

THE CHURCH

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The word “church” is a translation of the Greek word *ekklesia* in the Bible. Use Blue Letter Bible to look up the definition of *ekklesia* and record it below:

How does this definition compare to what most people view as “church” today?

The Bible teaches there is a “universal church” and “local church.” The universal church consists of every believer, everywhere, who has trusted in Christ (1 Cor 12:13). The local church is simply local communities of believers committed to one another (Eph 1:1, Gal 1:2, 1 Cor 1:1, and more).

THE PURPOSES OF THE CHURCH

The book of Acts is the story of the church that began right after Christ ascended to heaven! What do the following Acts passages on the early church tell us about the purposes of the Church?

Acts 1:8

Acts 2:41-42

Acts 2:47

Acts 5:14, Acts 8:4

Are the activities in the above passages only for pastors and full-time church staff? Why or why not?

COMMITTING TO A LOCAL CHURCH

As we saw in Acts, believers in the early church regularly gathered, lived life together, and committed to each other. Did those people just like each other and get along or is there a biblical precedent to commitment to a local church? Let's find out!

How is Jesus described in Col 1:18? What does this mean? How is the church described?

What does 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 tell us about the need for every believer to be a part of the local "body" that is the church?

Read Hebrews 13:17 and 10:24-25. What commands does the author give? How do these verses emphasize a commitment to a local church and its leaders?

CHOOSING A CHURCH

Below are some general guidelines followed by some resources to consider when choosing a church. Why might valuing the "Primary" over the "Secondary" be beneficial?

PRIMARY

Gospel centered teaching
Preaches the Word exegetically
Values and creates Biblical community
Equips members to make disciples
Prioritizes reaching the nations
Provides ministry opportunities

SECONDARY

Convenient Location
Members' stage of life
Existing friendships
Dynamic communicators
Good programming
Meeting your preferences

RESOURCES TO USE

- Acts 29 Network
- Ask StuMo staff for church recommendations in your city
- "What is a Healthy Church Member?" - Thabiti Anyabwile

APPLICATION

What two churches will you consider in your new postgrad city?

What steps can you take to connect with someone at those churches?