

# The Local Church 5 - Part 3

by William MacDonald

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of faithful attendance at church meetings as an index of our love for Jesus and a demonstration of our commitment to being part of the body of Christ.*

**Duration:** 8:49

**Scripture:** John 14:15, Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25, Ephesians 4:16, Hebrews 10:25

**Topics:** "Christian Fellowship", "Church Unity"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the significance of Christian fellowship, highlighting the impact of collective prayer and support within a community. It underscores the unique bond and depth of relationships found in Christian fellowship that surpass worldly connections. The sermon also delves into the responsibilities that come with being part of the family of God, stressing the importance of spiritual gifts, unity, faithful attendance at meetings, and prioritizing gatherings for worship and remembrance of Christ.

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## Transcript

Fellowship, and your husband's name is going to go on it, and it will reach 2,000 people. I tell you, that means something, doesn't it? It made her day. 2,000 people enlisted to pray for our Barry.

And the good news is that Barry's home and doing wonderfully well. And then a worldwide fellowship. Some of you have traveled various parts of the world.

I don't know many parts of the world where you couldn't go and find real Christian fellowship. And you're with those people for just a short time, and it feels that you've known them forever. And there's no fraternity, sorority, or society in the world to compare with the Christian fellowship.

The world has nothing to offer comparable to it. I think of places that I have visited and the friendships that have been formed, and they go with you through all of life. Privileges of fellowship in a local assembly.

But there are also responsibilities, aren't there? And oftentimes we forget these. You know, the French have an expression, noblesse oblige. Nobility has its obligations.

Nobility has its obligations. It means that nobility obligates. It's the obligation of honorable, generous, and responsible behavior associated with high rank or high birth.

And dear Christians, we are people of high birth. Children of the Heavenly King. And there are responsibilities that go with that.

Let's think of some of those responsibilities. There's a responsibility to exercise our spiritual gift. Because it's only as we do that that the body grows, functions, matures.

We saw that as we were in Ephesians chapter 4. The body needs you. It needs your contribution to the body. You should be willing to do for the Lord what you wouldn't be willing to do for any secular employer and beyond.

You know, employers today, they can tell you go to Singapore and you go. But God might tell you to go to Madagascar, and it's a different story, isn't it? We should be willing to do for the Lord what we would never do for any secular employer. An obligation to endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace.

Not to be the source of conflict, but to be confessing faults to one another, learning to live in brokenness before the Lord. In other words, in order that the assembly might not suffer. There's the obligation to attend meetings faithfully.

One of the few places today where you're sure to find commitment is in the dictionary. You can always find it there. But it's less and less obvious in many meetings of Christian fellowships.

I think that faithful attendance at our meetings is one of the casualties of the frenzied lives on the one hand and our weekend escapes on the other. What is a valid reason, for instance, for not attending the breaking of bread? Remember the king is there. Remember the one who died for you in Calvary is there.

What would be a good reason for not attending? Aunt Minnie's birthday? A family get-together on Groundhog Day? What would be a good reason? Pretty hard to think of a good one, isn't it? If we really believe the Lord Jesus is there, I'd say it would be pretty hard to find a good reason for not being there. He requested it. He said, this is my body, which is broken for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. He is there when we do meet together. We appropriate, as I said before, we appropriate this fact by faith.

We don't act as if it were true. We act because it is true. Someone may object, as I said, that, well, he's everywhere.

I know he's everywhere. But there's a special sense in which he's present when his people gather together to worship him. The early church was faithful in its commitment to the local assembly.

We've already referred to Acts 2.42. It says they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers. It doesn't say they continued in those things. It says they continued steadfastly in those things.

And the apostle Paul knew that when he left Philippi to go to Troas, he'd find the believers there breaking bread on the Lord's Day. Could Paul depend on us to be there at that time? I like to remind myself that when I am not present, the Savior misses me. And he misses you, too, when you're not present.

I often think of that time when he went to the house of Simon the Pharisee. And he got kind of a cold welcome. The Lord Jesus said to him, you didn't give me any water for my feet.

You gave me no kiss. You didn't give me oil to anoint my head. You gave me no kiss.

Do you ever think that when you're not there, and he is there, he misses your kiss? I believe that. I'm just a simple believer that I really believe that with all my heart. If he missed the kiss of an unregenerate Pharisee, how much more does he miss the kiss of one whom he redeemed by his precious blood? Attendance at the assembly is an index of our love for Jesus.

It's an index of our love. He said, if you love me, keep my commandments. And that's one of his commandments, isn't it? This do in remembrance of me.

And it's an index of our priorities, as I already suggested. Which is more gripping? A prayer meeting or watching the Super Bowl? Well, it depends on how you're looking at it. If you're looking at it from a natural standpoint, the Super Bowl is far more gripping.

But if you're looking at it through the eyes of faith, it's not. That makes all the difference in the world. Because in the prayer meeting you're having intercourse with the God of all creation.

In the Super Bowl you're getting excited about scores that a hundred years from today won't make any difference. It just depends on what kind of glasses you have on. What kind of lenses you have in your eyes.

Which is more important, to do routine repairs on a house or to be at the prayer meeting? Things like that. We have to think about our priorities.

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