

What is a Healthy Church Member

Week 6 Study Guide

A Healthy Church Member is a Committed Member

Ephesians 4:7-15

4:7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." 9 (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? 10 He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

1. One of the reasons the Apostle Paul wrote this letter was to explain the purpose of the grace that was given to individuals and to the body of Christ.

a. What *is* the body of Christ? What other Bible references do you know that speak about the church being the body of Christ?

b. Where do we get the idea of having local churches or assemblies? Why is it important for the worldwide body of Christ to manifest itself locally?

c. Think about question b with regard to this text. Consider the type of ministry Paul outlines in verses 7-12 – the ministry of leaders God gives to the church. What does this imply about the importance of a local body of believers? Could the ministry described here take place if the leaders described here all lived in, say, Jerusalem, while the worldwide body of Christ was scattered all over the world?

3. To what end do we minister in the Church? (v.12-14)

4. Individual spiritual growth – that is, growing in Christlikeness – in significant measure happens through points of contact with other believers. We also grow in Christlikeness *corporately*, as a local body, so that *together* we display what Jesus is like. Look again at verses v. 12-14, and look closely at v. 15-16. In what ways can we all minister to each other so that the local body of Christ grows up into *corporate* Christlikeness?

5. Think now of yourself in particular. Consider v. 16 and Hebrews 10:24-25. Verse 24 can be translated, “We must consider one another, how to stir up one another to love and good works.” In what ways has God made you particularly effective at ministering to others in the body so that you stir them up to Christlikeness? What is your obligation to those in this local assembly? Are your obligations different for those who are not yet part of this assembly?

6. According to Thabiti, what are the reasons why some people are apathetic about church membership? How does he argue that church membership is biblical?

7. Thabiti lists eight actions of a healthy church member. Test yourself on all eight. Which ones do you personally need to improve in? How can you help others in this local church grow in these ways? What can we do as a small group and as a church to build up each other in these ways?