



The Mission of the Church

Adapted from FireBible Article: The Church by Danny Duvall

The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in heaven.

Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshipped by man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason for being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is: To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world; To be a corporate body in which man may worship God; To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son; To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world.

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason for being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience: Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs; Adds a necessary dimension to worshipful relationship with God; Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ and care for the poor and needy of the world.¹

The Church article gives a deeper understanding of this truth:

Matthew 16:18 (ESV) And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

¹ "The Church and Its Mission," The Assemblies of God, <https://ag.org/Beliefs/Statement-of-Fundamental-Truths#10> (Accessed August 25, 2017).

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The Church of Jesus Christ is one of the few enduring endeavors of your life. The following teaching on the Mission of the church will help the Christian understand what makes the church so impactful, and identify what should be the Christian contribution to its mission.

The Greek word Ekklesia (Church) refers to a meeting of God's people **called** out and summoned together. This word comes from a word that means impartation of the King's rule spread into the people. As we gather together the King's delight is **dispersed** throughout our lives and community.

- A. The church is a community of people who come together as **citizens** of God's kingdom for the purpose of worshiping their Lord.

Ephesians 2:19 (ESV) So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

- B. The word church can refer to the local assembly or the **universal** church.

The Church is:

1. A company of the Redeemed believers made possible by Christ's death.

1 Peter 1:18–19 (ESV) ¹⁸ knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

- a. It is a **pilgrim** people no longer belonging to this earth.

Hebrews 11:13 (ESV) These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

- b. Each church member's first function is to have a living, personal **relationship** with God.

1 Peter 2:5 (ESV) you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

2. The Church is a people called out. 'Ekklaeo' is out or called. Separation from the world and into God's kingdom is inherent to the church's **nature**.

2 Corinthians 6:17–18 (ESV) ¹⁷ Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, ¹⁸ and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”

- a. As a member of the Church you are a moving **Temple** of God and of the Holy Spirit. You are an agent always ready for service.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (ESV) Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

3. The Church is the **body** of Christ. This image indicates that no true church exists apart from the vital union of the members with Christ.

1 Corinthians 6:15 (ESV) Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!

4. The Church is the bride of Christ. This marriage image emphasizes the devotion and faithfulness of the Church to Christ, as well as Christ's love and intimacy with His Church.

2 Corinthians 11:2 (ESV) For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

5. The Church is a spiritual **fellowship** (koinonia).

2 Corinthians 13:14 (ESV) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

This fellowship includes the indwelling of the Spirit, the unity of the Spirit, and the baptism in the Spirit. This fellowship is to demonstrate **observable** love and care for one another.

John 13:34–35 (ESV) ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

6. The Church is a spiritual **ministry** (diakonia). We serve through gifts given by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 12:6 (ESV) Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;

7. The Church is an army involved in spiritual **conflict**.

The church is in a spiritual struggle against Satan and sin. The Spirit, with which the church is filled, is like a warrior wielding the living Word of God, delivering people from Satan's dominion and conquering every power of this dark world.

Ephesians 6:12 (ESV) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:17 (ESV) and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

8. The Church is the pillar and ground of **truth**.

1 Timothy 3:15 (ESV) if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

Jude 3 (ESV) Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

9. The Church is a people with a future **hope**. This hope is centered in Christ's **return**.

John 14:3 (ESV) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

10. The Church is both **invisible** and visible.

It is invisible in that it is united with all believers all over the world. It is visible because it is built of local congregations containing faithful overcomers, and professed Christians who are **spiritually dead** and **lukewarm**.

Revelation 2:2 (ESV) “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false.

Revelation 2:5 (ESV) Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

11. The Church at its core is full of **wrinkles** or imperfection.

Ephesians 5:27 (ESV) so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

FURTHER STUDY:

Read **Matthew 16:18-19 (ESV)** and answer the following from the *FireBible* study notes:²

- Upon what confession (rock) does Jesus build His Church?

- The name Peter means “a small _____,” but the Church is built on a huge _____.

 - Jesus is the _____ on which the Church is built. Peter and the other believers are _____ of the Church.
 - **Comment:** The authority that Jesus gave Peter to bind or loose people, Jesus gave to all the other apostles (Matthew 18:18). Likewise, Jesus gives authority to all believers to bind or loose people (Matthew 28:18-20)

² Quentin McGhee, *Unlocking the Treasures of Your Fire Bible: Resources for Spiritual Understanding*, Springfield, MO, Life Publishers and Faith & Action Series, 2012, Page 196.

- Does Scripture teach that God gave Peter more authority than He gave the other apostles?

- Does Matthew 16:18 mean that evil will not overcome any believers or churches? Explain.

- What does Matthew 16:18 mean?

- What do the “keys” represent in Matthew 16:19?

- What are 5 things that church leaders and believers do with the authority God gives us (Matthew 16:19)?

Read the *FireBible* article: *The Church*. Answer the following:³

1. The Greek word for *church* (pronounced eck-kleh-SEE-uh) refers to a people _____.

2. The word *church* can mean a _____, or all believers together, called the _____.

3. The Church is God’s people, redeemed by _____. The Church has a _____ with God.

³ Quentin McGhee, *Unlocking the Treasures of Your Fire Bible: Resources for Spiritual Understanding*, Springfield, MO, Life Publishers and Faith & Action Series, 2012, Page 197.

4. From what is the Church called out?

5. The Church is called to be the _____ of God and the Holy Spirit.

6. As the body is united to its head, any true church _____.

7. As a husband and wife are faithful to one another, _____.

8. How does the Church show that it is a spiritual fellowship?

9. How is the Church able to minister?

10. What does the spiritual warfare of the Church involve?

11. As a foundation supports a building, the Church supports _____.

12. What is the basis for the Church's future hope?

Comment: When we refer to the invisible Church, we mean that we cannot always see whether people are true believers. Only God sees what is in the hearts of people. So, the true Church is invisible to us.

13. Does the visible church – all the people we see who come to the local church – include only true believers? Explain.