

3 Reasons Why Some Christians Avoid Church by Theologically Driven

by [John Aloisi](#)

A few weeks ago I wrote a post about [the myth of unchurched Christians](#). Unfortunately the reality is that there are a good number of professing Christians who either shy away from church membership or avoid church attendance altogether. The problem of professing Christians who neglect church involvement is sadly not a myth.

There are a number of excuses that such professing believers give for their lack of church involvement. Here are three that I've heard:

1. "I've been hurt by a previous church (or church leader)."

Sadly, this reason is often grounded in reality. Many people have been emotionally torn up by the actions of other people. Churches are full of sinners—hopefully, redeemed sinners, but sinners nonetheless. It should come as no surprise that sinners sin, and although all sin is ultimately against God, human sin often has harmful consequences in the lives of people who have been sinned against. But someone's sin against you is not a good excuse for you to sin against God by ignoring his plan for this dispensation which is for his people to identify with a local church.

2. "The church is full of hypocrites."

Yes, local churches contain people who live hypocritically. To some extent, every person that acknowledges the lordship of Christ but continues to sin is acting hypocritically. This was a problem in the first century, and it remains a problem in the twenty-first as well. As long as believers possess a sin nature, they will sin against their Lord and Savior, and such sin runs contrary to their profession. However, this isn't a good reason for avoiding the church, for few things could be more hypocritical than professing to love Christ while refusing to identify with his people in a local expression of the body of Christ.

3. "I can worship God better on my own."

Some professing believers speak of being "churchfree" or "satellite Christians." They feel that because they can approach God directly through Christ, they do not need to be connected to a local church. In fact, some profess that their relationship with God has actually improved by walking away from the church. But if God's plan for this age involves his people assembling together for worship, fellowship, and mutual accountability, then it doesn't ultimately matter how one feels. The quality of one's worship is not completely separate from affections or "feelings," but feelings cannot override commands. One cannot worship God better by ignoring his instructions and the model that is pretty clearly laid out in the NT.

Sometimes these three excuses are used together, as if one could build a cumulative case for why he or she doesn't need to be connected to a local church body. I've provided only the simplest replies to these excuses. Here are a few NT passages so-called unchurched Christians must wrestle with if they wish to continue excusing their lack of local church involvement:

[Acts 16:5](#): "So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers."

[1 Corinthians 5:2, 4–5](#), and [12–13](#): "Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this?... So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan.... What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside."

'Expel the wicked person from among you.'

[1 Timothy 3:14–15](#): “Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.”

[Hebrews 10:24–25](#): “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

[Hebrews 13:7](#), [17](#), and [24](#): “Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.... Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account.... Greet all your leaders and all the Lord’s people.”

See also [Acts 15:41](#); [1 Cor 1:2](#); [1 Cor 4:17](#); [1 Cor 7:17](#); [2 Cor 8:1–24](#); [Gal 1:2](#); [1 Tim 5:17](#); [Titus 1:5–9](#); [Jas 5:14](#); and [1 Pet 5:1–4](#) among others.