

## “A Bombshell”

Over the next couple of months I plan on dropping a cumulative “bombshell” through sermons and congregational meeting discussions.

Are you ready for it? Are you sure? O.k., run for cover... incoming!

***The local church is absolutely necessary for your spiritual well-being!*** Did you hear the explosion! Yes, I know, this is probably not what you have been taught. Time and time again you have been instructed that being part of a local church does not save you (which it doesn't). So, you have wrongly concluded, along with much of the American Church, that being part of a local church is not necessary. It's fine, if you want, but since our relationship with Jesus Christ is “personal,” we can more or less take or leave regularly attendance.

I have come to believe this is one of the biggest lies perpetrated by the devil. It has been responsible for turning young adults away from the gospel when they go off to college, diluting a person's affections for God, dishonoring the Lord through weak anemic professing Christians who are more like the world than Christ, and countless other armor-piercing shrapnel let loose from its exploding shell.

Consider the following sampling of biblical evidence for the absolute necessity of true Christians assembling together regularly with the congregation in which they have committed to serve Christ.

(1) The word translated “church” in the New Testament, *ekklesia*, is chosen since it was used to speak of the congregation or assembled people of God in the Old Testament (cf. Acts 7:38; Heb. 2:12; 12:23). So, at its core, the Church is to be a people who assemble together regularly and are connected to one another.

(2) The Church is commanded to assemble together and, as such, to help each other grow (Heb. 10:24-25). We should not be surprised, then, to find out we are responsible for each other's discipleship (Matthew 18:1-20).

(3) Since we have such a responsibility to each other, God gives to each of us spiritual gifts for the benefit of one another (1 Cor. 12). The gifts you have are needed by others in your local congregation and you need the gifts others have. Continual absence matters!

(4) Each Christian is given grace to grow and serve, yet we utilize that grace only to the degree we submit to leaders placed over us to equip us for works of ministry (Eph. 4:7-12ff.; Heb. 13:17).

(5) God commands Christians to love each other in very concrete and Christ-like fashion (1 John 3:16-18) as a witness to the world of the reality of his work among us (John 13:34-35; 17:20-23). This is so much a part of who we are in Jesus Christ, the lack of it may be a strong indication we do not truly know God (1 John 4:8)!

As you can see, there are powerful biblical reasons for us to reconsider our view of our local congregation.

Stay alert and keep your helmet and flack jacket handy for more explosions to come!