mean church right? But the word church truly didn't start being used until about the 12th century.

And I've met many people who have used the argument that ekklesia means assembly right? So where two or three are gathered there Christ is right?

On a Sunday morning. So every Sunday morning you know what I do? at 9 a.m. I go out to the golf course with my buddies. It's the ekklesia baby. But I really want to fight against this.

[ 47 : 27 ] It's not just assembly. It's an assembly of people who are coming together who are common and yoked together for the body of Christ.

right? And even if we read Matthew 18 15 to 20 which also has the word assembly in it it says if your brother sins against you don't tell him his faults between you and him alone if he listens to you you have gained your brother but if he does not listen take one or two others with you that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses if he refuses to listen to them tell it to the church the ecclesia the assembly and if he refuses to listen even to the church let him be to you as a gentile and tax collector truly I say to you whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven again I say to you if two of you agree on earth there are two or three gathered in my name there I am among them this text is giving christ is giving permission for those two or three to what is bound on earth shall be bound in heaven right he's giving authority to the church to be able to do such a thing as expelling a brother from the church who is not obeying his commands and it says if he refuses to listen to them tell it to the church right the assembly one thing to consider here is that it means that there's someone who knows this brother right it's not a random group of people it's people who knows his brother who knows his life and who knows these other brothers that are coming tell it to the regular assembly who gather together they know one another right it's a connected people and they're accountable to one another and and just some more on top of this in the book of

Acts there's an assembly of people that happens and there's a group of 120 people gathered in the upper room they're assembling together right and there's some way that someone knew that there was 120 because they knew everyone right it wasn't just a random gathering even more when they were meeting in the temple there were 3,000 who were gathering how could you know if there was 3,000 if you didn't know these people right someone is keeping track of who these 3,000 are right if people belong to the church right the ecclesia then they are regularly gathering together and know one another!

point 13 got to the conclusion but just in conclusion I have a quote from the great scholar and pastor Brian Pirtle in in the context of the local church there's clarity there's healthy order and there's a shared responsibility none of the leaders are perfect and none claim to be but they are grounded in the gospel aiming to be spirit led aiming to be bible soaked people aiming to be clear with one another you might agree but have your labors grown dull in the pursuit of the church do your labors need to be refreshed are you seeing God's church the way that God sees his church