

PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

At salvation, God The Holy Spirit (GHS) enters the new believer into the universal church. GHS also assigns every believer to be part of a local church. The local church is a team of believers who work together to build up the body of Christ. The body of Christ is built within through spiritual gifts servicing the word of God and built from without through evangelism. God puts believers together so that we can pool our resources and work together to accomplish the mission of representing Christ to the world. A healthy church that effectively teaches the word for growth, fellowships in the word, promotes worship of God and pursues the work of the ministry is a treasure to be valued and kept. A good local church is the work of God.

INTRODUCTION

A. WE, THE BELIEVERS ARE THE CHURCH, NOT THE PHYSICAL BUILDING.

- Bel's body is the sanctuary, not the auditorium in the building

B. THE CHURCH IS BOTH UNIVERSAL AND LOCAL.

- Universal – all born again believers anywhere, anytime, together
- Local – Individual organization of believers in a specific location

C. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH IS FORMED BY THE INDWELLING OF GHS

- 1Cor 6:19-20 – indwelling making the believers body into the temple of God
- 1Pt 2:5 – living stones built into a spiritual house; Eph 2:21-22 – holy shrine

D. THE LOCAL CHURCH IS FORMED AS GHS MOVES BELIEVERS TO BAND TOGETHER INTO A FAMILY / TEAM / BODY TO PURSUE THE MISSION OF BUILDING KINGDOM OF CHRIST

- Act 2:41-47 – newly saved believers banded together; edifying one another; forming a ministry team to preach the gospel & the word to the world.
- Act 13 – 1st missionary thrust – evangelized & formed churches in cities

MISSION OF THE CHURCH

1. INDIVIDUALLY & COLLECTIVELY, BELIEVERS ARE THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF JESUS CHRIST.

- 2COR 5:14-21 – Ambassadors for Christ - Each individual believer is to make the appeal, “be reconciled to God”
- 1Pt 3:15 – apologetics - Each believer to explain his heavenly hope
- Eph 5:1 – imitators of God - Example of Christ – grace, love & forgiveness
- Jn 17:21 – Unity – that the world might believe you sent Me.

2. THE CHURCH IS THE CUSTODIAN OF GOD'S WORD AND IS RESPONSIBLE TO PASS ON ITS PROMISES & PRECEPTS TO THE NEXT GENERATION.

2Tim 1:5 – Lois à Eunice à Timothy – passing down of the faith through 3 generations

- § GOSPEL – 1Cor 15:3-4 – Death, burial & resurrection is to be shared by the gift of evangelism and personal witnessing; Offer escape from eternal judgment to the world – Mt 16:18 – gates of hell opened; Offer peace with God 2Cor 5:14-21; Convict the world about Christ Jn 16:7-11
- § DOCTRINE – 2Tim 2:15 - the categorical discussion of biblical topics taught from the pulpit by a gifted pastor Eph 4:11; and taught in less formal settings by individual believers Heb 5:12.
- § PROPHECY – Jn 16:13 – GHS will disclose what is to come
- § Laws of Divine Establishment – morality for believer & unbeliever

EQUIP BELIEVERS FOR THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY & LIFE IN THE DEVIL'S WORLD

- § Eph 2:10 – perform good works that God prepared in eternity past
- § Eph 4:12 – train & equip for the work of the ministry.
- § Eph 5:22-33 – marriage
- § Eph 6:1-4 – family
- § Eph 6:5-9 - career

3. SAFE HAVEN FOR BELIEVERS FROM THE WORLD.

Eph 6:12 – we are at war with the forces of evil

- Heal – Eph 4:12 – **katartismos** – mend, straighten, correct, line up straight
- Grow – Eph 4:11-16 – speaking truth to one another – grow into Christ
- Encouragement – Heb 10:24-25 – motivate one another to love & good works
- Peer Influence – 1Cor 15:33 – bad company corrupts good morals
- Social Life – Act 2:42-47 – they were all together, breaking bread

4. PUBLICLY PRAISE & WORSHIP GOD

- 1Cor 14:25 - Bring unbeliever to faith & worship
- Eph 5:18-20 – singing in your hearts to the Lord.
- Deut 31:19-22 – song of warning
- Heb 13:15 – sacrifice of praise – lips giving thanks to God

5. WITNESSES FOR GOD IN THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

- Eph 3:8-10 – manifest the wisdom of God to angelic forces of evil.
- Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7 – loyalty & integrity under satanic attack
- Jam 1:2-4 – prove the power & validity of God's word under adversity