

Satisfied in One Another

How the Local Church Satisfies the Longing Soul · Hebrews 10:19–25

“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith... Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

— Hebrews 10:19–25 (ESV)

There is a feeling many of us carry but rarely name. It is the sense that we are not yet home—that this world, for all its beauty, is not our final stop. We look around at the chaos, the noise, the decay, and something deep within us whispers: there is more than this.

C.S. Lewis put words to it well: “If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.”

This longing is real. And it is not something to be dismissed or medicated into silence. It is a feature, not a bug, of the Christian life. The question is: where do we go with it?

In Hebrews 10:19–25, the author gives us a surprising answer. He does not point us toward a spiritual discipline or a personal achievement. He points us toward each other. He points us to the local church.

Here are five reasons why the local church is good for your longing soul.

1. The Local Church Reminds Us That Our Greatest Needs Have Been Met

The author of Hebrews begins with a breathtaking gospel announcement: we have “full confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh.”

To the original Jewish audience, this would have been shocking. The “holy places” were accessible only to certain priests, on certain days, after specific rituals. The idea that any believer could simply enter—freely, confidently—would have been nearly scandalous.

But that is exactly what the gospel announces. The curtain that separated us from God has been torn—because the flesh of our Savior was torn. And this truth shapes everything about how we understand the local church.

The church is, at its core, a community of need. We do not gather because we have it together. We gather because we share in a common human poverty—and because we share in a common divine rescue.

Think of it this way: a St. Louis Blues fan and a Chicago Blackhawks fan might have very little in common on any given night during the regular season. But at the Olympics, cheering for Team USA, they stand shoulder to shoulder. Something deeper than team loyalty bonds them: shared citizenship.

In the local church, we have something that runs even deeper than national identity. We are a people who have been brought to the end of ourselves and found Christ waiting there. That shared poverty—and that shared abundance—is the foundation of everything we are together.

2. The Local Church Will Keep You in Covenant

There is something deep in the human soul that longs to belong—to be known, to be held, to be kept. But belonging without commitment is just proximity. And proximity without covenant is just attendance.

The local church is gloriously better than that.

Notice the language of Hebrews 10: “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering.” The phrase “hold fast” is not the language of loose affiliation. It is the

language of people who cling to one another and to what they believe. In the local church, we watch over each other's confession and each other as confessors. We guard each other's doctrine and each other's lives.

I know that "covenant" is not a popular word in a culture that prizes optionality. We are trained to keep our commitments loose enough to exit when things get hard. But you were not made for that kind of freedom. You were made to live in a body—with *one another*.

Earlier in Hebrews, the author issues a striking warning: "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day... that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."

Do you see the mechanism God gives us to keep us from falling away? It is not a self-help strategy. It is not a podcast or a spiritual journal. It is one another. We are called to exhort one another. To ask the question Cain tried to dodge—"Am I my brother's keeper?"—and answer with a resounding "Yes!"

Covenant community is the scaffolding God builds around the Christian life under construction. Your longing soul needs to be kept—and God has designed these people to be the keeping agents.

3. The Local Church Reminds Us That Real Beauty Is Ordinary

We live in an age obsessed with the extraordinary. Social media has handed everyone a highlight reel and called it normal. The cumulative effect on the soul is a kind of chronic dissatisfaction—we get bored easily, and we get bored with the wrong things.

We scroll past the extraordinary so fast that we lose our capacity to see the beautiful in the ordinary. And this is deeply dangerous for our spiritual lives, because so much of what God has given us is wrapped in ordinary packaging.

Notice that Hebrews 10:24 tells us to "consider" how to stir one another up to love and good works. That word is intentional. To consider one another requires deliberate, sustained attention. It requires actually knowing the person sitting next to you.

And if you can afford yourself that kind of attention—if you can slow down long enough to truly see your neighbor—you will begin to recognize the beauty in them. Each one of them is an image-bearer of God. Each one carries a story of grace.

The rhythms of the local church—gathering together, sitting under the preached Word, taking the Lord’s Supper, singing songs—can feel unremarkable. But they contain more beauty than we realize. We just have to tune our souls to the frequency God designed for the local church.

4. The Local Church Is Made of *Real* People Forming a *Real* Body

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky’s, Father Zosima, makes a pointed observation: it is easy to love humanity in the abstract. It is much harder to love the actual person in front of you—with their quirks, their failures, their needs intact. When we love “mankind” in general we often fail to love any one in particular.

The local church does not let us love an abstraction. It forces us into contact with real people. People who are difficult. People who are broken. People who will disappoint us and whom we will disappoint.

And that is the point.

The New Testament reaches for multiple metaphors to describe what we are together: branches grafted into the vine; many members of one body with Christ as the head; living stones being built up on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, with Christ as the cornerstone.

None of these metaphors allow for isolation. You cannot be a branch by yourself. You cannot be a body part without the body. You cannot be a brick floating in midair. The local church is not a collection of individuals who happen to occupy the same building on Sunday mornings. It is an organism and it is *together*, moving through our pilgrimage toward the Promised Land with *real people*, where we will find our source of life—all rooted in Christ and his Bride.

5. The Local Church Is a Foretaste of Heaven

We return to where we started: the longing soul. Augustine wrote that our hearts are restless until they rest in God. We know that full rest awaits us on that great day—when we cross our own Jordan and enter the Promised Land.

But here is something that may surprise you: I am convinced that the local church gives us previews of that day in the here-and-now.

Think about what happens when we gather. We are sojourners—people who know this world is not our home, who feel the weight of that displacement every day. And then on Sunday morning we walk into a room full of other sojourners who know exactly that feeling.

For an hour or two, something remarkable happens. We breathe together. We sing together. We listen together. We eat and drink at the Lord's Table together. And in that gathering, we get a taste of the age to come—a collection of weary sojourners who come together to a place where we can be us and see other trophies of grace face-to-face. The local church, and our time with one another, is a foretaste of the communion that will one day be unbroken and eternal.

The author of Hebrews tells us to gather “all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” The local church is not separate from eschatology—from our hope for the end of all things. It is tethered to it. Every gathering is a small rehearsal for the great gathering that is coming.

Conclusion

I am convinced that God is a giver of good gifts—gifts we do not deserve. And though it is fashionable today to dismiss the church, to try to take Jesus while leaving the church behind, I believe she is among the greatest gifts God has given us.

For those of us who feel that deep longing—who know we are pilgrims on the way, who have not yet made it home—we find in the local church people who can truly see us and truly know us.

And more than that: in the church, we find people who can help us see Him and know Him.

Your longing soul was not meant to wander alone. It was made for one another.

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