

# OUR LITTLE CORNER OF THE KINGDOM





# **HIS KINGDOM IS DIFFERENT**

- Too often, humanity's conception of the Kingdom of God is limited by its experiences with earthly kingdoms – borders, complicated hierarchy, voting blocs and demographics, earthly measurements of glory or victory, etc. The scriptures challenge this...
- John 18:36
- Colossians 1:18, 24
- Ephesians 1:18-23, 5:23
- The church is the body of Christ and the expression of His kingdom on earth. It is a borderless, victorious, spiritual entity, whose citizenry openly embraces its unique place in this temporal and corrupt realm (Philippians 3:20-21, Colossians 3:1-4).



# **THE CHURCH FUNCTIONS LOCALLY**

- **From the very beginning, the church was a tight-knit, intimate community (even with thousands who initially obeyed the gospel call). Love, hospitality, teaching, and various acts of worship were beautifully expressed throughout the community in homes and small groups. The Way, as it was commonly called (Acts 9:2, 19:9, 19:23, 22:4, 24:14, 24:22), was all-encompassing. Christianity was the “way” they lived, not a club to which they belonged.**
- **This Way was shared in towns and villages everywhere Christians went, with similar congregations of believers sprouting up and growing. Locals enjoyed cohesiveness and unity, being reminded of the fact that their membership meant something powerful (Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:27, 1 Timothy 3:15, Ephesians 5:30).**



# **THE CHURCH FUNCTIONS LOCALLY**

- **Congregations in the first century “met” and “came together” (Acts 11:26, 14:27, 1 Corinthians 11:18, Acts 20:7). They assembled and were warned not to forsake each other’s spiritual needs. One cannot forsake something to which he has no commitment.**
- **Local members identified themselves with a group, and their membership was acknowledged. The twelve disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19:7), the brethren in Puteoli (Acts 28:14), Phoebe and the church in Cenchrea (Romans 16:1), the church that met at Aquila and Priscilla’s house (Romans 16:5), the numerous named members in Rome (Romans 16), the churches that met in Colossae and Laodicea, who knew each other well enough to identify each other (Colossians 4:15–16), Philemon from Colossae (Philemon 1–3), and many others.**



**SO FAR, WE HAVE OBSERVED  
TWO INCREDIBLE BLESSINGS IN  
THE CHURCH...**

**FIRST, it is a blessing that the church is so big that it could never be contained, and anywhere you go there are sure to be saints loving and serving God;**

**And, SECOND, it is a blessing that we get to be enriched on the local level with all the treasures of a family of fellow saints.**



# **YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO FAR**

- **It's awesome to be part of something that is both huge and intimate at the same time. Our Lord reigns over a Kingdom without bounds, but the Christian faith lives and works right here in our own community, bearing every good fruit, homegrown (Col. 1:4-6, 10).**
- **Local leadership (1 Peter 5:1-2, Titus 1:5, Acts 14:23, 20:28).**
- **Access to a wealth of Bible knowledge, study opportunities.**
- **Every element of Christian worship (singing, communion, etc.).**
- **Hospitality, friendship, acceptance, accountability, weeping with others and laughing with others (Romans 12).**
- **Benevolence, both sharing in and receiving.**
- **Family, even when "real family" fails (Matt. 10:34ff, 19:29, 1 Tim. 5:1ff, 1:2, 2 Tim. 1:2).**