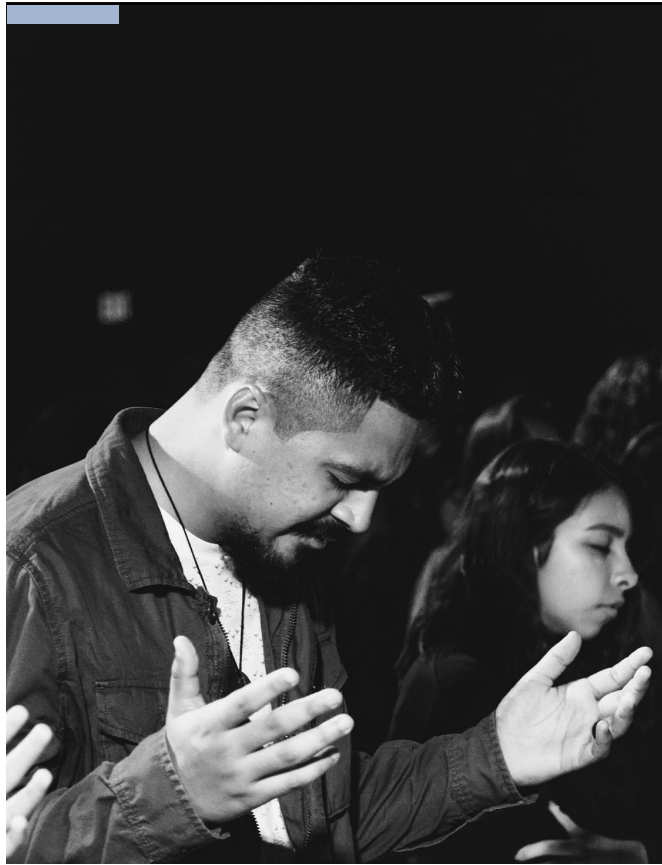


SESSION 2



**A REAL MAN BETTERS GOD'S
WORLD: *HIS CHURCH***

B

1. A Real Man Is Present in a Local Church

A. He prioritizes his presence in the local church.

Hebrews 10:24-25:

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

- According to a recent PEW research poll, less than a quarter of men attend a church service weekly.
- According to Lifeway research, on average, Father’s Day is the least attended Sunday in the Christian church. [Source: <https://research.lifeway.com/2012/05/11/mothers-day-church-attendance-third-among-holidays-fathers-day-last/>]
“Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion of rich, healthy blood to a sick man.” - D. L. Moody

“The disciple is one who, intent upon becoming Christ-like and so dwelling in his ‘faith and practice,’ systematically and progressively rearranges his affairs to that end.” - Dallas Willard

B. He prizes his presence in the local church.

- A man who loves Jesus cannot say “I love Jesus” and then neglect Jesus’s Bride, the church.

Psalm 122:1:

“I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord!”
*“A sign of a healthy church is crying babies and **singing men!**” - Unknown*

C. He perseveres in his presence in the local church.

“The people who stay are the ones who make a difference.” - Howard Hendricks

- Simply put: Don’t be a church hopper! Yes, being in a doctrinally and morally healthy church is important. But remember, no church is perfect, and no church is always preferential.
“Declining church loyalty—or what is sometimes referred to as ‘church hopping’—is becoming a common feature of churchgoing. Just because somebody might attend church doesn’t mean they attend the same church every time. While a majority of churchgoers tend to stick with a single congregation (63% churched adults, 72% practicing Christians), a sizable minority is at least occasionally attending other churches, including nearly two in five churched adults (38%) and one-quarter of practicing Christians (27%).” - Barna Group, <https://www.barna.com/research/current-perceptions/>

2. A Real Man Plugs into His Local Church

A. A man who is “plugged in” is a man that is actively being disciplined in his local church.

- Paul wrote to a young pastor, Timothy, in the local church [at Ephesus] that he was to establish a pattern of disciple-making. He said... “what you

have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” – 2 Timothy 2:2

- Four generations and three exchanges of disciple-making are seen in 2 Timothy 2:2:
 - Paul to Timothy
 - Timothy to faithful men
 - Faithful men to others
- Every man should ask himself a series of important **questions**:
 1. Who have I placed myself under in a relationship where they regularly pour godly wisdom into me?
 2. Who am I regularly accountable to?
 3. What am I regularly learning from other men that I can apply in the crucial areas of my life as a man?
 4. How do the relationships and environments I place myself in make me feel safe and stretched?

B. A man who is “plugged in” is a man who actively engages other men in his local church in meaningful relationships.

- Men are becoming more, not less, isolated, and that is not a good thing.
- According to a 2021 study from the Survey Center on American Life: *“The percentage of men with at least six close friends fell by half since 1990, from 55 percent to 27 percent. The study also found the percentage of men without any close friends jumped from 3 percent to 15 percent, a fivefold increase.”*
- We need **friends** to be able to thrive amidst the difficulties of life.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10:
“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!”
- Some reasons to make your local church the place to seek out male friendships:
 1. You are worshipping the Lord together weekly.
 2. You are both heading in the same direction in life.
 3. You are both learning the same stuff.
 4. You will see each other regularly.
 5. You can both easily get to know one another’s family.
 6. You are both accountable to the same leadership.
 7. You can experience life on mission together through mutual ministry and service.
 8. If the relationship is ever strained, you can’t hide from each other if you are committed to attending your local church.

Proverbs 13:20:

“Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.”

Proverbs 27:17:

“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”

C. A man who is “plugged in” is investing his energies in the ministry life of his local church.

- Nothing is **beneath** him.
“There are no menial jobs, only menial attitudes.” - William J. Bennett
- Everything is a privilege for him.
- A real man invests his energies in the church because he GETS TO, not because he has to.
- A “get to” **attitude** is evidenced by a man’s five key choices:
 1. He must choose gratitude over groaning.
 2. He must choose appreciation over **apathy**.
 3. He must choose enthusiasm over entropy.
 4. He must choose **opportunity** over obligation.
 5. He must choose resolution over resentment.
- Everyone is honored and valued by him.

Romans 12:10:

“Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.”

- He looks to serve as much as he can in areas of **passion, capabilities, and gifting** for the good of God’s kingdom.
- Women tend to volunteer more than men, at a rate of nearly 30%. [Source: <https://research.lifeway.com/2018/07/26/data-paints-a-picture-of-volunteerism-across-the-nation/>]

D. A man who is “plugged in” gets his family plugged into his local church.

- The church is not the enemy of the family but is, itself, a FAMILY of families.
- A man’s biological family is important, but men need to remember that the church is the **eternal** family of God.
*“Blood family is not ultimate. The Christian’s first family is the church.”
- Rodney Clapp*

E. A man who is “plugged in” uses his financial resources to advance the kingdom of God through his local church.

- He meets the needs of people through his local church. The early church exemplified a generous and selfless attitude in giving to meet people’s needs.

Acts 2:44-45:

“And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.”

- He materially blesses those who spiritually **feed** him.

Galatians 6:6:

“Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.”

- He gives with an attitude of generosity and joy.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7:

“The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

F. A man who is “plugged in” regards and respects his church leadership.

Hebrews 13:7:

“Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.”

Hebrews 13:17:

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13:

“We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.”

G. A man who is “plugged in” eventually looks to disciple other men.

- Men in the church have a responsibility to pour into others.

Colossians 3:16:

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

3. A Real Man Prays for His Church

A. Prayer is vital work for a real man to do.

“I have never seen many men work without praying, though I have never seen any good come out of it; but I have never seen a man pray without working.” - Hudson Taylor

“...prayer is work, not a sport.” - R. Kent Hughes

B. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul models what we should pray for the local church. These prayers are seen in Ephesians 1:15-23 and 3:14-21. Paul teaches us that we should pray for our local church to have the following:

1. The wisdom, hope, riches, and power of the Gospel
2. Strength for life as a church
3. Love for one another
4. A regular experience of Christ’s love

“I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach.”

- C. H. Spurgeon

C. God plans, directs, and empowers His church. So He is the One to be sought as it looks to take new ground.

“Prayer lays hold of God’s plan and becomes the link between his will and its accomplishment on earth. Amazing things happen, and we are given the privilege of being the channels of the Holy Spirit’s prayer.” - Elisabeth Elliot

Be Present!

Plug In!

Pray!

Your Table Discussion Questions

1. Does the thought of spending time at/in church excite you? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever been intentionally disciplined by anyone? Have you ever intentionally disciplined someone? Explain.
3. How many close friends do you have? What makes them a “*close friend*.” Why do you think it is difficult for men to form meaningful friendships? Explain.

Your “BetterMan” Reflection:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes and then answer the following question: “*What is one thing you can do to move toward a deeper relationship with the men in your church this week?*” Write your answer in the space below.