

**Faith Christian Fellowship**  
**Sunday, March 8, 2015**  
**Why Go to Church?**  
**Because God Made It**

**TEXT:** 1 Cor 1:2 Unto **the church of God** which is at Corinth, to them that are **sanctified** in Christ Jesus, **called** to be saints, **with all that in every place call upon the name** of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

Read 2 Corinthians 1:1 Galatians 1:2 1 Thessalonians 1:1 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Philipians 1:1 Col 1:2 Ephesians 1:1

It is fashionable today to say that we can be spiritual, even Christians, without going to church. Why is it such a big deal?

Thank God we live in a day where the Word is readily available to us. That begs the question: "I have a bible, so why do I need the Church?"

- ♥ The New Testament epistles were written to a specific group. It is the group known as "the Church".
  - The "sanctified" and "called," who call on the Name of Jesus Christ, both in specific cities and in every place.
  - This group is very special to the Lord. Acts 20:28
  - The "called out" Church: gr. *Ek+klesia* - a calling out, i.e. (concretely) a popular meeting. Matt 16:18 the name ekklesia was first applied to the Christian society by Jesus Himself **"Upon this rock I will build my church."**
  - Nelson - "the greatest emphasis in the New Testament is placed upon the idea of the local church..."
  - God has been calling out a people for Himself since the beginning of time. What is this thing "the church?"
- ♥ God has ordained a people for himself. The church is the outgrowth of the plan, the mystery hidden from the foundations.
  - In the OT He was always seeking a people among whom He could dwell and who could be called by His Name. Ex 25:8 / 19:5-6 / 6:7 / Deut 7:6 / Mal 3:17
  - The Gospel's good news is, we are it!! 1 Pet 2:9-10 / Eph 2:10-15 ...**His purpose was to create in himself one new man** out of the two, thus making peace,
- ♥ In Genesis 49 Israel blessed his sons, which became the tribes, God's original nation. Notice what He called this gathering of Sons for His service
  - Reuben – "see, a son." The church is the place where the world sees the Son. 1 Tim 3:15 / Eph 1:23.

- Simeon – "hearing (especially intelligently with an eye to obedience) We, the people of God, hear from Him. It is a place of intense discipleship. Act 11:26
- Levi – "a joining or uniting." It is a place of unity or joining together. Levites were sprinkled among the other tribes, making sure each tribe found and fulfilled its place in their wilderness procession. 1 Thess 5:12-13 / Eph 4:16
- Judah – "may He be praised" The church is a house of praise. Ps 22:3 / Heb 13:15 / Joh 4:23-24
- Zebulon – "habitation, dwelling." A dwelling place for God through the Spirit. Eph 2:21-22 / 1 Cor 3:16
- Issachar – "he will bring reward" The church is where we serve. There is a reward for service 1 Cor 15:58 / Mark 10:28-31
- Dan – "Judge" A place of discerning, judgment, & correction for the children of God. 1 Cor 6:1-3 / Matt 18:15 / 2 Tim 4:1-2
- Gad – "good fortune." We learn to receive tangible blessing that it is odd to the world. Mal 3:12 / 2 Cor 9:8-12 / Acts 4:34-35
- Asher – "happy." The church is supposed to be a happy, joyous place. Ps 149/ Romans 14:17 / 1 Peter 1:8
- Naphtali – "my wrestling." We are safe to wrestle with the devil or with the Spirit of God Eph 6:12 Hos 12:3-4 / Heb 5:7
- Joseph – "may God add" The church is where God adds to His Kingdom. Acts 2:47.
  - Ephraim -"Double fruit" Eph 3:20
  - Manasseh – "Causing to forget" – It is the clan of the new creation 2 Cor 5:17
- Benjamin – "the man of God's right hand." God's right hand man in the earth. We are on a mission. Eph 3:9-10 / 1 Peter 2:10

**Putting it all together:** The church is where we can be and see the sons of God while we are hearing from our Father through His appointed shepherd. It is a house of unity and joining together for the worship of the Lord, a habitation for God through the Spirit where God equips His kids for service. Here He corrects us and keeps us on the path that brings reward. Church is where God teaches His kids to prosper in the midst of lack, be happy in the face of despair, and to fight their way through to victory in every struggle. It is a gathering of unlikely characters who have no past, people of the new beginning, whom God uses to accomplish unreasonable good, far beyond any logical explanation. The Church, the local assembly of believers, is God stretching forth His hand to heal whosoever will. We are the saints, the faithful, the flock of God, the purchased possession, the sanctified, and them that call on the Name of the Lord. The Church is us!