

**“The Other Family We Don’t Get to Choose”**  
**Life’s Most Important Relationships, Part 7**  
August 30<sup>th</sup> & September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018

Bible tells us how to **RELATE** as the spiritual family of God – that’s done in the context of the **RELATE**  
Following Jesus was never meant to be a **SOLO** journey

**Why You’ll Never Find the Perfect Church**

You will never find the perfect church because every church is full of **SINNERS**

The church is a **HOSPITAL** and a **HEALTH** club

The church always has been and always will be **MESSED UP**

Church is a place where God says, “Come as **YOU ARE**,” but I won’t let you **STAY** that way

**Why the Local Church Is God’s Plan “A,” & Why There Is No Plan “B”**

**Defining this thing called a “church”**

A church is a place where followers of Jesus meet **REGULARLY** and are **COMMITTED** to one another “ekklesia” (translate “church”) means “the assembly” & is used 109 times in the New Testament and almost always refers to the **LOCAL** church.

**Matthew 16:16-18** (NIV) “Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by My Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.’ Jesus said upon understanding who I am (the **MESSIAH**), I will build my “assembly,” and I am so committed to it, whatever hell can throw against it, won’t stop it.

**What makes a local church so important?**

**1. The local church functions as the **BODY** of Christ**

We are the tangible “hands” & “feet” of Jesus; Christ ministers to our community **THROUGH US**  
**1 Corinthians 12:27** (NIV) “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”

The various parts of the church body only make sense when **CONNECTED TOGETHER**.

Problem: Sometimes we expect the church to do **ORGANIZATIONALLY** what God called us to do **INDIVIDUALLY**.

**2. The local church functions as the pillar and foundation of the **TRUTH****

**1 Timothy 3:14-15** (NIV) “Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.”

Together we hold to the truth of **SCRIPTURE** in ways we never would if left alone.

Realize: When God and you don’t agree, He’s **ALWAYS RIGHT**

Watch creating the “Burger King” Bible – “have it **YOUR WAY**”

**3. The local church provides the **LAB** for learning how to **LIVE** like Jesus**

Being in a **SMALL GROUP** is essential for learning how to **LIVE OUT** the Christian life.

**Romans 12:10-19** (NIV) “<sup>10</sup>Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup>Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. <sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord.”

**4. The local church provides godly **PEER PRESSURE**.**

We all live **DIFFERENTLY** when around other people.

Peer pressure can be **GOOD OR BAD**; it depends on who you hang around with

Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV) “<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur [help, motivate, stimulate, encourage, provoke] one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Proverbs 13:20 (NLT) “Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.”

1 Corinthians 15:33 (NAS) “Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company corrupts good morals.’”

## **Staying on Mission**

### **How to Keep a Good Church From Going Bad**

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV) “<sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

The mission of New Hope is to make **DISCIPLES** – “disciple” means “a follower” – this is our Great **ASSIGNMENT**.

#### **1. Our job at New Hope is to reach out & recruit **NEW FOLLOWERS** of Jesus**

If we are not seeing people, who didn’t know Jesus, come to Jesus, something is **WRONG**

Matthew 9:10-12 (NLT) “<sup>10</sup> Later, Matthew invited Jesus & His disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors & other disreputable sinners. <sup>11</sup> But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked His disciples, ‘Why does your teacher eat with such scum?’ <sup>12</sup> When Jesus heard this, He said, ‘Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do.’”

Our message **NEVER** changes; our methods **CONSTANTLY** change.

#### **2. Our job at New Hope is to teach people how to **LIVE** the Christian life**

1 John 2:3-6 (NIV) “<sup>3</sup> We know that we have come to know Him if we keep His commands. <sup>4</sup> Whoever says, ‘I know Him,’ but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. <sup>5</sup> But if anyone obeys His word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in Him: <sup>6</sup> Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus did.”

We learn how to live the Christian life because it is not very **INTUITIVE** (not what we’d do on our own)

#### **3. Our job at New Hope is to deploy people into **KINGDOM MINISTRY****

1 Corinthians 12:7 (NLT) “<sup>7</sup> A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.”

1 Peter 4:10 (NLT) “God has given each of you a gift from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.”

## **My Next Step Today Is...**

- I realize being in a small group is essential for learning how to live out the Christian life. Help me find one that fits me.
- Please contact me when the next “S.H.A.P.E.” is offered
- I am interested in being baptized next Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM. Please contact me!

**Next week:** Join us as we discuss “Who’s My Neighbor?” Invite a friend!