

“When Church is Working!”

Acts 2:5-8; 42-46 NKJV

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

Thank you so much for visiting our website! Here is an excerpt of my notes from Pastor A.J.'s sermon, “When Church is Working”

We pray this Message will bless you the way it blessed us! Please come back again next week for more from “LaKesha’s Pen” with another inspiring message from our Pastor.

Yours in Christ, LaKesha Johnson-Lewis

Church is NOT something you go to; it’s a family you belong to!

In the book of Acts you see the beginning of the church. Jesus returned to prepare the disciples to continue the mission of spreading the gospel of Jesus the Christ. There were 14 different nations represented in Acts 2. This was a Holy Ghost set up. In **Matthew 16**, you will read of Peter’s confession of Jesus being the son of God and of which God will build the foundation of the church.

What is God to you? Many people today say “I am a Christian but I don’t go to church.” Many young Christians will abandon church for a relationship with Christ. You can’t have one without the other. Satan has tricked many into believing this type of lifestyle is ok but if you aren’t connected to a local church you are cut off from your power supply. How can a plant grow and flourish unless it’s connected to its roots. Jesus said it this way in **John 15:4**, Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. Verse 5 continues on to say “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for **without me you can do nothing**. When you say you are a Christian minus attending a local church what you are really saying is “I am a powerless,

dead Christian who believes I can do life apart from God!" Don't continue to believe Satan's lies counteract his lies with the truth. See **Hebrews 10:19-25**.

Church

Church is a place to come to learn, grow and to be encouraged as well as encourage others. Though you come and are spending time with other believers you also have an individual encounter with God. You experience Him personally. **Matthew 18:20**, states where two or more are gathered together in His name, there He is in the midst. He will show up to heal you spiritually, emotionally and physically. He will show up and supply you with whatever you have need of. The church is not just a place where you show up to be served but also a place where you come to serve. This is the Cruise Ship verses the Battleship mentality. If you are attending a local church it's important that you contribute to the church in some way. You should be serving others as well as enjoying the services being provided to you. Church is the place you come to that prepares you for this game called life. It's the place where you come and practice. Yes, many people think practice is boring and unnecessary but how can you become better without fine tuning your skills and learning how to apply them to everyday situations? You must learn the purpose or the why behind the importance of attending church. Be open to learn how to be good at something you don't like because when you are open to learn about it your perspective about it may change. In the church setting you must also learn to open your life up to others. This doesn't mean you have to broadcast all your personal information but begin to develop personal relationships with others. There are there to encourage you and you will be surprised how many are willing to go the extra mile for you.

Membership

When you join a local church you are considered to be a member. Membership brings balance and there you will find commitment. In verse 5 and 6 of Acts, the Spirit of God showed up like a mighty rushing wind...it was like fire. When you are a member of a local church it's important that you show up. In Acts if the people had not gathered together for the festivities they would not have been able to hear. Your attendance is important because it increases your chances to hear from God. In Romans 10:14, it speaks on how can people hear without a preacher? But the flip side of that is the people must show up to hear the preacher. God has given you gifts and talents to be able to contribute to the body (See 1st Corinthians 12) or the local church as well. If you don't show up then the body of local believers misses out on your contribution. There of course will be times that you will not be able to attend but this should be on an occasion. There will be things in life that will try to prevent you from attending church, that's Satan's tactics. He doesn't want you to grow and he doesn't want you to contribute to the body because you just may be the miracle someone else is praying for. Push through the grind because come Monday morning regardless of how you feel guess where you will be...at work. Be committed to church like you are committed to your job because without the blessing of God you wouldn't have that job! Church is filled with flawed people and things can get a bit messy. Accept the challenge to be committed to the church and not the mess. Assist with laying the foundation for the future. Have the "In spite of" attitude. "In spite of _____ I show up!" Don't place your point of view on the 10% that's not working. Instead look at the 90% that is. Show up so you can be used. Be vested and don't make God optional!

Worshipper

Why do you come to church? The church is there for you. Speak up in praise and prayer. Remember what God has already done for you; think how amazing He truly is. How did God do what He did? When you begin

to think about Him in this way your heart is lifted beyond your current circumstances and out of it will flow gratefulness; which is the fuel for your praise which leads to worship.

Welcome Back!

Everyone has a moment! It's very important to have people who are vested in you and will encourage you out of what you are going through. People who understand you are not your circumstances. You have a destiny. God has allowed circumstances to reel you back into a committed relationship with Him. Everyone needs to be a part of something bigger than them. In order to make it you need God! Trust in heavenly vessel! Steve Harvey said to learn how to jump. Be all in with your gift. Jump and your gift will be your parachute. It doesn't always open up the first time and you may hit and hit the ground hard. But be willing to free fall and hit the rocks. Eventually your parachute will open and your gift will make room for you. Continue to fine tune your gift and don't be afraid of failure turn your failures into successes. You can evolve but church will be the vehicle that will get you there. Living Water Christian Center will flourish but we need you! You are welcome to do your part!