

Church Matters

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[0:00] My subject tonight is Church Matters. Looking at the church, this morning we looked at doctrine matters, now we're looking at the church. The church matters. In other words, it's important. The church is important. And what's it all about? Why does it matter?

What is so important about belonging to the church? God has ordained the church. This fellowship of the flawed, it's been called. Because we're all flawed humans, aren't we? We're all limited and we've got our faults. I know I have. And yet the church is of his making. He's brought us together. Church, it means assembly or congregation. It means when we're gathering together, it's a getting together of the people of God. That's what a church is. And for all of its faults, the church is of God's making. It's his creation. It's his idea, his plan. And we're going to go to Matthew 16, if you'd like to follow me there. God has made the church to carry out his purpose and his will in the world. And Matthew 16, verse 18 reads, and the Lord is addressing Peter here, and I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

He's saying here, Peter's just confessed Christ as his Lord, and Peter's confession of faith was the rock, as it were. The confession of his faith was the rock that the church is built upon. And the Lord Jesus says, I'm going to build my church, and he says the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. So we see the church is very special in God's plan. And God's people are meant to be an active part of the church. Again, church means congregation, assembly, being together as believers. It's important. It's helpful. We grow. We can encourage one another as we participate together, believers together, in our local church. Church is important. So I put to you tonight, make it a priority as well for yourself. We can have all kinds of priorities in our calendar, and mark our calendar with all kinds of important things. Think of the church. If it's important to God, it should be important likewise for us. Set your calendar around fellowship. Make fellowship the first thing that you mark on your calendar. Let everything else fit around that. It's important that we assemble, that we get together. It's a good thing. It's good for our soul. It's good for us. It's good for others, because we not only receive, but we impart when we come to church. I like to think that it's not always what you get out of it. It's what you put into it too. Because by being here, there's other people.

[2:51] There's other brothers and sisters you can connect with and talk with and encourage, and you can be encouraged and encourage others likewise. It's a mutual thing. And God commands us to. So it's very worthwhile. Now sometimes we can perhaps put other things, a birthday party or a sports event or social events ahead of church fellowship. I think that's not wise. Sometimes we can set our own conveniences or our self-interest and miss out. Because when we miss out for fellowship, we miss out on something that's very important. I'm not meaning to be heavying people, but more just an encouraging thing, where you're physically able to get together. It's a good thing. I know for myself and Julie, raising our little family, our little ones were in church, you know, every time we could, through the week as well, as well as on Sundays, both times if we can. And of course I'm preaching to the converted here tonight, because you're in church. But you know, just saying the point, support the church where you can. God helping you. We know there's reasons why. Sometimes it's not possible. But God rates the church as a top priority. He's building his church. He says the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It's God's idea. The Lord Jesus is building on the foundation of that confession of faith in him. So the church is important. It's God's way of doing stuff. When you think about

it, really, putting it in, you know, in blunt terms, really, it's his program. It's his idea. And really, God's accomplishing his work on earth through the church. That's you and me. As we get together, as we are his assembled people, God does things when we get together. It's right through the Bible, isn't it? Through the Old Testament, the Old Testament saints gathered together, they met together, they fellowshiped together, they worshipped together. And so it's got that principle right through the word of God.

It's something that's a time-tested principle. And so what is the church? The Bible calls the church the household of God. In other words, it's like a family. It's a sense where we're family. We're brothers and we're sisters. We're brethren. We're together as God's children.

And it also says that we are the body of Christ. So we think of our bodies, lots of parts. And likewise, we're all different and have different ways of working, different ways we can contribute and be participating in the body. Why should we care? Why should we love the church? Christ loved the church. Christ loved the church and he gave himself for it. As we see in Ephesians 5, 25, that the Lord Jesus loved his church as his bride and he gave himself to redeem it.

It says, husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. Such love. I know one of the mentions this morning was the everlasting love. He's loved us with an everlasting love. That's how much God loves us, isn't it? And he so loved the church, the congregation, his assembled people, he so loved the church that he gave himself for it. So that's special, isn't it? You're special today because he's given his very blood shed for you. And what a picture of love that is, as the closeness of a marriage bond. And the church is called God's building as well, not the physical bricks and mortar as we might sometimes be seated in such, but he's talking about the building blocks of you and me as living stones we're built together. It's that this construction project, this building work that he's doing. God's church is called a building.

And the church also is called a flock, a flock. Now, I was reflecting this morning, I was telling someone that my dear wife here, I was out at the rally Saturday and I got this message from my wife, the sheep is out. And it's the black sheep. And probably that's a good thing that we've got a little bit of a property with some 10 sheep and one of them jumped the fence. And so Julie had to go and be the shepherdess and go down this valley and up the other side. It was quite a hike, so it's not easy. And Julie had to go looking for this lost sheep. Thankfully, we had a visitor at the time who gave a bit of help. But it's got that picture of sheep going astray. And you know, the Bible says that all we like sheep have gone astray and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity, the sin of us all. And so that little sheep wandering off, jumping the fence and doing its own willy-nilly thing is away from the flock. And it makes me think really at times of some human sheep that I'm really responsible for. I think I worry that they're astray from the flock. They're astray from the fold. And it's not a good place to be, really, is it? We know that we as God's sheep should be together in a flock. And the Word of God talks about such a picture. For example, 1 Peter 5, verse 2. 1 Peter 5, verse 2. The church is also called a flock. As it reads, 1 Peter 5, verse 2. Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. So Peter's saying that to the elders that he's addressing, to feed the flock of God. And we're meant to be together like sheep are meant to be in a flock, together, like folded together in a fold, fed together, comforted together, the safety in the fold. And God doesn't want us to be like some straying sheep. Away from his pastures, we'll end up getting into trouble. A lone sheep out on its own can get in all kinds of bother. And this could all be avoided if we stayed where the strength is, which is in the fold. Amongst our fellow believers, there's a strength there as we are where the flock is, because that's where the shepherd is as well. I've seen so many horror stories where people go off on their own merry way. And I'm talking frankly here, there's some folk that come to mind, they've got some pretense of a house church, and they end up in the wilderness. They're not under any kind of accountability to the body. They're just doing some of their own kind of thing. They're astray from accountability. They pray for the wolves. And as we talked about this morning, the winds of false doctrine, there's no stability, there's no strength there. And they wonder why they get into trouble. And likewise too, they're wasting their talents. They're disobeying God. I think of some people, there's some believers I know, there's some that just live a couple of stones throw from here. They had some difference, and they're nowhere. They're nowhere. They're not going to fellowship anywhere. So they're nowhere spiritually. They're missing out. And we're missing out on

them because they've got abilities that they could give to the body, but they're not here.

[10:09] So they're wasting their talents. I think that's a grievous thing. And they're disobeying God. They're missing out on the blessings of strengthening and being strengthened by their church family. So I pray that we won't make that mistake. And so the elder in this context, in 1 Peter 5, the elder here is told to feed the flock of God. And really, this was a verse that was quickened to me when I was searching for what God wanted me to do. I feel that I'm called to this, to feed the flock of God. God helping me, I'll hopefully provide something that's going to feed the souls that God has given us together today to be receiving some kind of feed from God. And of course, the food that we really need is spiritual food, isn't it? That we can be taught by God's word. We can grow spiritually. Because that's the ultimate objective for the flock, for the sheep, that we be fed, that we'll be nourished, that we'll be nurtured, that we can grow spiritually.

And the church is part of all of that. So if we're not where the word is, where the fellowship is, we'll miss that. And so we want to individually, to grow, we need to make the Bible a priority.

Now, of course, when you have the Bible at home, you can get the Bible online, you can get the Bible live streamed and such. There's nothing really beats being together. It's the sense of being together. Because when you're together, you can impart to others around about you, and you can worship together. There's something about worshipping together. I know, as much as you might try, it's hard to fellowship with your TV screen, isn't it? As much as you might get some good stuff that way too. But as we get together and we hear the preaching and the sound teaching ministry of the church, it's going to help us with our growing. We'll get spiritual growth from that, I trust. So we should want to get to where the word is, God helping us, where it's being preached, because that's God's will. It's the right thing to do. It's the scriptural thing to do. So may God give us that desire for his word. Like the desire that a baby has for a feed. For example, 1 Peter 2, verse 2. 1 Peter 2, verse 2, where it reads, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby. When you get that little baby and it's time for a feed, they'll let you know about it. They'll vocalise it. They'll cry out for it, won't they? And we should be having that heart's cry. I want your word, Lord. I want that sincere milk of the word. I want to have that which I can grow thereby. It's the word of God. And so that's one of the focus of the local church ministry is to God helping us to clearly teach and preach God's word. We need that. And it's the way that God has ordained it. It's the time-honoured way right through the word of God. They got together and they heard the word. They received the word. They acted upon the word. And we honour God when we do that.

And I love the scripture. People might be familiar, if you'd like to turn there too, Psalm 133. The Psalm 133. It's got a lot of content there that encourages us to this fellowship, this call to fellowship, and how there's a blessing right there. I love these words in Psalm 133.

[13:34] It reads, behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together. In unity. Think of that. For brethren, brothers and sisters to dwell together, to get together, to dwell together in unity. It reads on, verse 2, It is like the precious ointment upon the head that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments. It's got that sense of an anointing there.

And as the Jew of Hermon, and as the Jew that descended upon the mountains of Zion. Think of that freshness of Jew on the grass. And for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore.

So again, something special happens. There's something special happens. There's some Jew that falls. There's some precious ointment. There's some dwelling together in unity. There's blessing. There's even life forevermore.

As we get together, we unite our faith together. There's something when there's that corporate mutual faith, isn't there? That mutual worship. As we raise our prayers together. As we raise our praise together.

It's good for our soul. There's a joy there. There's a blessing. He's commanded the blessing there. He says he's going to promise blessing. And so when we miss that, when we fail to fellowship,

we're robbing ourselves.

[14:54] And we're robbing others too of a blessing. So again, please don't feel exhorted in a negative way, but more as an uplifting way. Yeah, I need that. I need that blessing for my life.

And as believers, we can get that blessing, promises that blessing. So we ought to grab hold of his promises, including this one, that we can edify one another. We can be encouraged in this.

Of course, a familiar one of assembling, a familiar passage is Hebrews 10, verse 25. Hebrews 10, verse 25, where it reads, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another.

And so much the more, so much the more, as you see the day approaching. There's a sense where, as we're getting closer to our Lord's coming, it's all the more important. It's all the more precious.

It's all the more meaningful. As you see the day approaching, let's be exhorting one another. These are days that call for exhortation. You know, as we know, even the world knows. We're on the brink of World War III, some are saying, aren't they?

[15:58] They think things are looking pretty drastic. The way the government's going, the way the society is going, it's going downhill fast. And we think, well, as we see the day approaching, as we're seeing all these bad things happening, it's all the more precious and important for us to edify one another, encourage one another, exhort one another, and to that local church engagement.

So be faithful in that. There's a blessing for you. And the Bible mentions over 30 specific local churches. So local churches, little bodies of believers scattered here and there.

It's a biblical principle. Some 30 different local churches are talked about through the New Testament and six regions of churches. So there's kind of clusters of churches.

I love how Paul describes it in 1 Timothy 3, verse 15. As he exhorts young Timothy, 1 Timothy 3, 15, he says to Timothy, But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. So Paul tells Timothy, he tells them, Behave thyself in the house of God. Now again, this word house can signify household. It's a family.

[17:14] So we think of church. Church is not meant to be where we're just sitting isolated and just numbers or just people sitting on seats. But we're actually here together as a family.

This is a family meeting. We're brothers and sisters here together. And I'm just your brother, just you're my sister, my brother. We're together. We're children of God, all of us.

And so we're exhorting one another. There's that closeness pictured here, that familial context, isn't it? That sense of loyalty of a family. There's a togetherness.

There's a closeness, I trust. And it says there's a foundation here. Paul tells Timothy that the church is the church of the living God and it's the pillar, so like a column, we could think of it, and then the ground, like a foundation of the truth.

So it's not only the foundation that it rests upon, it's built upon the truth. It's the truth building on the truth. It's the pillar and it's the ground of the truth. So that's a wonderful factor too, really, isn't it?

[18:20] And God helping us, we are such a church because as I talked about this morning, sadly some churches don't seem to be the pillar and ground of the truth. They seem to be far from that.

But God helping us, we are built on the church foundation, the foundation that is the truth, and we are the pillar, like the column, the structure that's built upon that foundation, that is truth as well.

And so I trust we can be encouraged that we are such a church, God helping us. And the church is where also believers are encouraged to use their spiritual God-given gifts.

It talks through that in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. So God has given us different callings, different abilities, different ministries that he's given us to use.

And it talks about waiting on those ministries. It talks about being many, we're one body. This is Romans 12 verse 5. And everyone members one of another. Then it talks about having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us.

[19:24] It goes on to list numbers of gifts. So it's talking about using those gifts. And where do you use those gifts? When you get together. It's when you get together that you can use those gifts.

Because we're one body, we're members together. And so there's ministry, there's exhorting, there's mercy. See, I love that one of the spiritual gifts, I think, that doesn't get highly mentioned or that we don't always consider it, is the gift of helps.

The gift of helps, that's a ministry. Even when you're helping, as it were. And just do your little bit to do, some little bit to help. That's a ministry. And so there's things that we can almost overlook and think, what can I do?

Well, you can help. And, you know, of course, in a spiritual sense, God enables you to be helpful, to have that heart to help. It talks about exhorting, which is talking about encouraging, comforting people, teaching, ministering, giving, ruling.

There's a sense where there's lots of areas of responsibility, lots of ways that you can give. And that's how God gifts you to give, in the sense of these spiritual gifts.

[20:34] So, in a way, it's how you can effectively serve him. And so the gifts and callings and abilities that you have as your own person, and every believer has a gift, if not more than one, as God has gifted you, he's gifted you so that you can use those gifts and employ them as you serve him.

And it's obviously in the church setting. God's designed that all believers have a role to play, to participate, to utilise their God-given abilities. And every one of you, every single one of you, has something that God has put on your heart to do, some enabling to benefit the body.

So even be a helper, the ministry of helps. You might think, the little help that I can give, what does that count for? But God counts it as very precious, so everyone is important. And we're a community too.

As the church, we're meant to be a community together. I love how in Acts 2, 44, Acts 2, 44, it says, all that believed were together and had all things common.

There's a sense where we connected together, where there's a repeated theme of together. The church was together. They were together. As they assembled together, as they praised and prayed together.

[21:45] And God connects us together with other believers. So there's that community feel, that community aspect. Because really, we're not meant to be a solo act. You know, we're not meant to be like a lone ranger, a maverick, you know, just doing our own little thing without any connection.

We're meant to be together. It's interesting how the Bible uses the term, one another. There's some 60, close to 60, one another.

So you can check your concordance through the New Testament. One another. For example, love one another. Comfort one another. Forgive one another.

Pray for one another. Lots of others, such like. So maybe that's your homework tonight. You can check your Bible. For those one another's. And of course, all of those one another's, you can't really do, you certainly can't do it on your own.

You've got to be, at least with one other, to love one another and so on. And so at church, we can also get the benefit, in Titus 2, there's a calling there to the older ones amongst us, to be like godly mentors, to be, as it were, discipling others.

[22:56] So it talks about, you know, older women, teach the younger women. Older men, in a sense of, ministering to, the younger ones. So you might, even as an older person, you might think, well I'm kind of, put to one side now.

No, it's all the more important, for you that are older, that you can nurture, and build up these younger ones, amongst us, and help point them, in the right direction. We all have that, responsibility for others.

And so we can fellowship, with one another. In 1 John 1 verse 7, it talks about, how we have fellowship, one with another. There's another one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin.

Fellowship with one another. Fellowship with one another. And so as we gather, and gather, and all the more, all the more as you see the day approaching, we can build our faith, on Christ, that solid foundation, and we can be that close-knit community, as well.

I love how, the word of God talks about, knit together in love. I like to, think that we should, have that close-knit, kind of community. And it's a rich, diverse fabric, that we knitted together, we're all different, we might come from, different cultures, and countries, and different, experiences, and, different knowledge, different, family settings, but, God's brought us all together, from all of our different settings, and, different backgrounds, to be, one people, one family together.

[24:22] So let's encourage one another, brothers and sisters, let's, let's do our part to encourage one another, to strengthen one another. Another thing about the church, is it's God's outlet for evangelism.

We see, the early church, they, obviously, they got together, and they went evangelising together. They were persecuted together. They were, they were put in prison together.

And it's that sense, where they went, and reached out together, didn't they? And they sent missionaries, the apostello, they sent them out, to other lands, to outreach, to global missions. And, the book of Acts, tells the story, of the growth of the early church, of personal evangelism, of group outreach, of missions. And, so, outreach is, again, it's one of the, I like to think of souls, as the heartbeat of the church.

And we should have that heart, for souls, to reach out, to not lose sight of our mission. We planted here, not just to be some insular, little holy club, but to be, an outreach, an outreach base, to reach out, to our world, near and far.

[25:24] And so, God's equipping us too, to be those missionaries. Sometimes we've got the missionaries, on the board, but we've got the missionaries, here too. We've got the missionaries, right here, you and me. We're all missionaries, in that grand plan, really, aren't we?

We've all got an accountability, to reach the souls, that we can touch for Christ. And it could be, just passing out tracks, it could be, a word here, a word there, your own influence, your own godly testimony, to the people, that you rub shoulders with.

You're a testimony, you're a witness, each one, testifying to the grace of God. And it's all, kind of emerging, from the local church, there's a sense where, yeah, this is the, kind of, base, almost, that we're sent out from.

And we can encourage one another, as we're sent out, to reach out. And, also, church matters, because, we can, learn about the word of God, we can, mature in our faith.

So, let's be willing to take part, take part, to, say, yeah, church is about, what I can do, what each one of us can do. Someone put together, a bit of a funny, picture of, an organisation, you could, use it for any, organisation, you might have heard it, perhaps in another, way.

[26:37] But, it's talking about, bones, you heard this one? That there's four main bones, in every organisation. There's the wish bones, wishing somebody else, would do something, about the problem.

Wish bones, oh, I wish, somebody would do something. The jaw bones, they do a lot of talking, but very little else. You know, jabber, jabber, jabber, you know, jawing on, the jaw bones, a lot of talk, but no action.

Then you've got the knuckle bones, those who knock everything, ah, no, you know, just whinging, knuckle bones. Then you've got the back bones, those who, who carry the brunt of the load, and do most of the work.

Now, let's be the back bones, amen, let's be the back bones of the church, that, yeah, God can give me something to do, and I'm going to do it, and God helping me, he'll strengthen me to get it done. So, church matters, church matters.

Every believer, every believer, everyone, each one, everyone is important, and everyone has a calling. Every believer matters, because church matters.

[27:41] And so we're called to love one another, develop those meaningful relationships, with brothers and sisters, as your fellow Christians, like a family, God helping you. And, look, be the one to reach out.

If you're feeling like you're disconnected, you do the reaching out. You make the connection, because there's probably, the others around you might feel the same too. We all need that, don't

we? To think, how can I actually, be a loving brother, or sister, to those around about me? How can I, encourage others, here, and around about, in fellowship? And so, there's that spiritual maturity that comes, there's a blessing there. There the Lord has commanded the blessing. There the Lord has commanded the blessing. As we fellowship, we can use our God-given abilities. Whatever your ability is, use it. Just, find what God has put on your heart to do, and do it. Even do it, even if it feels hard to do it. Even if it feels like you don't get much encouragement. Even if it feels like it's a hard slog. That God has given you something to do, do it unto Him.

[28:44] Do it unto His glory. Because then you know that, you're doing it with the right heart. You're doing it to please Him. Not to get an acknowledgement, or any reward. But you're doing it to honour your Lord, because you love your Lord.

You want to be a faithful servant. Because He's your master. And if He's commissioned you to do it, He'll enable you to do, what He's put on your heart to do. And so the church is the body of Christ as well. It's an extension of our Lord.

When we think about it, you're His hand. You're His voice. You're His feet today. You are the body of Christ. We, each one, are carrying out His will, His work.

We're the church. We are the body of Christ. You are the body of Christ. So that's a sense of connection there. And He is the head. He gives the guidance, the support, the leading. And there's a connection amongst us.

We're connected together. We're not disjointed. We're some arm or hand over here, a foot over there, or an eye over here. We're all together. We function better when we're a body, when we are in that body context.

[29:44] And we can grow together. We can encourage. We can spur each other on. And we're accountable to each other. I'm accountable to you. And I was saying to someone this morning, we've got the means to sack the pastor.

If the pastor gets off on some immoral thing or gets off on some false teaching, then please sack me because we don't want that kind of pastor who's doing their own thing and getting unscriptural. The body has got that means to get rid of the pastor, which is important. So we're not some kind of cult. I'm not some kind of cult leader that you can't get rid of. You can get rid of me.

So please do if I get off track. But there's a sense where our shared worship is a good thing, isn't it? Our faith gets strengthened together as we encourage one another. We all take those opportunities and we commit to being that church that God wants us to be, the body of Christ, fulfilling his mission, his mission, and living in that community with one another.

So to close, we cannot fully live out our faith in isolation. Church matters. It's important. That's why we're connected. It's not something that's onerous or irksome or you're forced into it.

[31:00] But yet there's a glad fellowship. There's a glad fellowship. You want to be amongst God's people because that's where you can be strengthened. It's where you can give to others. And of course, I know there's many visitors here tonight.

You might have another church that you're doing just that. So keep on doing that. Keep encouraging that local church body that you're part of. It's very important. It's going to help. That church is going to help you. And so let's encourage one another so much the more as we see the day approaching.

Amen. As we fellowship, we'll get access to the Bible teaching that we need that will help us to grow. We can develop those relationships with our fellow believers. We can support one another. And there's opportunities for praying, for worship. That's when we get together. That's all the more special. And we can work together in service as well.

And we can receive that care and give that care. We can find that support. Sometimes that can be the hardest thing, can't it? When you're that lost sheep, you jump the fence.

[32:04] You're out on the back paddocks and you might be away from water and feed, away from the shepherd. You can get in all kinds of bother. But when you're together, when you're in that fold, in that flock, in that setting, in that nurturing community that is the church, the congregation, that you can find that support.

When there's difficult times, when there's tough things happen, when you need prayer, when you need support, because we're here for each other. Hopefully that's why we've got a contact booklet as a church.

For those that want to be included, so that you can pray for one another. When you see someone's missing, grab one of those contact lists and you can pray for those that you've seen, you've missed, you can encourage those ones.

So let's commit to being that church, being that body of Christ, that community. As we grow together, we serve together, we encourage one another in our faith journey. And of course, to be the church, you've got to be saved first.

So really, that is really the first, the starting point really, and not meaning to gloss over that, because you might think, well, I'm part of the church, I've been part of the church since I was this high, and it's not like being part of a club.

[33:16] This isn't some kind of a club that you kind of join. It's when you're born again is when you become part of God's church, right? It's when you actually trust Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, then you become his subject, you become a servant of God.

It says as many as received him, Jesus Christ, God gave them the right, the power, to become the children of God, the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

So when you trust Christ, it says you become children of God. So if we're children of God, it means we're brothers and sisters too. Really, that's the sense of it, isn't it? As we're children of God, we're brothers and sisters too.

So he draws us, he affects his church. As we are made his children, we're made such that we're a family of God.

So I pray you'll be encouraged that if you've yet to trust Christ as your Lord and Saviour, you'll say, yes, Lord, I do trust you. I do believe you died on the cross for my sin and I receive you by faith as my Saviour.

[34:23] Forgive my sin and become my Saviour, my Lord, by faith. And that is the simple trust that affects that salvation. And then we're in God's forever family, which is the church, aren't we?

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you are our great God and Saviour, that we can come to you by faith and know your grace. Lord, we pray for every heart, every home, each one here, visitors, auriculars, Lord, for each one, that each one might be encouraged in these things to be that church that you want us to be.

Lord, that assembly of your saved people, help us to know that, that we are your children by faith, to know that we're also brothers and sisters and to act like it, that we do care for one another like good brothers and sisters care for one another.

Lord, we help us to be such a people, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.