

**MARKS OF A
PROGRESSIVE
LOCAL CHURCH**

**A HEALTHY CHURCH IS
BUILD-UP OF HEALTHY
MEMBERS**

INTRODUCTION

- Ibandla eliphilayo nesimilo sikaNkulunkulu.
- UJesu esaphila ukhulumile ngokuqalwa kwebandla - **Mat. 16:18**
- Ibandla lendawo lakhiwa ngabantu abamukele uJesu njengeNkosi noMsindisi wemphilo yabo.
- Umsebenzi webandla ukuphila impilo yobungcwele nokuhambisa ivangeli - **Mat. 28:19-20**

THE FOUNDATION OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

- Isisekelo yiso esikhomba ukuthi isisindo nobubanzi bendlu bungakanani, ngokuba awukwazi ukwakha indlu engaphezu kwesisekelo.
- Indlu eyakhelwe phezu kwesisekelo esibuthakathaka ayikwazi ukufinyelela eqophelweni elifunwa nguNkulunkulu.
- Uma ufuna ukwakha ibandla eliphilayo, eliqinile nelikhulayo udinga ukuchitha isikhathi ulungisa indawo lapho uzolakha khona - **1 Cor. 3:10**

THE FOUNDATION OF A HEALTHY CHURCH - Cont

- UJesu waqala ngokubiza abafundi ngaphambi kokuba amemezele ukwakhiwa kwebandla - **Mat. 16:18.**
- Uma umuntu ekuKristu uyisidalwa esisha, okwakuqala kudlulile bheka sekuvele okusha - **11 Cor. 5:17**
- Ukubuyisana noNkulunkulu kusenze sabangamalunga omndeni munye kaNkulunkulu.
- UPawulu uthi “*Ngako-ke anisesito tihambi nemihambima, kodvwa nyalo seningumndeni munye nalabangcwele, senibendlu yaNkulunkulu.*” - **Eph. 2:19.**

THE FOUNDATION OF A HEALTHY CHURCH - Cont

- Impilo yobukristu akusiyo eyakho wedwa noNkulunkulu kodwa iyabathinta nabazalwane bonke bebandla lendawo. Wonke amakhaya anendlela azihlelele yona yokuziphatha kwamalunga - **Rom. 12:1-2,10.**
- Unkulunkulu uyasincenga ukuba sinikele ngemizimba yethu ibe ngumnikelo ophilayo, ongcwele, othandekayo kuye, kube ngukukhonza kwethu kokuqonda. Indlela yokuphila yomndeni kaNkulunkulu yehlukile kweyalezwe. - **Rom. 12:1-2**
- Umuntu ofuna ukuba nomzimba ophilile uyazivocavoca, adle nokudla okunempilo.

**A HEALTHY CHURCH
IS COMPOSED OF
HEALTHY MEMBERS**

DEFINITION OF THE KEY TERMS: **A CHRISTIAN**

- A follower of Christ or belonging to the body of Christ.
- Born again believer who has accepted Jesus Christ as a Lord and Saviour.
- A person who believes and lives according to Christ's teachings.
- The word "*Christian*" is used three times in the New Testament which was referring to Christ's followers who were having similar behaviour of Jesus Christ (**Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16**).
- They were given this name by their critics and the believers embraced the term as their badge of honour.

DEFINITION OF THE KEY TERMS: **MEMBER**

- is a person or something that belongs or is affiliated to a particular group.
- Is a person who collaborates and to the local church welfare.
- *“So then, you Gentiles are not foreigners or strangers any longer; you are now fellow-citizens with God's people and members of the family of God. You, too, are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets; or the foundation, that is, the apostles and prophets. the cornerstone being Christ Jesus himself.” - **Eph. 2:19-20.***

INTRODUCTION

- The church is like a human body that has many parts which are living together and functioning harmoniously under the supervision of one brain.
- Today Christians are floating from one church to another without identity, accountability and commitment.
- There are many analogies for believer's disconnection from a church: a footballer without club, a sheep without a flock and child without a family.
- God does not want his children to grow-up without a proper guidance.

THE LOCAL CHURCH IS OUR SPIRITUAL HOME

- A growing Christian loves fellow believers - **John 13:34-35**
- Definition of love:
 - *Is selfless, sacrificial and unconditional love. **John 3:16;**
John 13:35*
- This type of love is totally selfless and does not change whether the love given is returned or not.

A GROWING CHRISTIAN LOVES FELLOW BELIEVERS JOHN 13:34-35

- When Jesus was preparing his disciples for his ministry, he gave them the command.
- *“A command I gave you: Love one another. I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another”* **John 13:34-35**
- Loving one another was not new command. *“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against a fellow Israelite, but love your neighbour as yourself; I am the Lord”* **Lev. 19:18**
- This command was going to be a distinctive mark for his followers.

A GROWING CHRISTIAN LOVES FELLOW BELIEVERS JOHN 13:34-35 – Cont.

- The inclusion of the word ‘if ‘means that this command can be violated.
- It also means that it is possible to be a Christian without showing the mark of loving other people.
- Our Christ-like love will show that we are Christ’s disciples.
- Love is not just a warm feelings but it is an attitude that reveals itself in actions.
- The command at this point is to love our fellow Christians but we need to strike the balance by loving our fellow men.

A GROWING CHRISTIAN LOVES FELLOW BELIEVERS JOHN 13:34-35 – Cont.

- Christ's love is sacrificial – It brings unbelievers to Christ. It also keep believers strong and united in a hostile world.
- Our love should be that of Christ that goes beyond affection to self-sacrificing service.
- *“Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God” Eph. 5:2*

**WHAT DOES
BIBLICAL LOVE
LOOK LIKE?**

1 CORINTHIANS 13: 4 - 7

- *“Love is patient, love is kind, it does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, it is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”*

INTRODUCTION

- We all know that our relationships in our families need to be governed by love.
- Husbands are commanded to love their wives.
- Parents and children, brothers and sisters must love one another.
- But how do we know what this love looks like?
- Paul warned the Corinthian church that love comes as a first priority before any God-given gift.
- Love is greater than all spiritual gifts because without love, gifts are empty.
- Paul mentioned 13 characteristics of love to show how love acts or what it looks like in our everyday life

1. LOVE IS PATIENT

- Patience is the quality I need when things start to annoy or frustrate me.
- The word patience comes from two words meaning, “*long-tempered.*”
- You are slow to anger, you endure personal wrongs without retaliating.
- You bear with others’ imperfections, faults, and differences.
- You give them time to change, room to make mistakes without coming down hard on them.

1. LOVE IS PATIENT *(Cont.)*

- “A patient man has great understanding, but a quick-tempered man displays folly” **Prov. 14:29.**
- In the mouth of a patient person come out knowledge and understanding **Prov. 2:6**
- A hasty and quick temper is like a fire that is out of control burning everything in its path.
- It makes us to take hasty decisions and divide people.
- Patience helps us to control our temper and channel our feelings into right action.

1. LOVE IS PATIENT *(Cont.)*

- “A hot-tempered man stir up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel” **Prov. 15:18.**
- “Better a patient than a warrior, a man who controls his temper than one who takes a city” **Prov. 16:32**
- Most of the successfully businesses and families are built upon patience.
- Like a farmer waiting for the summer rain we need to be patient towards one another because all of us have shortcomings. **James 5:7-12**

1. LOVE IS PATIENT *(Cont.)*

- Patience is not the ability to wait but the ability to keep a good attitude while waiting. If things do not happen now it does not mean that they will not happen forever. Do not count the days but make the days count. **Ps. 40:1-2; Gen.29:20**
- Patience is one of the fruits of the Spirit. We need patience when we know someone has been insulting and sinning against us even when we are debating issues in the church. **Gal. 5:22; Col. 3:12**
- Patience teaches us about spiritual discipline. **1 Sam. 13:8-14; Heb. 12:1**

2. LOVE IS KIND

- To be useful or to show kindness in response to harsh treatment.
- He seeks out needs and looks for opportunities to meet those needs without repayment.
- *“If you love who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that”* **Luke 6:32-33.**

2. LOVE IS KIND *(Cont.)*

- Kindness motivates others toward positive change.
- Are you kind to your wife/husband and children?
- Do you do kind things to other believers or other people? How do you treat them?
- Kindness is one of the fruits of the Spirit. **Gal. 5:22-2**
- Kindness is characterized by benevolence and tenderness.

2. LOVE IS KIND *(Cont.)*

- A kind person is willing to help other people.
- No one can be loving and unkind at the same time.
- David asked, “*Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s sake*”. **11 Sam. 9:1**
- “*They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them*”. **Neh. 9:17**

3. LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS

- Jealousy is related to greed and selfishness.
- A jealous person wants what others have for himself.
- Selfish people do not congratulate other people's success.
- A jealous husband refuses to trust his wife. He doesn't want to recognize her abilities and contributions.
- A jealous person often blocks/frustrates the moving of the person they love.
- Jealousy is the source of quarrels and conflicts

3. LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS

(Cont.)

- Jealous is a very strong dividing force that can tear the local church apart. **Gen. 13:7-8; 26:12-16**
- Jealous can get foothold even among the believers or spiritual leaders. **Mk 3:2; Acts 5:17-20**
- The gifts and talents can stir up jealous and division among the believers. **1 Sam. 18:6-16**
- Jealous can delay the church growth or disturb local church unity.
- Jealous is classified as one of the sinful behavior that goes together with pride and selfness.

4. LOVE DOES NOT BOAST OR IS NOT PROUD.

- These two words are closely related because they derive from one source which is selfishness.
- Boastful is to make others to be jealous of what we have or to put others down and builds yourself up.
- Boasting is an outward manifestation of pride.
- Boasting is when you are trying to impress other people about your achievements in order to make yourself look great.
- Love is humble and it always build other people up.
- Loving person sees everything he has undeserved gift from God. **1 Cor. 4:7**

4. LOVE DOES NOT BOAST OR IS NOT PROUD. *(Cont.)*

- Boasting and pride make us to look too much of the credit and recognition we do not deserve.
Judges 15:14-19
- Boasting and pride can lead us into corruption.
11 Chron. 26:16
- Pride is the mainspring of all conflicts. **Prov. 10:13**
- Boasting and pride come from our self-righteousness. **Luke 18:11-14**
- It can lead us into our own self-destruction. **Acts 12:20-23**

5. LOVE IS NOT RUDE

- Rude means to act inappropriately or unbecomingly.
- Rudeness has become the culture of our present generation because it is *“all about me.”*
- Rudeness is rooted in selfishness whereas love is seeking to reduce the resistance of human interaction.
- *“Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ”.*
Eph. 4:15
- If we show love in words and actions, people will bring glory to God.
- Love has good manners and it doesn't want to hurt other people's feelings.

6. LOVE IS NOT SELF-SEEKING. *(Cont.)*

- It does not seek the things of itself or self-focus.
- Paul warned the Corinthians believers to stop focusing on their needs but serve God and one another.
- Self-seeking is the root cause of all conflicts and problems in our homes, churches and organizations.
- The remedy of all conflicts and problems we are facing in marriages and churches is love.
- We must love ourselves first before we can truly love others.
- Selfishness is the root cause of human problems. *“For even the son of man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many”* - **Mark 10:45.**

6. LOVE IS NOT SELF-SEEKING. *(Cont.)*

- Warning about self-seeking: “*But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath anger*”. **Rom. 2:8**
- Paul mentioned two categories if we read from verse 7-8 which we normal fall into: those who do good and those who disobey. Each has its activity and its reward.
- Those who are committed to do good things they give glory and honor to God but those who disobey the wrath of God is upon them.

7. LOVE IS NOT EASILY ANGERED.

- Love does not have a hair-trigger temper/short tempered heart. *“Slow to speak, slow to anger”* **James 1:19**
- Anger itself is not sinful but can lead a person into sin. *“Be angry and do not sin, do not let the sun down on your anger”* **Eph. 4:26**
- Love helps us to handle anger and to act in a constructive ways.
- Love puts the brakes on anger, slowing it down for the sake of the one you love.
- Short tempered involves seeking instant judgment or solution that does not give the offender a second chance.
- Bad temper is like bomb that burst out without warning and leave behind countless loss.
- Love is an attribute of God and one of his gifts given to us.

8. LOVE KEEPS NO RECORD OF WRONGS.

- It pays no attention to a suffering, wrong or takes no account of evil done to it.
- This idea of keeping no record was directed to the Corinthian church where believers were dragging one another into court. **1 Cor. 6:7**
- Jesus set a good example when he was dying on the cross, he prayed “*Father, forgive them*”. He kept no record of wrongs. **Luke 23:34**
- Refusing to keep records of wrongs is a clear expression of God’s love and forgiveness. **Col. 3:13-14**
- It doesn’t keep record of wrongs nor bear a grudge.
- The goal of love is to have a spirit of reconciliation.

9. LOVE DOES NOT DELIGHT IN EVIL BUT REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH.

- Although love is kind and overlooks the faults of others but it does not compromise the truth.
- To allow the brethren to go on sinning without confronting and correcting we do not love that person.
- Love delights in right-doing not in wrongdoing.
- Love is honest in its outlook rather than deceitful. **John 3:20-21**
- Love gets excited when it hears spiritual victories. *“I have no greater joy than this: to hear that my children are living according to the truth”*
3 John 4

10. LOVE ALWAYS PROTECTS

- The Greek word for “*protects*” is “*stege*” which literally means to “*cover*”.
- The word cover includes both protecting and preserving.
- It watches out for others and withstand with their shortcoming or fault in the loved one. “*Love covers all offences*” **Prov. 10:12**
- Love is not based on selfish desire or even mutual benefits. **Ezra 9:9**

10. LOVE ALWAYS PROTECTS *(Cont.)*

- After Joseph has learned of Mary's pregnancy was having all right to public disgrace or divorce her but he chose to cover and to protect her from public shame. **Mat. 1:19**
- We protect what is weak and vulnerable.
- A good example of God's love and his protection is **Psalm 68:5** *(Father to the fatherless, defender of widows- this is God, whose dwelling is holy (NLT))*”.

11. LOVE TRUSTS

- Trusting someone means that you think he/she is reliable, you have confidence in him/her and you feel safe with him/her.
- Trust is where you expose your vulnerabilities to a person, believing that he/she will not take advantage of your openness.
- It is where you have calculated or assessed the possibilities of gain and loss and concluded that the person in question will behave in a predictable manner.
- The fact that love believes all things does not mean that love is naïve or discerning.

11. LOVE TRUSTS *(Cont.)*

- Love is built on trust. Any relationship that is not rooted in trust is not made to survive rocky times.
- Trust is a building block of any relationship.
- Daphne Sze says that we always believe that love conquers all, but it is trust that pushes us to believe that we can and will conquer every obstacle.
- Trust is the glue that holds us together because it builds honesty, loyalty and team spirit in a working environment.

11. LOVE TRUSTS *(Cont.)*

- Love cannot exist without trust. Therefore love and trust must go hand and hand.
- You may choose to love someone you do not trust but that relationship will not grow because love lasts only where there is trust.
- It is important to have both trust and love although trust is more important than love but that does not reduce the value of love.
- Trust is the foundation all relationships.

13. LOVE HOPES - PROV.

13:12

- Hope is an optimistic attitude of the mind that is based on an expectation of positive outcomes.
- Hope is an assurance of things hope for and the conviction of things not seen. **Heb. 11:1**
- Hope and faith are closely linked although there are deferred:
- Faith is believing and trusting in something that you cannot see whereas hope is an imagination that there is something there.
- Hope also open the curtain to consider that there may be a way out of our challenges we are facing.

CONCLUSION

- Church is the only place where vulnerable and hurt believers can get love.
- **1 John 4:12** *“No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us”.*
- *“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works”* **Heb. 10:24 (ESV).**
- For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **Gal 5:13 (ESV).**
- We have to honor one another. **Rom. 12:10**
- We are called to be kind and compassionate to one another. **Eph. 4:32**

FELLOWSHIP
WITH OTHERS

DEFINITION OF FELLOWSHIP

- The root meaning of the word “*fellowship*” is to hold something in common.
- Is a group of people that join together for a common purpose or interest.
- Is defined as the state of sharing mutual interest, activity, feeling or experience.
- Is being a part of a group, It is opposed to isolation and individualism.
- Is a relationship of inner unity among believers that expresses itself in outer corporation with Christ and one another in fulfilling God’s will.

**WHY IS
FELLOWSHIP
IMPORTANT?**

1. FELLOWSHIP ALLOWS US TO APPRECIATE GOD'S GRACE

- We are all different in our gift and purpose and it is only in fellowship where we can see and appreciate that.
- No one is perfect. We are all sinners, but together we have different purposes that show different aspects of God to those around us.
- Each of us has been given specific spiritual gifts.
- **Romans 12** *4 We have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions. 5 In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body. 6 So we are to use our different gifts in accordance with the grace that God has given us. If our gift is to speak God's message, we should do it according to the faith that we have;*

2. FELLOWSHIP MAKES US STRONGER

- **Matthew 18: 19** *“And I tell you more: whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them.”*
- We can all learn and grow in faith just from spending time together and sharing.
- We learn from planning, doing and achieving things together.
- We learn from understanding that as a fellowship, we have a role to play in the growth of the Church and the fulfillment of God's Will.
- **Proverbs 27:17** *“People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron.”*

3. FELLOWSHIP PROVIDES ENCOURAGEMENT

- It is very easy to be angry, disillusioned and sad when things are not going well or you have fallen into sin.
- This is when fellowship can help us.
- Spending time with believers can help us remember that our God loves us.
- Spending time with believers can help us keep our eyes on God; who may use them to help us through difficult periods in our lives.
- Spending time with believers can help us in our healing process and encourage us to move forward with life.
- **Hebrews 10** 24 *“Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good. 25 Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage one another all the more, since you see that the Day of the Lord is coming nearer.”*

4. FELLOWSHIP REMINDS US THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE

- **1 Corinthians 12:** 21 So then, the eye cannot say to the hand, “I don't need you!” Nor can the head say to the feet, “Well, I don't need you!” 22 On the contrary, we cannot do without the parts of the body that seem to be weaker; 23 and those parts that we think aren't worth very much are the ones which we treat with greater care; while the parts of the body which don't look very nice are treated with special modesty, 24 which the more beautiful parts do not need. God himself has put the body together in such a way as to give greater honor to those parts that need it. 25 And so there is no division in the body, but all its different parts have the same concern for one another. 26 If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness.

5. FELLOWSHIP HELPS US TO GROW IN FAITH

- We learn from the activities, teachings, sharing thoughts, understanding, ideas and sharing experiences.
- We learn just from observing one another and correcting each other.
- **1 Corinthians 14** 26 *“This is what I mean, my friends. When you meet for worship, one person has a hymn, another a teaching, another a revelation from God, another a message in strange tongues, and still another the explanation of what is said. Everything must be of help to the church.”*

**REQUIREMENTS
OF SUSTAINING
FELLOWSHIP**

1. CONFESSION

- “*Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results (NLT)*”. **James 5:16**
- God has made possible for us to go direct to him through Christ for forgiveness but confessing our sins to one another requires us to confront one another.

1. CONFESSION (*Cont.*)

- Is a formal statement that is usually made by an offender to show that he/she admits that he/she has done something wrong to God or to other fellow human beings.
- Is an acknowledgement that goes with an implication of change of conviction and conduct on the part of the offender.
- Before confession you need to have a strong conviction that *“you want to amend the mistakes you have made.”*
- This cross-examination of your conscience is very important.

1. CONFESSION (*Cont.*)

- Confession has different aspects:

- A. To confess to God alone-** it is human nature to overlook mistakes and not making any adjustment so that it doesn't happen again. **Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9**
- B. To confess to one another** – Our broken relationships can destroy our relationship with God because our attitude towards one another cannot demonstrate a godly life. **Mat. 5:23; 1 John 4:20**

1. CONFESSION (*Cont.*)

- C. To confess to the spiritually mature or minister of the Word-** David was truly sorry for his adultery with Bathsheba and for killing her husband to cover up his sin. He acknowledged that his action had hurt many people. **Ps. 51, 11 Sam. 12:13**
- D. To confess to the entire church-** Some of the sins we commit publically. Secret sins are to be rebuked secretly, and public sins publicly. **Mat. 18:15-19**

2. FORGIVENESS

- **What is forgiveness:**

- is an act of letting the offender go without repaying his debt.
- Forgiveness means releasing the other from blame or leaving the matter to God's hands and moving on with your life.
- Forgiveness is an act of love and grace because we do not forgive the person because the person deserves to be forgiven.
- It is a decision to let go of resentment and thoughts of revenge.

2. FORGIVENESS *(Cont.)*

- **What is not forgiveness?**

- Pretending as if nothing has happened. **2 Sam. 12:9-13**

- To allow others to take advantage of you. **Prov. 22:3**

- **Guideline from God's word:**

- We are under obligation to God to forgive people who hurt. *“For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heaven Father will also forgive you, But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins (NIV) Mat. 6:14-15*

2. FORGIVENESS *(Cont.)*

- Lewis Smedes wrote these profound words about forgiveness: *“When you release the wrongdoer from the wrong, you cut a malignant tumor out of your inner life. You set a prisoner free, but you discover that the real prisoner was you”*
- When we choose not to forgive, we become slaves to bitterness.
- We have received forgiveness free from God and our forgiver has instructed us also to forgive without expecting repayment from our offenders.

2. FORGIVENESS *(Cont.)*

- Holding grudges and seeking revenge is a sin.
- The health benefits of forgiveness are lower stress, a healthier heart, lower blood pressure and an extended life span
- Buddha once said “ *Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it to someone else; you are the one who gets burned*”.

3. TOTAL COMMITMENT & AVAILABILITY

- *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me"* **Gal.2:20**
Heb.10:23-25
- A committed life to Christ does not come by accident.
- Total commitment demands loyalty which brings the sense of belonging and solidarity.
- Genuine fellowship requires commitment.
Phil.1:5

3. TOTAL COMMITMENT & AVAILABILITY *(Cont.)*

- There are several things that can break down commitment and destroy fellowship such as when believers come to church “*to get*” rather than “*to serve*”, when superiority raises its ugly head and when injury is not forgiven.
- Where there is no commitment; relationships cannot experience the fellowship.

4. A FAMILY SPIRIT

- The concept of family is extremely important in our life both physically and theologically.
- There are parallels between physical birth and spiritual birth because when we are physically born, we are born into a physical family and when we are born spiritually, we are born into a spiritual family.
- The discover your role /purpose in life through your relationships with others. **Rom. 12:4-5**

4. A FAMILY SPIRIT *(Cont.)*

- Each part of the body gets its meaning from the body as whole.
- If an organ is somehow disconnected or cut-off from its lifeblood, it withers and ceases to exist.

Eph. 4:16

- The first symptom of spiritual decline is inconsistent attendance to worship service and other local church gatherings.

CONCLUSION

- Fellowship gives us an opportunity to sharpen and uplift one another in the Lord. **Heb. 10:25**
- For the church to function properly, all of its parts need to collaborate with one another. **1 Cor. 12:14-20**
- Fellowship and attending church activities is required for all believers; it needs to be the believer's lifestyle.
- We are encouraged not to give up meeting together because it is God's Will for believers to fellowship.

GOD BLESS YOU

AMEN