

Foundations Lesson #6

The Church

When people use the word “church” they usually mean a building, a place where people gather to worship God. But the Bible uses the word “church” to mean people. From the original Greek word for church, we get the meaning of an assembly of people that has been called out.

I. an assembly of people...

- “assembly” – Psalm 149:1 / Acts 15:12
- “congregation” – I Corinthians 14:33 / Hebrews 2:12
- “fellowship” – I Corinthians 5:2
- “family” – Galatians 6:10 / Ephesians 3:15 / I Peter 4:17
- The primary issue is not one of services or attendance, but of **relationships**.
- the church: “one another” / “each other”

II. ...that has been called out

- I Peter 2:9-10

III. metaphors used to describe the church

- a family, Jesus Christ is our elder brother, God is our father
 - Galatians 6:10 / I Peter 4:17 / Hebrews 2:11-12 / Matthew 6:9
- a body, Jesus Christ is the head
 - Romans 12:4-5 / I Corinthians 12:12-27 / Colossians 1:18 / Ephesians 4:15-16
- an army of soldiers, Jesus Christ is the commanding officer
 - II Timothy 2:3-4 / Ephesians 6:10-17 / Romans 13:12 / Revelation 19:19
- a flock, Jesus Christ is the shepherd
 - Luke 12:32 / John 10:11-16 / Acts 20:28-29 / I Peter 5:2-4
- a bride, Jesus Christ is the bridegroom
 - II Corinthians 11:2 / Isaiah 62:5 / Matthew 9:14-15 / Revelation 19:7-8
- a building, Jesus Christ is the foundation or the cornerstone
 - I Peter 2:4-6 / Ephesians 2:20-22 / I Corinthians 3:11
- a holy nation, Jesus Christ is the king
 - I Peter 2:9 / John 18:37 / Revelation 17:14
- branches, Jesus Christ is the vine, God the Father is the gardener
 - John 15:1-8

IV. church: referring to all believers everywhere (the universal church)

- Hebrews 12:22-23 / Ephesians 5:23-25 / Colossians 1:18

V. church: referring to an individual congregation (the local church)

- Romans 16:23 / I Corinthians 16:19 / Philipians 4:15 / Philemon 2

VI. reasons to belong to a church family

- God says that those who dwell in his house are blessed. – Psalm 84:4
- It is good and pleasant. – Psalm 133:1
- We can sharpen each other. – Proverbs 27:17
- God will teach us his ways in his house. – Micah 4:2
- God promises his presence where his people gather in his name. – Matthew 18:20
- God says we should not give up meeting together. – Hebrews 10:25
- David's example: he loved the house of the LORD. – Psalm 27:4, 26:8, 122:1
- Jesus' example: his custom was to be in God's house every Sabbath. – Luke 4:16

VII. the primary obstacle to belonging to a church family – OFFENSE

- **offense:** my choosing to feel angry or upset over what another has done instead of my obeying God and loving them from the heart regardless of what they do
- Some say, "I'm not offended, I'm just hurt."
- Our part: to have a passion to be pure-hearted, unoffended, full of love towards everyone
- God's part: to change us (We are incapable of making ourselves unoffendable.)
- How easily someone gets offended reveals how immature in Christ they truly are.
- recommended book to read: The Bait of Satan by John Bevere
- Proverbs 19:11 / Mark 6:1-6

VIII. The mission of the church

- to worship God
 - John 4:23 / Psalm 96:9 / Psalm 95:6 / Hebrews 12:28
- to evangelize the lost
 - I Peter 3:15-16 / Matthew 28:18-20 / Acts 1:8
- to help God's people become more and more Christlike
 - Romans 8:29 / Ephesians 4:12-13, 16 / II Corinthians 3:18