

Church

2 Reasons

Why I

LOVE

The Local Church!



Purpose of Booklets

These are **Short Starter** Studies on **Sensitive** Subjects that **Stir & Stimulate** you toward **Biblical, Practical** Information that show that **Jesus** has **Great Answers** to some of life's **Hardest Questions**.

At www.FamilyBibleStudies.TIPS & the Family Bible Study App each booklet is a free download along with a short podcast explaining each booklet.

The website and App also has:

***“One Terrific Tip to make
Family Bible Studies
Everyone’s FAVORITE time of the week!”***

The website and App also give lists of different **Categories** for the booklets as well as ways to use the booklets in:

1. Bringing **Friends** to **Christ**
2. As a Resource for **Pastor’s Sermons**
3. **Small Group** Bible studies in a **Church**
4. As a **Resource** for Christian **Counselors**
5. Bible studies with **Friends** or **Co-workers**
6. For your own **Personal Growth & Bible Study**
7. Christian **Business Owners** to serve their **Customers** or **Employees**

What if I Don’t Agree with What I Read?

There is always a good chance that I am wrong or that I have poorly communicated. I always encourage each person to research on your own. It may be that your research helps me and others to find God’s heart more clearly.

We all seek His truth by the two Bible measures of:

1. what is **clear** and **consistent** in **God’s Word** and
2. what bears the **Fruit** of **Jesus** in the lives of those who follow that application.

In heaven, all of God’s purposes in God’s Word will be clear and our actions will be aligned with God’s Word. I constantly ask myself, what will we **act** like and **believe** when we are in **heaven**. This is my goal in these booklets.

“Thy kingdom come; thy **will** be **done** on **earth** as it is in **heaven**”

Table of Contents

FIRST Reason why I ♥ LOVE ♥ the Local Church

1. It **BLOWS** the **STINK** Off of Me! 😊
The ONLY place where it is NOT all about ME! (pg. 1)

SECOND Reason why I ♥ LOVE ♥ the Local Church

2. Jesus constantly compared **Kingdom Relationships**
to **Financial Investments!**

Every Financial Investment has 2 questions

- i. *What is the RETURN on my Investment?*
- ii. *How MUCH should I Invest? (pg. 4)*



3. **Important Questions to ask**
when **Evaluating** a Local Church! (pg. 6)



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It **BLOWS** the **STINK** Off of Me!

I grew up in the 1960s. It was an era when children played outside in the summer 8-12 hours a day. I was one of six children. Ours was a busy and noisy home. Many times, when our home would get overly noisy, I remember my mom saying to us: *“Go Outside & Blow the Stink Off of You!”*

It was a harmless, fun way to remind us how a **different atmosphere** can bring a **totally different perspective**.

Every Single Thing in My Life is **ALL** About **ME!**

At work, at home, with friends, in my hobbies, my main motive is that it will bring benefit back to **ME!** Everything in my life is constantly **ALL** about **ME!** Even if I am doing a fantastic job of serving my family, I know in my heart that it benefits **ME** to have a great family.

- Church is the **ONLY** place where the *“Me Focus”* gets set aside.
- Church is the **ONLY** place where we our **ACTIONS** declare that *“Bringing People to Heaven”* is my **ONLY** purpose in life.

Can I **SMELL** Myself?

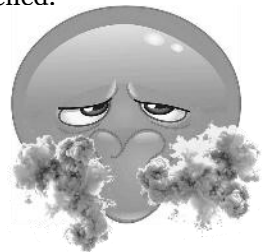
The **MORE** I have bad body odor – the **LESS** I smell it.

Our olfactory nerves in our noses have a **SHUT OFF VALVE**. When a bad odor increases around us, our noses actually **SHUT OFF**. That is why everyone remembers being around someone with really bad body odor. Every person in the room was bothered by this person’s odor.

Sadly, the person **WITH** the bad body odor was **COMPLETELY UNAWARE** of how badly they smelled.

The Nose **RE-SET**

The only fix is for this person to take a shower. Once clean, the **nose RE-SETS** and is **again sensitive** to bad odors. **Church** is where we **RE-SET** our noses so we can smell our own selfishness!



EVERYONE around us can **SMELL** us!

Both **Christians** and **Non-Christians** know that our attitude toward our local church is one of the loudest statements of whether or not our Christianity is real!

The Baseline Minimum of Being a Christian = PURPOSE!

The **BOTTOM LINE** for every business is to “***Make Money!***”.

If they don’t “***Make Money!***” - they will **not** stay in business.

- This “Clarity of Purpose” guides **every** minor & major **decision**.
- This “Clarity of Purpose” **never leaves** their mind or focus.

They may spend money to make money. They may have secondary goals for their company, but they always keep their primary purpose in mind.

In the same way, the Bible gives a very strong “Clarity of Purpose” for every Christian.

We **live every moment** to “***BRING OTHERS to HEAVEN!***”

- This “Clarity of Purpose” guides **every** minor & major **decision**.
- This “Clarity of Purpose” **never leaves** our mind or focus.

The local church has always been God’s main tool to bring others to heaven. Every time we step in the doors of our church, this **refocus** on our “**Purpose**” is the **shower** that **refreshes** and **resets** our **noses**.

The more we invest our time and emotional energy serving in our local church, the more our hearts long to see people come to heaven.

The SECRET to True Community!

Here is the SECRET that only vibrant Christians know.

True Christians **NEVER** just **ATTEND** church! We **deeply commit** to **SERVE** in our local church.

In every healthy church, the **best** people are the ones **serving**. We meet each other when we serve. We make the **best friendship connections** with fellow servants.

It is **SO EASY** to find great community in ANY healthy Church.

We simply let the leaders know that we LIVE to SERVE! We appeal, ask and constantly seek to find ANY area where we can SERVE. We teach our children that the local church is a place where we come to serve.

The result is always great community.

We rearrange our schedule and priorities to **MAKE Time Available**.

Whether the church attendance is 200 people or 20,000 people, community in that church is easy to find for those who come to church to serve.

Church is the **ONLY** place that refreshes and resets our ability to smell how **SELFISH** we have become.

Why the Bible is So Strong on This Subject!

There are so many scriptures that emphasize how strongly the Bible commands each of us to serve in a local church.

When you see someone who claims to be a “Christian” but they don’t serve faithfully in their local church, you will **almost always find** that this person has become **stagnant** in their **personal Bible Study**.

God’s Word constantly challenges us to serve others in the local church.

EVERY Single Book in the N. T. has at least one verse that states that the **BEST MEASURE** of how **much** we **LOVE** Jesus is **measured** by how much we **love** and **serve** our church family.

Mt. 22:39-40, Mk. 12:31, Lk. 10:27, Jn. 15:12, Acts 2:42, Ro.12:10, I Cor. 12:21-26, II Cor. 8:8, Gal. 6:10, Eph. 1:22-23, Phil. 1:27, Col. 1:3-4, I Thess. 1:2-3, II Thess. 1:3, I Ti. 3:13, II Ti. 4:1-5, Tit. 3:1-2, Phil. 1:7, Heb. 10:25, Ja. 2:2,8, 1 Pt. 1:22, II Pt. 1:5-9, 1 Jn. 3:10, II Jn. 1:4-5, III Jn. 1:3-4, Ju. 1:17-21, Rev. 2:19

Eight full chapters in the N. T. are exclusively devoted to explaining how the **BEST MEASURE** of how **much** we **LOVE** Jesus is **measured** by how much we **love** and **serve** our church family. (*Rom. 12, I Cor. 12, Eph. 4, I Jn. 1-5*)

These chapters are amazing, rich studies. They give graphic pictures of our connection in our local church being as strong as our connection between our body parts. Notice the last bolded words in Eph. 4:16.

*Eph. 4:16 From him the whole body, **joined** and **held together** by every **supporting ligament**, **grows** and **builds itself up in love**, as **EACH PART DOES ITS WORK!***

All of I Cor. 12 challenges every Christian to be deeply involved and connected in a local church. In v. 18, the Bible says that God has **already chosen** a specific church for each Christian. This is the verse that gives us the Biblical model of “**Membership**” in a local church.

*I Cor. 12:18 But as a matter of fact, **God has placed** each of the **Members** in the body just as **He Decided**.*

Jesus constantly compared
Kingdom RELATIONSHIPS
to **Financial INVESTMENTS!**

*Mt. 6:19-21, 7:24-27, 13:45-46, 18:12-14, 20:1-16, 25:14-30,
Mk. 8:36, 12:41-44, Lk. 6:30-38, 12:15, 12:16-21, 13:6-9, 15:8-10,
16:1-13, 16:19-31, 18:1-8, 19:1-10, 19:11-27, 21:1-4, Jn. 12:1-8*

Two Questions with Every Financial Investment!

1. What is the **RETURN** on my investment?
2. How **MUCH Money** should I invest?

If you have invested **\$10,000** in the Monster Beverages in 1994, your return **30 years** later would be over **\$81 million** dollars.

Knowing such a huge **RETURN** would impact How **MUCH MONEY** you would invest.

What I learned thru Church History.

When I arrived at Bible College in 1979, I took a church history class. That class launched me into an intense 10 year study of church history. Over those ten years, I read hundreds of book and articles on Church History. Over those ten years, I saw a clear pattern. In every generation, Jesus is determined to build HIS Church. ***Mt. 16:18b I will build MY church.***

In EVERY Generation, Jesus raises up sincere Christians who live only for Jesus and for the single purpose of bringing others to heaven. They are vibrant, alive, passionate, healthy Christians whose life, love and witness causes others to come to Christ.

This long term picture helped me to understand that I am to evaluate **every local church** based on how much **RETURN** I will receive if I **INVEST** myself into this church.



I am commanded to use the compass of God's Word to find the most Bible Believing, Bible Living, Fruit Bearing local church in my area.

Once I find that church, I am then commanded to give my Greatest Investment of my time & gifts so that I may bear the most Fruit for Jesus.

When we understand why **Jesus** wants us to connect our **Local Church Family** to an **Eternal Investment**,
We apply the two factors of Investments to our local church.

2 questions with Financial Investment!

1. What is the **RETURN** on my investment?
2. How **MUCH Money** should I invest?



LARGE Investment in a POOR Return

If I pour my whole heart and invest my time, emotions, energy and gifts into a church that is toxic, 😞 not bringing people to Christ, 😞 not loving, 😞 not high integrity and high humility, 😞 not teaching clear Bible truths, 😞 not building disciples 😞 or not causing healthy family relationships, 😞 it is like pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into a stock that loses money over decades. I have **WASTED** my **investment**. 😞

SMALL Investment in a GREAT Return

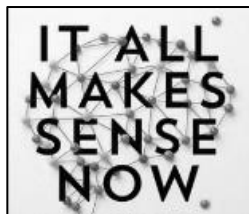
On the other hand if I find a church that is wonderful in all of those traits but I only just “*Show Up*” like a **spectator** on a **semi-regular** basis, but I still attend that church for 30 years, it is like knowing what will happen with Monster Stock in 1994, yet **instead** of making the major investment of \$10,000, I **only** invest **ONE PENNY**.

30 years later, instead of having over 81 million dollars, I would only have a total of 81 dollars. I would still be rewarded for coming for 30 years but my reward would be 81 dollars compared to 81 million dollars.

This explains a LOT!

This is why I LOVE the Local Church!

There are SO MANY Fantastic Local Churches. Jesus expects us to carefully investigate because a great local church is our **BEST INVESTMENT** for ETERNITY.



Important Questions to ask when Evaluating a Local Church

The Standard Starter Questions

1. Are the **Sermons** based on God's Word and grow me spiritually.
2. Does the **Worship** draw me into God's Presence.
3. Are the **Children's & Youth** ministries filled with vibrant Godly young adults and great leaders.
4. Is **Outreach** to Non-Christians a main focus of the church.
5. Does this church have **Humble, Faithful, High Integrity** Leaders.
6. If I brought a **Non-Christian friend** to **this church**, would they **want** to come **back**?

Three Deeper Dive Questions

1. How **LONG** have the **Pastor**, the **Staff**, the **Leaders** and the **People** been **coming** to this **church**?

In the healthiest churches, there are many people who have attended this church for many years. Stability is a great sign of health. Almost all newer churches go through seasons of turmoil.

In addition, the best churches have a lot of long term people as well as many NEW people who are coming into the church.

2. How does this church present **Core Values** in ways that make this a **SAFE** place?

In our church, we have two core values that we present to every member and constantly reinforce with every leader.

They are:

i. ***“ARP” – Advice Requires Permission!***

- I Cor. 13:5 says that *“Love is Not Rude!”*
- I Cor. 2:17 says *“Show Proper Respect to Everyone!”*

There is nothing more rude or disrespectful than to force advice on someone who has not asked for advice. Every member of Liberty Church agrees to never give anyone advice unless you have permission.

ii. ***“Can you please help me to understand?”***

If something is mishandled in Liberty Church, every staff person and leader is committed to humbly meet with those involved, to listen well and to do all we can to make it right.

In return, every member, leader and staff person are committed that if someone complains about something in Liberty Church, that we will tell the person complaining that we will immediately contact those in charge to set up a meeting.

However, while our leaders are humble, we also ask each of our members to also be humble and to begin the dialogue with the words: *“Can you please help me to understand...?”*

This opens dialogue and creates a willingness for everyone to listen and grow.

It is astounding to most people that we have such unity, safety, and family at Liberty Church. That type of atmosphere never happens accidentally.

Every healthy church works very hard to keep unity, respect, graciousness, humility & kindness as the top values in their church.

This factor makes a big impact on your longevity in a church and the church’s effect on children and teens.

3. How does serving in this church include “**Growth Tracks**”?

Serving is rich in God’s Word and is a great key to community. When we serve, we all desire to GROW Spiritually.

One thing that our church has learned from other great churches across the U.S. is that **ALL SERVING opportunities** should include “**Growth Tracks**” which enable people to be able to mark **spiritual victories** in their **personal life** – **tied** to their serving in church.

That is why **EVERY position** of serving in Liberty Church includes:

- i. Regular **Team meetings**,
- ii. Personal **Goal Setting** &
- iii. Regular **Leadership Training**.

We have found this to be **especially true** with **young people**. When we provide numerous opportunities to serve and to learn leadership, the peer influence of teens has a much higher ceiling.

Here are some examples of “*Growth Tracks*”.

Youth

- 1) Youth Leadership Council 2) Production Team 3) Youth Worship Team

Children’s ministry

- 1) Children’s Worship Team 2) Children’s Special Needs Buddies
3) Children’s Church Teenagers workers paired with Adult CC Workers

Outreaches

- 1) Hope Dealers Street Ministry 2) Drive Thru Prayer ministry
3) Lay Counseling Certification for reaching families and friends for Christ

In-Service Leaders

- 1) Elders 2) Small Group Leaders

Budgeting & Financial Counseling Ministry

- 1) Class Leaders 2) Individual Counselors

Inner Healing Counseling Ministry

- 1) Class Leaders 2) Individual Counselors

Worship, Safety Team, Men’s & Women’s Ministries

Team Leaders

3 Quick Conclusions

Conclusion # 1 – Sweet Reward of Serving!

Here is a great Bible Truth!

*ONLY the Servants
experience Great Community
in a Local Church!*

So many millions of Christians go to church and wonder why they never feel connected. Their great loss is to WAIT to serve.

They bounce from church to church with their long list of reasons why each church does not “fit” them waiting for the perfect church that will meet all of their needs. So Sad!

Conclusion # 2 – Escape the Whirlpool of a Busy, Sinful World!

Never before in history has the **PULL** of **sin** been so strong. Even if blatant sin does not overwhelm you, the **busyness** and **distractions** of the world suck away our time, focus and energy like a whirlpool.

The **ONLY** way to overcome this massive sucking whirlpool is to have a **STRONGER PURPOSE** than the pull of this world. No one finds powerful purpose by just “attending” church. Just “attending” church is boring.



The more you have serve in many positions in the local church for many decades, the more Jesus **fills** your soul with **such powerful purpose** that the world no longer has any attraction and you escape the whirlpool.

Conclusion # 3 – This is where I bear fruit for Eternity.

Deeply investing in a great local church is the second most important decision of your life.

Jesus tests our love for Him by asking how much we love his Bride!

Those in **heaven** with the **greatest rewards** will be the quiet servants who served faithfully in their local church with no recognition or demand for attention.

*Mt. 25:21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been **faithful** with a **few things**; I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the **joy** of your master.'"*

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