



The Local Church: What It Is and What It Isn't

Ephesians 3:20-21; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Matthew 16:18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 12:7, 12-13

Common misconceptions of the church:

- The church as your once-a-week fill up
- The church as your escape from life
- The church as your quick fix
- The church as a producer

Most of the “problems” with the church really don’t find their root with the church, but with the individual.

“Ask not what your church can do for you but ask what you can do for your church and the Kingdom of God.”

“A church is a group of Christians who assemble as an earthly embassy of Christ’s heavenly kingdom to proclaim the good news and commands of Christ the King; to affirm one another as His citizens through the ordinances; and to display God’s own holiness and love through a unified and diverse people in all the world, following the teaching and example of elders.” - Jonathan Leeman and Collin Hansen, *Rediscover Church*

The church has purposes that extend upward (worship), outward (witness), and inward (within the church).

Seven realities that make up a biblical church:

- The church seeks the glory of God.
- The church is centered on the Word and the Word of God.
- The church is empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- The church is a new covenant gathering of believers.
- The church is united by personal confession in Christ.
- The church is divinely called to advance the Kingdom of God in the world.
- The church is different from the world.

“The church itself is not made up of natural ‘friends’. It is made up of natural enemies. What binds us together is not common education, common race, common income levels, common politics, common nationality, common accents, common jobs, or anything else of that sort. Christians come together, not because they form a natural collocation, but because they have all been saved by Jesus Christ and owe Him a common allegiance. In the light of this common allegiance, in the light of the fact that they have all been loved by Jesus Himself, they commit themselves to doing what He says – and He commands them to love one another. In this light, they are a band of natural enemies who love one another for Jesus’ sake.” - D.A. Carson