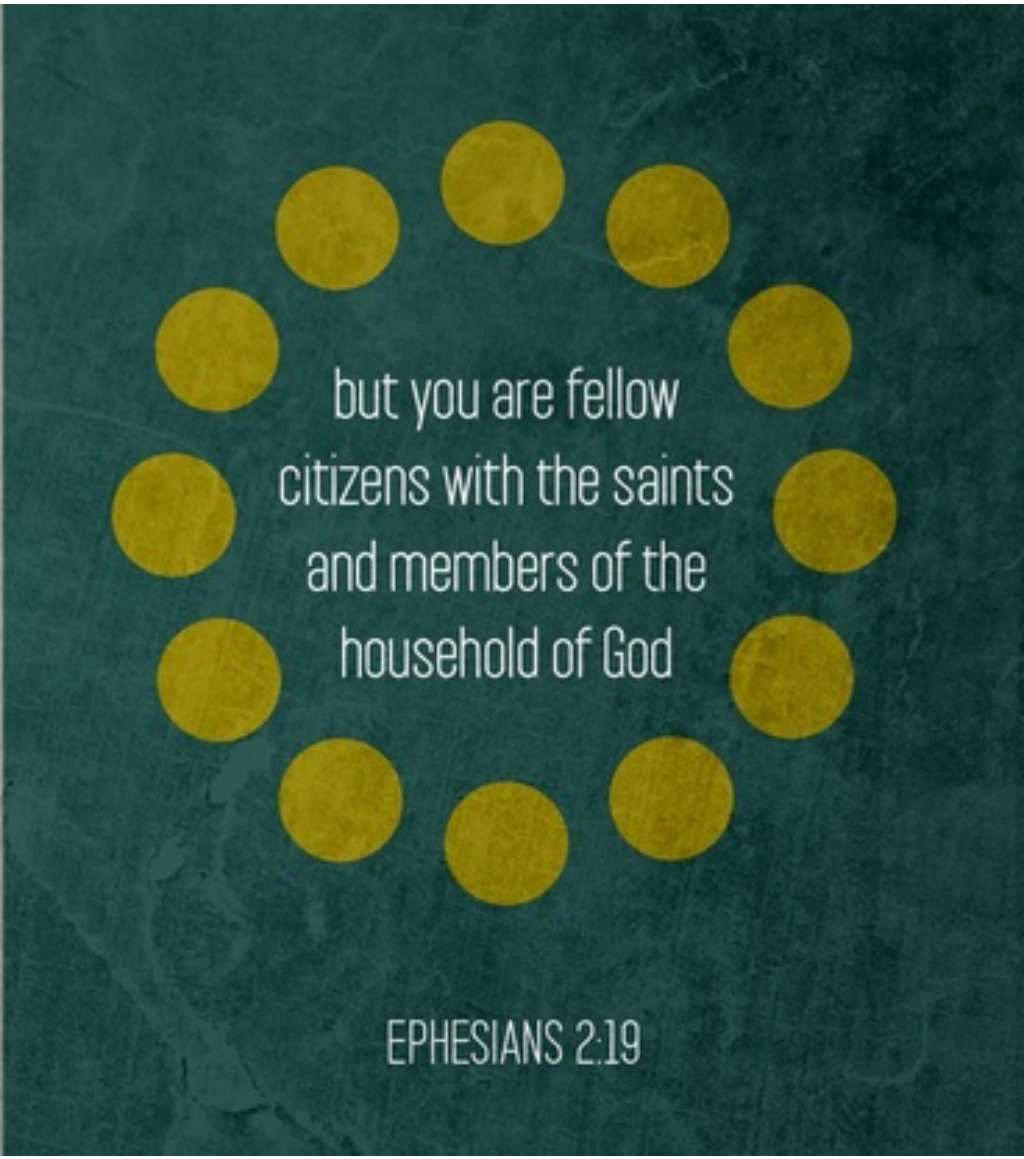


So then  
you are no  
longer  
strangers  
and aliens



but you are fellow  
citizens with the saints  
and members of the  
household of God

EPHESIANS 2:19

**A Place to Belong**



- **“The Bible knows nothing of solitary saints or spiritual hermits isolated from other believers. The Bible says we are joined together (Eph. 4:16), built together (Eph. 2:22), heirs together (Eph. 3:6), fitted together (Eph. 2:21), and held together (Colossians 2:19) and will be caught up together (1 Thess. 4:17).**

- **You are not on your own anymore. While your relationship with God is personal, God never intends it to be private.**

**But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know  
how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the  
house of God, which is the church of the  
living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.  
— 1 Timothy 3:15 (KJV)**

- **Membership in the family of God is priceless. The family or household of God is also called “the church” (1 Timothy 3:15). The church is so significant that Jesus died on the cross to purchase this relationship (Acts 20:28).**



- **The church is not only referred to as the household of God, it is also called the “body of Christ” (Ephesians 1:22-23) and is viewed as the “bride of Christ” (Ephesians 5:23).**

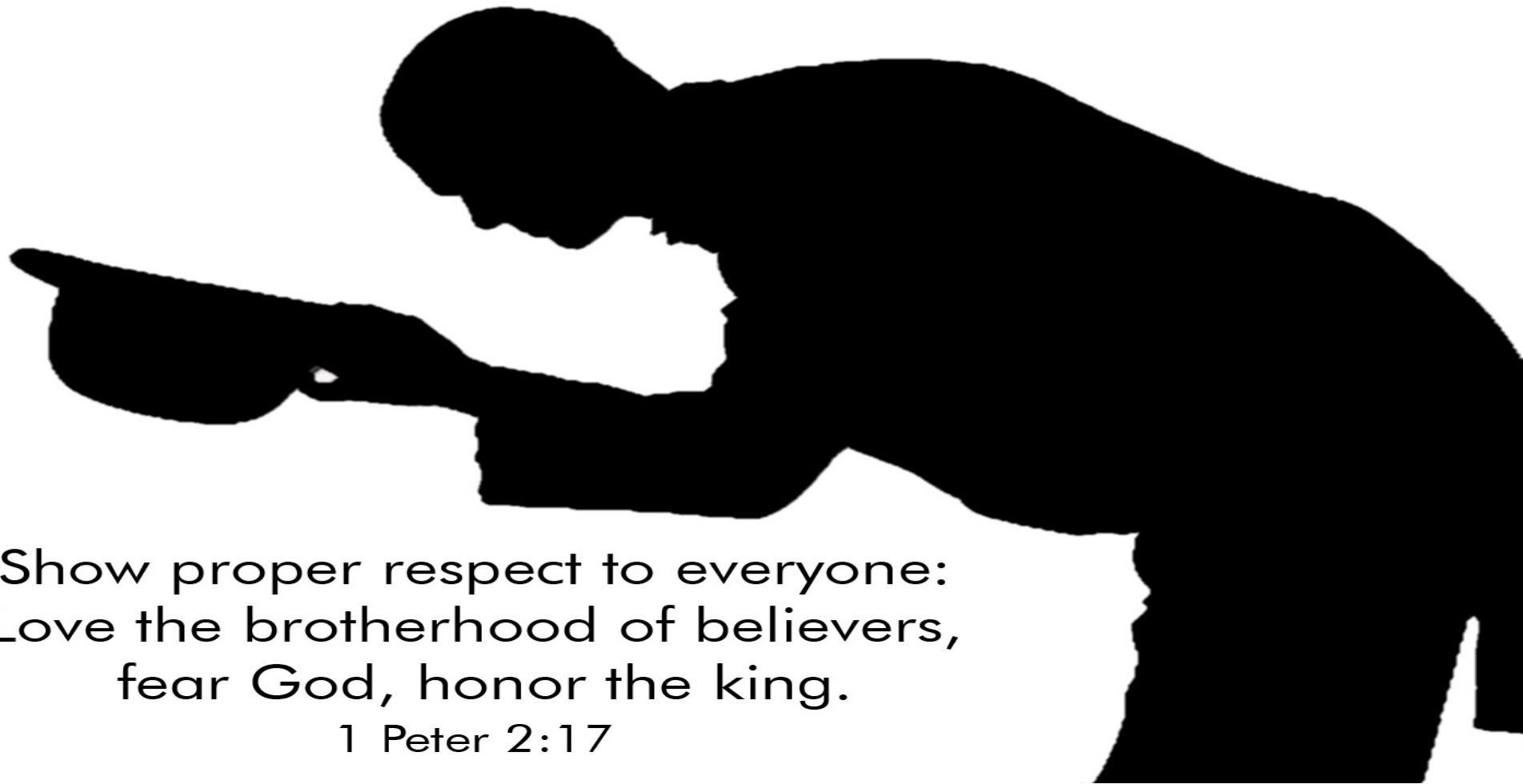


- **To say that “I don’t need the church” is the same as saying to Jesus, “I love you, but dislike your wife”, or “I love you but reject your body”.**

- Do I *use* the church?
- Or do I *love* it?

## 1 Peter 1:22

You have purified your souls by obeying the truth in order to show sincere mutual love. So love one another earnestly from a pure heart.



Show proper respect to everyone:  
Love the brotherhood of believers,  
fear God, honor the king.

1 Peter 2:17



Who are You  
Lord?

I AM  
JESUS  
WHOM  
YOU ARE  
PERSECUTING

ACTS 9:5

- **When Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the church in Jerusalem (Acts 8:3), Jesus said that Saul was persecuting Him (Acts 9:5 “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting”). Jesus’ ties with the church are so close that He plainly said that when we help out another brother with even their physical needs, we are actually helping Him (Matthew 25:40).**

# Churchless Christians?

- I cannot find them in the New Testament.
- Acts 2:41-47
- Wherever Paul preached and converted people, a local congregation was established (Acts 14:22; 16:5).



- **Paul is always found starting or working with a local congregation (Acts 9:19; 9:26; 11:26; 13:1).**
- **Timothy, Silas, Luke, etc...are always found working with churches.**

- **The Bible compares the relationship of an individual believer to the body of Christ, as an organ in the body (1 Corinthians 12:12ff), or a stone in a building (1 Peter 2:5), a sheep in a flock (Acts 20:28), and a child in a family (1 Timothy 3:15).**

- **So a Christian who is not a member of a local congregation is like an organ without a body, a sheep without a flock, or a child without a family. Such is unnatural.**
- **Such is dangerous.**
- **Such is always deadly.**

**Attender or Member?**

- **“The difference between being a church attender and a church member is *commitment*. Attenders are *spectators* from the sidelines; members get involved.**

- **Attenders are *consumers*; members are contributors. Attenders want the benefits of a church without sharing the responsibility. They are like couples who want to live together without committing to a marriage”**

**Why do I Need the Church?**



or certificate  
qualifications. eg Didn't  
**credibility** /kredɪb  
thing has credibility  
trust them. so He f

"A new command I give you: Love one another.  
As I have loved you, so you must love one  
another. By this all men will know that you are  
my disciples, if you love one another"

John 13:34-35

- **When the world sees people from all different backgrounds and upbringings working together, standing united on God's truth, speaking the same thing (1 Corinthians 1:10) and loving each other, such is *real proof* of the legitimate power of the Gospel (Romans 1:16), and changed lives.**

# Help With My Selfishness

- **“The local congregation is the classroom for learning how to get along in God’s family. It is a lab for practicing unselfish, sympathetic love. As a participating member you learn to care about others and share the experiences of others. Only in contact with ordinary, imperfect believers can we learn real fellowship”**

- **“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love....distributing to the needs of the saints...given to hospitality” (Romans 12:10,13).**
- **“Resolve this, not to put a stumbling-block or a cause to fall in our brother’s way” (Romans 14:13).**

- **“If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it” (1 Corinthians 12:26).**
- **“That the members should have the same care for one another” (1 Corinthians 12:25).**

- **“Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another” (Colossians 3:13).**
- **“Warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all” (1 Thessalonians 5:14).**
- **“We ought to lay down our lives for our brethren” (1 John 3:16).**



# Real Spiritual Growth

- **“Over fifty times in the New Testament the phrase ‘one another’ or ‘each other’ is used. We are commanded to love each other, pray for each other, encourage each other, admonish each other, greet each other, serve each other, teach each other, accept each other, honor each other, bear each other’s burdens, forgive each other, and many other mutual tasks.**

- **It may seem easy to be holy when no one else is around to frustrate your preferences, but that is false, untested holiness. *Isolation breeds deceitfulness***

# **Isolation Breeds Deceitfulness**

- **It is like thinking how patient I would be as a parent *when I don't have any children yet.***
- **When Christianity is all theory.**

- **The crazy ideas or doctrines that people come up with when all by themselves.**

- **Being a member is proof that I am serious about loving Jesus and His disciples in reality, and *not just in theory*. I am willing to love, support and encourage real people, not imaginary ideal people.**

# **To Do God's Work**

- **It is foolish to think that I can do God's work all by myself. No one is that gifted or talented. In order to save the lost and edify the saved it takes many people with all sorts of different gifts and talents (Ephesians 4:16). The church is the pillar of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15) and not a solitary individual believer.**



**ENCOURAGE  
ONE  
ANOTHER  
DAILY!**

**HEBREWS 3:13**



**Isolation is Deceitful**

- **Much of what I have learned about the Bible over the years was in connection with studying with others. I need interaction with other believers to avoid believing what is false, to test my conclusions, to be encouraged, to learn, and to have wise leaders watching over me (Hebrews 13:17).**

- **“Satan loves detached believers, unplugged from the life of the Body, isolated from God’s family, and unaccountable to spiritual leaders, because he knows they are defenseless and powerless against his tactics”**



# I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH

MATTHEW 16:18