

Theme: All Christians are called to be part of local churches where they are led and cared for by elders, worship God, learn the Scripture, receive the sacraments, pray together, serve one another, and carry out the Great Commission together.

## I. Intro - A Big Day for Many Today!

- A. Water baptisms with very different life stories
- B. New members ,going BRCC
- C. Ordaining Warren Hower as a new elder
- D. My teaching will be briefer!
- E. I want to remind us why the local church is important!

## II. Two Aspects of the Church

### A. The one universal church

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with **all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ — their Lord and ours:** 1 Corinthians 1:2

1. The universal church is what we looked at last week
2. This is the Church in the Spirit, the Bride of Christ - all those everywhere who call on Christ for salvation
3. This is the church mentioned in the Creed

We believe in one holy **universal** and apostolic church.

We believe in one holy **catholic** and apostolic church.

- a. There is one universal, catholic Church
- b. This is not a denomination or organization but the whole church throughout the world and through all time

### 4. Membership in the universal Church happens at salvation

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with **all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ — their Lord and ours:** 1 Corinthians 1:2

- a. Every person who is willingly under the Lordship of Christ by embracing the Gospel is in the universal Church
- b. At the moment of our conversion we were not only united to Jesus by the Holy Spirit, but we also became members of the universal Church.
- c. This is essential because one can become part of a local group of Christians without truly being a Christian, but only true believers are part of the universal Church!

### 5. If you have never looked to Jesus for salvation, I urge you to do so today!

- a. No one else can reconcile you to the Father Who made you and Who loves you!
- b. The Spirit is at work now calling people to Jesus!
- c. He is calling you out of hurt, out of shame, out of brokenness, out of your own success to find life, acceptance, healing, and meaning in Jesus!

### B. The local church

To **the church of God in Corinth**, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ — their Lord and ours: 1 Corinthians 1:2

1. There is not just a universal Church, but also a church of God in each particular location (Corinth)

2. The universal, invisible Church finds expression in local, visible churches. These churches exist at a particular time and place. They are not spread out geographically but can be identified as a church in a particular location.

The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house. 1 Corinthians 16:19

- a. 'churches' - one universal Church comprised of many local churches
  - b. 'church that meets in their home' - an identifiable group of believers who gather together for worship
3. Example: a member of the military or employee of a large, multinational corporation - both have a specific location and job assignment!
  4. This is true for every believer and is essential for a flourishing, healthy Christian life!
  5. It is also important for each local church, which can only flourish as we walk in unity together to serve one another and God's purposes in the world today.

### III. We Believe - In the Local Church

- A. We are called to vital membership in a local church!

All Christians are called to be part of local churches where they are led and cared for by elders, worship God, learn the Scripture, receive the sacraments, pray together, serve one another, and carry out the Great Commission together.

1. We believe this - catechism question 71!
2. Note 'together' and 'one another' - this requires the local church!

3. The NT is full of 'one another commands'
4. The Spirit is working to build us together, not just with random, periodic relationships but with others in a local church where we regularly worship and serve God together!
5. This is why we celebrate with those who became members today!
6. Local church membership certainly has challenges - we are sinful people who fail and can cause hurt!
7. But we are still better together!

- B. The importance of elders in the local church

All Christians are called to be part of local churches where they are led and cared for by elders...

1. Local churches in Scripture are always led and cared for by elders  
Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. Acts 14:23

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. Titus 1:5

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. 1 Timothy 5:17

- a. This is a key distinction between a bible study or fellowship gathering and a local church!
- b. I taught on this for several weeks this summer as we were praying to see if God was calling Warren to be an elder in BRCC.

2. Elders are far from perfect, and they do not have some sort of special status before God - they are simply men who have been walking with Jesus for a good while and have a heart to care for God's people.

#### IV. Applying the Word

##### A. A call to follow Jesus!

1. I encourage you to hear God's Spirit calling you to follow Jesus!
2. If you have never called out to Jesus do so today!
3. If you have looked to Jesus in faith, follow the call to be baptized and join a local congregation to grow as a disciple of Jesus!
4. Share the good news with others - God is calling people to Himself from this broken world!

##### B. The ordination of Warren Hower as an elder in BRCC

1. Warren come forward for vows
2. Affirmation from the congregation
3. Prayer by the elders and wives for Warren and Amy

##### C. The Lord's Table

1. This Table belongs to the Lord!
2. The Spirit works here to point us to Jesus
3. Come and be strengthened!

We Believe - In the Local Church

1 Corinthians 1:1-2

November 16, 2025  
Ordination of Warren Hower and Communion  
2 Corinthians 13:14

Teaching keywords: Church; ordination; community; fellowship; leadership

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. 2  
Corinthians 13:14

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, <sup>2</sup> To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ — their Lord and ours: 1 Corinthians 1:1-2