

The Church

Introduction

Throughout history one of the most common institutions in towns and villages all over the world has been the local church. The church has been a place where many have met their wife or husband, a place of social interaction, and a place of education. However, what is a church? What is a church supposed to be? We will address this subject in this booklet.

This lesson will cover the following topics:

- I. What is a church?
- II. What is the mission of the church?
- III. Why does the church assemble together?
- IV. When should the church meet?

I. What is a church?

1. The word church is derived from a word that means assembly or congregation. So a church is an assembly.
2. **I Corinthians 12:12-14**, *“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.”*

Romans 12:3-5, “ *For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*”

a. In these verses the Apostle Paul is speaking to the church at Corinth and he is describing the church as a

_____.

b. The church body or assembly is made up of many different _____, but it is one _____.

3. Acts 2:41-47, “*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*”

a. Fill in the following blanks from the phrases that are taken from the verses above:

- 1) And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and _____,
- 2) And all that believed were _____.
- 3) And they continuing daily with one accord _____, and breaking bread from house to house,
- 4) And the Lord added to the _____ daily such as should be saved.

These phrases show us that the church assembled together often.

b. Notice here that this group of believers called a church:

- 1) Met together
- 2) Broke bread house to house
- 3) Were in one accord in the temple.

All three of these things show that these believers met together regularly.

Conclusion: The church is an assembly or body of believers that regularly meet together to accomplish God's purposes.

II. What is the mission of the church?

1. Matthew 28:18-20, *“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*

In these verses, we see God's commandment to all believers.

Fill in the blanks of the following statements taken from the preceding verses.

- a. __ ye therefore
- b. and _____ all nations
- c. _____ them in the name of the Father
- d. _____ them to observe all things

2. God has commanded all believers to go into the world and preach the saving grace of Jesus Christ to others and to teach those same people to also go and teach. Thus, everyone will hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. We like to use the following motto at our church: **Go, Win, Baptize, Teach.**

- a. Our motto uses the word *win* instead of the word *teach* as above. The reason for this is to establish that this teaching involves winning people to Christ with the Gospel message.
- b. Another way to summarize God’s command to us in Matthew 28:18-20 is to use the phrase *make disciples*. God has commanded all of us to make disciples, and that should be the mission of a church.

Conclusion: The mission of the church is to win people to Christ, baptize them, and to teach them to do likewise. Simply stated, the mission of the church is to make disciples of Christ.

III. Why does the church assemble together?

1. The Bible clearly teaches us many reasons why the church is to come together, and we will discuss many of them here in this booklet. However, all of the reasons that you will see below, though they are not specifically a part of the church's mission, all help the church to fulfill its mission.

2. Fill in the blanks from the following verses:

a. **Hebrews 10:23-25**, “Let us _____ the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us _____ one another to _____ unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but _____ one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

b. **I Corinthians 14:3**, “But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to _____, and _____, and _____.”

- 1) In this verse the word *prophesieth* is referring to the religious instruction that is given in the church services by a pastor or teacher.
- 2) The purpose of that instruction is to edify, exhort, and comfort.

3. Now let's define and explain the words that you just wrote in the blanks of the preceding verses:

a. **Hold fast** = to cling, to keep, to seize. Hebrews 10:23-25 is one long sentence in which God is emphasizing the role of the church in helping us maintain our

profession of faith. Many saved people do not continue to follow Christ throughout their entire lives. If we are to be one of those who clings to our faith, we need to be active in the church.

- b. **Consider** = to observe, think about, and treat in an appropriate way. It is the job of every church member to be thoughtful of others and to treat them in such a way that demonstrates that thoughtfulness.
- c. **Provoke** = to arouse or stir up. It is the job of every church member to arouse others to good works and godly living.
- d. **Exhort** = to call near and give comfort. It is the job of every church member to bring comfort to others through their mutual fellowship. When church members come together, it is not for just the comfort of a message but for the comfort that their mutual presence brings to all.
- e. **Edify** = to instruct, to build another's knowledge. One of the functions of church services is to establish, strengthen, and grow the knowledge of the believers.
- f. **Comfort** = to encourage and console. It is the job of every believer to encourage those that are suffering.

4. Fill in the blanks of the following verses:

- a. **II Timothy 4:1-3**, *“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;*

_____ the word; be instant in season, out of season; _____, _____, exhort with all longsuffering and _____. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;”

b. The words that you have just written in are more reasons for why the church meets.

5. Now let's define and explain the words that you have just written.

a. **Preach** = to proclaim, publish. Paul is speaking to Timothy, and he is telling him to “preach the word.” One of the main reasons that we gather together as a church is to hear the preaching of God's Word.

b. **Reprove** = to tell a fault, convince, correct. When someone reproves another, they are pointing out a fault and convincing that person to correct that fault. A large part of preaching is the preacher convincing the congregation to correct faults in their lives.

c. **Rebuke** = charge, forbid. It is the job of a preacher to make a clear distinction between right and wrong. The congregation should be challenged to not participate in certain sinful actions.

d. **Doctrine** = teaching, instruction. The church meets together so that teaching and instruction can be done. This is why we have Sunday School classes. This is why we have a discipleship lesson series. This is why

we have Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening services. This is why we have soul-winning training classes. This is why we have a Christian School and Bible College training.

6. Fill in the blanks of the following verses:

- a. **I Corinthians 10:16**, *“The ___ of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the _____ of Christ? The _____ which we break, is it not the communion of the _____ of Christ?”*
- b. **I Corinthians 11:23-26**, *“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took _____: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my _____, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the _____, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my _____: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this _____, and drink this _____, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.”*
- c. One of the reasons for the church members to assemble together is to partake in the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act that promotes our faith in the blood and body of Christ that was offered up for our salvation. The Lord's Supper serves as a memorial service where the church is remembering the sacrifice that our Lord made for us on the cross of Calvary.

7. Fill in the blanks of the following verses:

- a. **Acts 2:42**, “*And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in _____.*”
- b. **Acts 4:31**, “*And when they had _____, the place was shaken where they were _____; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.*”
- c. **Acts 12:5**, “*Peter therefore was kept in prison: but _____ was made without ceasing of the _____ unto God for him.*”
- d. **Acts 12:12**, “*And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where _____ were gathered _____.*”

The verses that you have just read are just a few of the verses that demonstrate that the disciples of Christ prayed together often.

Conclusion

The church assembles:

- To help the members to hold fast to their profession of faith
- To give the members an opportunity to be thoughtful and considerate of one another
- To provoke the members to do right and live right
- To give the members an opportunity to exhort one another through their mutual fellowship
- To establish, strengthen, and grow the knowledge of the members

- To give the members an opportunity to comfort and encourage one another
- To hear the preaching and teaching of God’s Word
- To partake in the Lord’s Supper
- To pray together

IV. When should the church meet?

1. There is no command in the Bible as to when the church must meet.
2. There is an example in the Bible that the disciples met on the first day of the week, which is Sunday.
 - a. **Acts 20:7**, *“And upon the _____ day of the week, when the disciples came _____ to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”*
 - b. Furthermore, the example of local, Bible-believing congregations throughout history has been to meet on Sundays. This does not mean that churches are to only meet on Sundays, but meeting on Sundays has certainly been a common practice of most churches.
3. There is also a pattern in the Bible that the church met often.
 - a. **Acts 2:46**, *“And they, continuing _____ with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,”*
 - b. **Acts 5:42**, *“And _____ in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”*

Conclusion: As we have read and studied concerning the church, it is clear to see that we as believers have an obligation to serve the church. We are to be faithful to church gatherings, and we are to lend our gifts and talents to fulfilling the church's mission. In doing so, we not only help ourselves but also others to hold fast the profession of our faith.

REVIEW - The Church

I. What is a church?

- A. The church is an _____ of believers.
- B. The church is made up of _____ members, but it is _____ body.

II. What is the mission of the church?

- A. In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus commands all believers to go and _____ all nations, to _____ them, and to _____ them to observe what He has commanded.
- B. Our church uses the following motto: **GO, _____, _____, _____.**
- C. The purpose of the church could be stated as _____ of Christ.

III. Why does the church assemble together?

The church assembles for the members to:

(NOTE: Draw lines to connect the underlined words with their correct meanings)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. <u>Hold fast</u> the profession of their faith | • to call near and give comfort |
| B. <u>Consider</u> one another | • to encourage and console |
| C. <u>Provoke</u> one another | • to cling, to keep, to seize |
| D. <u>Exhort</u> one another | • to proclaim, publish |
| E. <u>Edify</u> one another | • to arouse or stir up |
| F. <u>Comfort</u> one another | • to observe, think about and treat in an appropriate way |
| G. Hear the <u>preaching</u> of God's Word | • to instruct, to build another's knowledge |

IV. When should the church meet?

- A. In the Bible, the disciples met on the _____ day of the week.
- B. The Bible pattern is that the church met together _____.

Assignment: Choose at least 2 of the following verses, memorize them, and say them to your teacher.

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| • Acts 2:42 | • Hebrews 10:24 |
| • Romans 12:5 | • Hebrews 10:25 |

Application: What will you do based on the truth you learned in this lesson?

Your name: _____

Name of teacher: _____

Signature of teacher: _____

Date completed: _____