

## **Faith Formation – Week Ten**

### **The Doctrine of The Church**

#### **The Universal Church**

- Universal Church, referred to in scripture as the *Body of Christ*, consists worldwide of all believers in Jesus Christ: 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 27
  
- God indwells the Church: 1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:19-22
  
- The Universal Church represents Christ on Earth: 1 Peter 2:9-10
  
- The head of this body is Jesus Christ, Who rules the Church from the right hand of the Father: Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18

#### **The Local Church**

- God has ordained the existence of the local church, which is an organized group of local believers: 1 Cor. 1:2; Philemon 2

#### ***Purpose of the local church***

- Making disciples of all nations: Matt 28:18-20  
The main command in this verse is to *make disciples*. A disciple is a follower of Jesus. This passage describes three activities associated with the command to make disciples:
  - *Go* means that discipling is a lifestyle, and that we meet people where they are: Acts 1:8
  
  - *Baptizing* means that discipling starts with winning people to Christ: Acts 2:40-41
  
  - *Teaching to obey* means that discipling includes growing people to maturity: Acts 2:42
  
- Displaying Mercy: James 1:27; 1 Tim. 5:3,8-9,16

#### ***Government of the local church***

- The local church is to be governed by a plurality of men who are selected according to biblical qualifications and hold the office of elder: Acts 14:21-23; Titus 1:5-8

- The roles of elders:
  - Guarding doctrine: Titus 1:9
  - Teaching the word: 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17
  - Shepherding the flock: 1 Peter 5:1-4
  - Equipping the members of the body to do ministry: Eph. 4:11-12
  - Praying for the sick: James 5:14

### ***Ordinances***

God has instituted two ordinances that He has commanded the local church to observe:

- Baptism: Baptism brings believers into public identification with Christ. All believers should be baptized after conversion in a timely manner: Acts 8:12-13, 35-38; 16:31-33; 18:8
- Communion, or The Lord's Supper: It is celebration for faithful Christians to observe regularly. The purpose is to remember Christ's work on our behalf, not to be a means of grace. Therefore, the elements remain just as they are: bread and wine (or grape juice): Matt. 26:26-27; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-31

### ***Participation in the Local Church***

- Members are to be engaged actively in encouraging and promoting godliness in one another: Matt. 18:15-20; Gal. 6:1-2; 1 Thess. 5:9-11
- The Spirit gives unique gifts to each member for the purpose of contributing to the common good of the body: 1 Cor. 12:7

### **Application**

- Believers should all live in unity with one another: Eph. 4:1-6
- Believers should participate in the local church for their own spiritual growth: Heb. 10:24-25
- Believers should be actively engaged in the community using their gifts and abilities to benefit the church and one another: Rom. 12:1-8