

* Hebrews Ch 13: v 17

Why must leaders take their task seriously?

Why should you obey your leaders and submit to them?

● Fellowship

* 1 John Ch 1: v 3, 7

Whom is our fellowship with? • _____
• _____ • _____

Fellowship with other Christians is more than just friendship, it is participating together in God and sharing with each other.

* Acts 2: v 42-47

- **Being together (v 42, 44, 46)** — In order to operate as one body, we must spend time together. There may be large meetings, small meetings, formal or informal or it may be just having a meal together and encouraging each other. Make sure that you are benefitting from all the God-given gifts in your church. Don't neglect meeting together but let us encourage one another (*Hebrews Ch 10: v 25*).
- **Sharing lives** — As Christians, we need to learn to trust each other. This involves being open and honest without pretence. It means being yourself and sharing your joys, sorrows and fears. It means caring, understanding and not judging.
- **Sharing possessions and money (v 44, 45)** — From earliest times, Christians have shared their possessions. Learn to share your house, car, gadgets, books, food etc with your brothers and sisters - we own nothing, we are only stewards of God's property. Many Christians give a tenth of their income (a "tithe") to the work of God — particularly in their local church (*2 Corinthians Ch 9: v 6-8*).
- **Working together (v 47)** — Find out what the aims and vision of your church are and get involved in what is going on. There is much work to do in the Kingdom of God!

How involved are you in your local church? What can you do to get more involved?



* Ephesians Ch 5: v 23

Who is the Head of the church?

The Church



● A big world-wide family

As a Christian, you belong to a large family. You will find that you quickly feel one with your "brothers" and "sisters" in Christ, even though you may come from different cultures and backgrounds.

● The true church

There are many "Christian" organisations, denominations and movements. Belonging to one of these does not automatically make you a Christian and you may find a mixture of believers and non-believers in these organisations. The *true church* is all those people on earth who are truly born again — who have *repented*, who have *faith* in Jesus as their personal Saviour, who own *Jesus as their Lord* and who have a *relationship with God*. Only God can see his full strategy involving his people all over the world.

● A local church

A local church is a group of Christians united in beliefs, aims and purpose, working together for God in an area. It is essential for every Christian to become part of a local church.

Look up the verses in *Ephesians* and connect with the description of the church given below.

- Eph Ch 2: v 19-20 •
- Eph Ch 2: v 21-22 •
- Eph Ch 4: v 15-16 •
- Eph Ch 5: v 22-32 •
- Eph Ch 6: v 10-18 •
- *The bride of Christ*
- *An army*
- *God's people - a household*
- *People in which God lives*
- *The body of Christ*

● The body of Christ

The church is an *organism*, not just an organisation. It is built on *relationships* between God and man and between people. Church membership is only meaningful with the love, trust and commitment which Jesus talked about.

* John Ch 13: v 34-35

How are the disciples of Jesus recognised? _____

* 1 Corinthians Ch 12: v 12-26

Here Paul compares the church with a human body. The members of the church are like the parts of the body.



Notice the following:

- We are all parts of the *same body* (v 12).
- We all *belong* to the body (v 14-16).
- We have *different gifts* and functions (v 14-19).
- *Variety* is a strength (v 17).
- We all *need each other* to be complete (v 21).
- Every member is *important* (v 22-25).
- We *share* in each other's sufferings and joys (v 26).

This is why it is important to become part of a church so that you can find your gifts and function in the local body of Christ. *You need your brothers and sisters and they need you.* You will find that other Christians are quite different from yourself but this can be a strength as you pull together and grow in your service and knowledge of God.

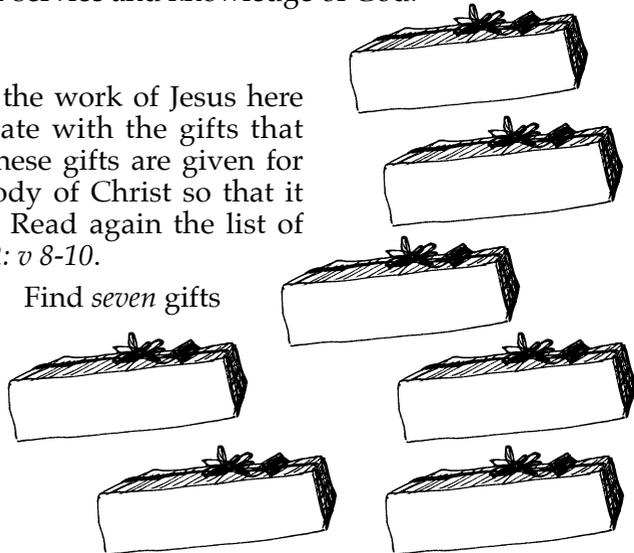
● Gifts

The church can continue the work of Jesus here on earth as you participate with the gifts that God has given to you. These gifts are given for the building up of the body of Christ so that it can be effective for God. Read again the list of gifts in *1 Corinthians Ch 12: v 8-10.*

* Romans Ch 12: v 3-8 Find seven gifts



Do you have any of these gifts?



● Ministry gifts

* Ephesians Ch 4: v 11-13

Certain people will emerge with prominent recognised gifts.

Ministry gift	Description	People with gifts
	Church planter and builder sent out from his home church.	Rom 1:1, 1 Peter 1:1
	Brings the counsel of God to specific situations, visionary.	Acts 15:32, Acts 21:10
	Preaches the gospel. People come to faith, healed, delivered.	Acts 8:4-7, Acts 21:8
	Leads and cares for the people, a shepherd.	John 21:15-17
	Understands the word of God and is able to faithfully pass on the truth to others.	1 Cor 4:17, 1 Tim 4:11-16

Why are these five ministry gifts given to the church?

You might know people in your church with these ministries. Some may give up their secular work to serve God with their gifts.

● Leaders in the church

In New Testament times, a local church was led by *elders* or *overseers*. Paul appointed leaders in the churches which he planted or he delegated the task to others.

* 1 Timothy Ch 3: v 1-7

What qualities was Paul looking for in leaders?

• _____	• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____	• _____

* Titus Ch 1: v 5-9

You will see that most of these are *character qualities*.