



SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

J.J. Turner, Ph.D. ©

When I lived in Louisiana I lived on Love Street in Happy Acres. It was 10 years of having great neighbors on a non-through street. It was a group of 15 homes occupied by Christians who were all members of the same congregation. We often referred to our little community as “a little heaven on earth.” I still miss it.

I grew up in a small community in Rex, Georgia; the population within a mile or so circumference was approximately 175-200. That is counting dogs, too. Everybody knew their neighbor. It was a great place to grow up and shaped my attitudes and values.

Physically and socially speaking living in a great community is a blessing, and for many, a rare one today. However, there is one community that is designed by God to be a blessing. It is the church, the Body of Christ, into which every member has been placed as it pleased God to do so (Galatians 3:27; 1 Corinthians 12:18).

The spiritual community has no geographical boundaries but is expressed and enjoyed in gatherings every week called assemblies. In these assemblies something wonderful happens: “*Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds*” (Hebrews 10:24). This is why we wouldn’t want to miss any of these assemblies (Hebrews 10:25).

God’s spiritual community is designed to prevent loneliness, heal hurts and inspire to greater participation in God’s three-fold mission for the church: (1) evangelism, (2) edification, and (3) equipping. The blessings occur when we come with a “What can I give?” attitude instead of “What can I get out of it?” attitude. Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

As citizens in God’s spiritual community (i.e. family) we should want to (1) support it financially, (2) participate in its growth, (3) attend its assemblies, (4) comfort fellow-citizens, (5) become more like the Head (Christ) of the community, (6) be a peacemaker, and (7) live faithfully by the guidelines in the Bible. Citizenship carries with it responsibilities.



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Each member of the spiritual community must answer these questions: **How am I contributing to the health of this spiritual community? What will I do to make our community a healthier place to experience God's blessings?**