

ACTS Lesson 8

A loving person desires to see others using their gifts to the glory of God, even if it means being eclipsed in his own ministry. Steven J. Cole

- To the ends of the earth
- The Church in Antioch
- Christians
- James Killed and Peter Imprisoned
- Herod Agrippa I
- Prayer changes things
- Peter's Sermon

One Body

Though our congregations are made up of ordinary people engaged in predictable practices, we are an outpost of heaven itself. Be encouraged to participate, love, and pray for the body of believers with these quotations from [A Place to Belong: Learning to Love the Local Church](#) by Megan Hill.

“Though Christ is not physically present with us today, God’s love for his people is still on display—in the local church.”

“We cannot make anyone lovely—not in the way that God does by removing our sin and imputing Christ’s perfect righteousness to us. But our love for one another in the church does produce a sort of radiant loveliness that shines before a watching world.”

“In the church we should look for and encourage the gifts of each person, even gifts that are quiet and often inconspicuous.”

“The local church is an unlikely collection of people, and with earthly eyes it may be hard to see that we belong together. With spiritual ones, however, it is clear. In the church, we all have one testimony.”

“The church is not a man-made society that we can participate in—or opt out of—according to our own level of comfort. The PTA, the neighborhood association, or the library booster club do not obligate us to personal sacrifice when things get tough. Family does. Because God’s people are our family, we will hold our own preferences and priorities loosely (Acts 4:32; Phil. 2:3–4).”

“No matter how ordinary your elders appear, they are, in reality, Christ’s perfectly chosen gift to you. When you receive the ministry of your elders, you receive the ministry of Christ himself.”

“Dear Christian, do you want to experience the fullness of Christ? Belong to the church. Use your gifts where he sets you. Exhort. Serve. Give. Show mercy. Work alongside his people for the common good. Then—in the unassuming surroundings of the fellowship hall or the church basement or the aisles between the pews—you will know firsthand the fullness of Christ. In fact, you cannot experience it in any other way.”

“We take our place in Christ’s family by taking our place in the local church. Whether your congregation is small or large, urban or rural, generations-old or brand-new, it is no ordinary gathering. Every week, you worship alongside men, women, and children whom Christ calls his brothers and sisters and mothers. Together, you are the family of Jesus.”

“The members of the local church may seem insignificant, but from the perspective of heaven, they are vital partners in the work of the gospel.”

“The people in the local church are our brothers and sisters—they are Christ’s brothers and sisters—so we ought to regard them with all the delight and warmth of a healthy sibling relationship. We ought to cover their weaknesses with love and eagerly celebrate their advances in godliness (1 Pet. 4:8; 1 Thess. 3:6–10). We ought to cultivate in our hearts a determination to find and focus on whatever is pure and lovely and excellent and praiseworthy in them (Phil. 4:8).”

“By living consistent gospel lives, we encourage our unbelieving friends and neighbors to embrace the good news of Christ for themselves. By speaking a word of Christ to those we know, we invite others to be his disciples.”