

# The Church

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## God's Family

The church is not a building, nor is it an event – it is God's people living, celebrating, and growing together. As individuals, church helps us to grow in God and to fulfill His plan for our lives. As we focus on others, the church is also God's way of reaching out to the lost and building His Kingdom.

## The Church Is God's People

### Ephesians 2:19 (NIV)

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household,

How does the way God sees us change when we believe in Him?

### Ephesians 4:11-16 (NIV)

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

How do God's people fit together?

Also from Ephesians 4:11-16, what is God's goal for us and the church?

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## What Is Church For?

### Acts 2:41-47 (NIV)

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.

All the believers were together and had everything in common.

They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

What was special about the early church?

(What happened? What did they do?)

## We Need Church

What advice can we receive from

### Hebrews 10:25 (NIV)

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.

?

Why do we need church?

God's Presence –

**1 Corinthians 14:25 (NIV)**

| as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!"

God's Power –

**1 Corinthians 4:20 (NIV)**

| For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

God's Preached Word –

**Matthew 13:9 (NIV)**

| Whoever has ears, let them hear."

God's People –

**Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)**

| 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.

## Ask a Friend

What do you enjoy about church?

Why are you part of this church?

## Application

What do you think you can do to have a more committed relationship with the Church?

## Prayer Model

Lord Jesus, I thank You that I am part of Your family. I thank you that you are blessing me as a part of this church. I pray that You would use me to bless this church and to help it to grow.

## Key Verse

**Ephesians 4:16 (NIV)**

| "From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."