

GROWTH TRACK  
Lesson Five  
The Local Church

1. Two Aspects

a. Church Universal Is made up of all born again believers on Earth. **Revelation 5:9** And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

b. Church Local is the individual assemblies lead by Eldership. **Acts 14:23** So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

2. New Testament is written to "churches" in localities that had structure and order.

**Colossians 2:5** For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

a. Order means a structure of leadership comprised of Elders, Deacons, Members. **1 Timothy 3:1-10** This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 8 Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, 9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. 10 But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.

3. Believers are expected to identify with a local congregation for the following reasons.

a. Personal spiritual growth - **1 Peter 2:1-2** Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

b. Equipping for ministry - **Ephesians 4:11-12** And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

- c. Relationship with other believers as family - **Ephesians 3:14-15** For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
  - d. To Care for one another's spiritual progress - **1 Corinthians 12:25** that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.  
**Colossians 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
  - e. For protection of spiritual covering - **Hebrews 13:17** Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.
  - f. For accountability of spiritual life - **Hebrews 13:17** Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.  
**Ephesians 5:21** submitting to one another in the fear of God.
  - g. For partnering together in the work of God - **Hebrews 10:23-25** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.
  - h. For restoration of erring believers - **Galatians 6:1-2** Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
  - i. To corporately worship God together - **Psalms 35:18** I will give You thanks in the great assembly; I will praise You among many people.
  - j. To support world wide effort of Evangelism and Discipleship.
4. Our participation in and support of the Local Church is a reflection of our spiritual maturity, showing that we understand the plan and purposes of God.