

Trends

Church trends:

- **Divided loyalty:** ~40% of church goers report regularly attending multiple different churches.
- **Attendance:** ~32% attend because "they have to" or "out of habit."
- **Zeal:** ~33% leave church worship services feeling "disappointed."
- **Commitment:** for about 50% of Millennials and Gen X'rs who are church goers do not believe church membership is relevant.
- **Impact:** ~57% of U.S. adults say "the church" has no impact or a negative impact on society.

—via Barna Group

Acts 20:28: "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

Sentence Sermons

"Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion of rich, healthy blood to a sick man."

—Dwight L. Moody

Hebrews 10:24-25: "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

News & Notes

Please pray for Zachary Wallace. He is not faithfully attending services as he should (Heb. 10:24-25). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16)

Please keep sister Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. She's an encouragement to all!

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to encourage them!

Pray for the African appeal for funds to buy Bibles, songbooks and support faithful preachers' travel expense. Donate if you're able! 1 Jn. 3:17

My trip to the Philippines (April 7-May 5) has been cancelled due to the coronavirus outbreak. Lord willing, this will soon come to an end and the preaching training schools planned can be rescheduled. Please continue to pray for the furtherance of the gospel!

Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people

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Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



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The Church Jesus Built (Part 2) What Is The Church?

Craig Thomas

What comes to mind when you hear the word *church*? A red brick building with a cross-topped spire? A denomination? A hierarchy of clergy? Let's see how the Bible defines *church*.

1) **The church is the "called out."** Our English word "church" comes from the Greek word "ekklesia" derived from two words, "ek" meaning "out of" and "klesis" meaning "a calling." Thus, in the New Testament (NT) the church consists of people "called out of" one thing into another. God calls men out of darkness (1 Pet. 2:9) into His kingdom (1 Thess. 2:12; Col. 1:13), the church, using the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-14). Upon hearing, believing, and obeying God's call through the gospel men are "saved," the Lord "adding" them to His church (Acts 2:47); they then have "fellowship" with "his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9); and "receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Heb. 9:15)

2) **The church never refers to a building.** In the NT people never "went to church," they were "the church." The NT never describes a building as "the church," it always describes people. Paul says "the church" and "body of Christ" are one and the same; synonyms describing the same people (Eph. 1:22-23). The grand purpose of "the church" is where sinful man is reconciled to God; where man finds salvation from sin (Col. 1:18-23). So then, "Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." (Eph 5:23)

3) **The church never refers to a denomination.** In the NT "the church" is the "saved," those answering God's call through the gospel. Those answering the gospel call are also called "saints" (Rom. 1:7), "Christians" (Acts 11:26), "living stones, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:5), "a chosen generation," a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people" (1 Pet. 2:9). The church is re-

ferred to as the “church of God” (Acts 20:28), “churches of Christ” (Rom. 16:16), “church of the firstborn” (Heb. 12:23). The church is never referred to by the denominational names so popular today.

4) **The church never refers to a hierarchy of clergy.** In the NT “the church” refers to ALL men and women who have obeyed the gospel and are saved. As Paul says, “So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” (Rom. 12:5) The NT **never** makes the distinctions popular with men such as “clergy” and “laity.” Call us for more information concerning Christ’s one true church revealed on the pages of the NT.

The Churches of Christ

Samuel Matthews

Loved ones, please prayerfully consider the below Bible FACTS...

(1) The church of Christ is the ONE body, or ONE church spoken of in the New Testament (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23; Col. 1:24; 1 Cor. 12:12-13).

**“16 The churches of Christ salute you.”
—Romans 16:16**

(2) The church was established (built) by Christ. He is its founder, head and Saviour (Matt. 16:18; Acts 4:12; Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18).

(3) The church is NOT the building, but the people who have been saved and added to it (Acts 2:41, 47; 1 Cor. 12:27).

(4) The church follows ONLY the rightly divided Bible, which is the authoritative, inspired, complete and perfect will of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; James 1:25; 2 Peter 1:3).

**“9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”
—Matthew 15:9**

(5) The church was NOT formed by division and bears only a Bible name (1 Cor. 1:2, 10-13; Rom. 16:16; Eph. 4:12).

(6) The church does NOT practice any man-made doctrines (Matt. 15:7-9; 1 Tim. 4:1-3).

(7) The church does NOT follow any human creed books in order to please men (Gal. 1:6-10).

(8) The church will be judged based upon the Law of Christ (John 12:48; Rom. 8:1-3; Gal. 6:2).

“24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

—John 4:24

(9) The church is NOT bound by or amenable to the Old Testament Law of Moses (Col. 2:14; Rom. 7:1-6; Heb. 9:15-17).

(10) The church does NOT add to or take from God’s written word (Rev. 22:18-19; Deut. 4:2).

(11) The church must give a Bible answer to a Bible question (1 Thess. 5:21; 1 Peter 3:15; Rom. 12:2).

(12) The church members are called CHRISTIANS (Acts 11:26; 1 Peter 4:16).

(13) The church members meet together on Sunday to worship the Lord, our Heavenly Father, in spirit and in truth (John 4:24; Acts 20:7).

(14) The church members meet on the first day of every week to worship God: by cheerfully giving a contribution for the saints (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7); by praying without ceasing (Luke 18:1; 1 Thess. 5:17); by remembering Jesus’ death in the communion or Lord’s Supper (Matt. 26:26-30; 1 Cor. 11:23-29); by hearing the word of God (the Gospel) preached (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; 2 Tim. 4:2); and by praising and honoring Him with the fruit of our lips (Heb. 13:15); that is, WITHOUT the accompaniment of mechanical instruments, we sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness while making melody in our hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

(15) The church invites all people to become members of Christ’s body.

To do so you MUST: (a) hear God’s word (Romans 10:14-17; Matt. 13:19; Matthew 28:19); (b) believe that Good News (John 3:16; 8:24; Heb. 11:6); (c) repent of your sins (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 2:38; 17:30; 26:20); (d) confess Christ as Lord, the Son of God (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33); and (e) be baptized by immersion in water for salvation through the remission of your sins by the blood of Jesus (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38-41; 22:16; Matt. 26:28; 1 Peter 3:20-21; Rev. 1:5).

“26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

—Galatians 3:26-29

Dear friends, as a penitent believer, you become a child of God when you are baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:26-27). The Lord then adds your saved soul to His body, His Kingdom, His church (Acts 2:47; Col. 1:13). In Christ you become a born-again new creature (John 3:3-5; 2 Cor. 5:17) because that’s when you receive the indwelling gift of God’s Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 5:32), which is eternal life (Rom. 6:23).

Christ said: “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). All of the passages above are just the beginning of the truth. We hope and pray that your STUDY of this post will help you know and understand the truth as Philip helped the Eunuch (Acts 8:26-39) and Aquila and Priscilla helped Apollos (Acts 18:24-26). The God of Heaven is so Good. We love you all so much.