

# Voices: You need church

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One of the phrases you often hear in conversation with people who do not attend church is, "I like Jesus but not the church."



Zac Harrell understand the sentiment. There is no arguing the fact many feel hurt, alienated and abandoned by the church. This should come as no surprise. Our churches are filled with imperfect, messed-up sinners.

When people complain to me about the church being a bunch of hypocrites, my reply is always, "You're right; we are." No church is perfect, and no church ever will be. There is no need to search for the perfect church. It doesn't exist.

This does not mean we should leave the church. In fact, this means the exact opposite.

The church is not perfect, and neither are we. The body of Christ is for those who are hurt, those who are struggling and those who are broken.

You need the church, brothers and sisters in Christ, to come alongside you

and to help you find healing in the grace of God. The church needs you, too. The church needs those who have walked through “the valley of the shadow of death” to walk hand-in-hand with others experiencing suffering and pain. You need the church, and the church needs you.

### **Don't abandon**



It is understandable to be frustrated with the church as you have experienced her, but we must not abandon the local church. We need the tangible, local body of Christ in our lives to help us be who God has called us to be. The church needs men and women committed to the life of the church, even through the mess of our common life together.

There has been real damage done by many churches. You may have experienced that damage. There is no excuse for the misdeeds of the church, but the misdeed of one church do not mean there is no church for you. Find a church where you can be open and honest about your pain. Find a church where you can experience the peace of the gospel. Above all, find a church.

There is power in the church gathered together for worship. Joy and restoration come through the corporate disciplines of singing, praying, hearing the word of God proclaimed and through the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Our faith family mourns when we mourn and rejoices when we rejoice. We need the fellowship of the body of Christ, and we need the habits and practices of the church.

### **Plant your life**

No church is perfect, and no church will meet all our requirements or

preferences. The church we see on television or the sermon we listen to on podcast seems appealing because we have some kind of fantasy of this church out there just for us and for our situation. There is a church out there for you, for your family, for your situation. Most likely, it is not on television, but just down the block.

Plant your life in a local church. Join a local church and be a part of the life of that church, even if the music is not your style, even if they don't have every program you wish they had, even if there are not as many young adults or too many young adults. Preferences cannot be our ultimate guide to the church we should join.

What gifts do you have? What needs does the church have? Where do you live? These are questions we should be thinking about when it comes to local churches.

God has placed you in the community where you live for a purpose, and he has given you a local church in that community for a purpose. Commit your life to your local church, because you need the church.

Being a part of a church is not easy, but it is essential. We cannot love Jesus and not love his church.

Find a church where you can plant your life and be faithful.

Find a church where you can be you.

Find a church because she needs you.

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