



THE LOCAL CHURCH



- Having completed an intensive study of pursuing holiness as it relates to drawing closer to God, we now turn to the church and how she can help us draw closer to God.
- Today, we will address what the local church can do to help.
Then we want to discuss fellowship!

What is the church?

- “Church” -

Found ~110x in the New Testament
Based on ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia), a common word meaning, “to call out” and had reference to an assembly, usually something formal.

Used secularly 3x in NT

Acts 19:32, 39, 41

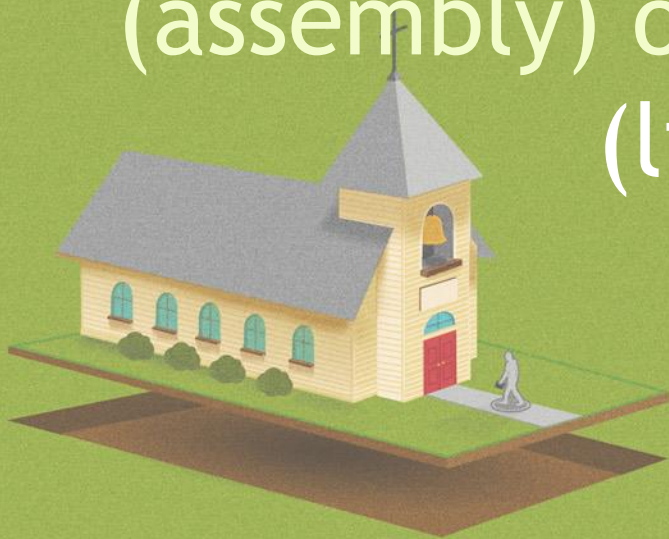
2x for Israel -

Hebrews 2:12, Acts 7:38



What is the church?

- “Church” -
Most often “church” and has
reference to the church of Christ -
(NOT a title, but a description)
THUS, the called out body
(assembly) of God’s people
(literally or
representatively)



What is the church?

- “Church” - Used in 2 senses

Universal - the body of all who are saved. Relationship (fellowship) with God and one another.

NOT an earthly organization

Matthew 16:18

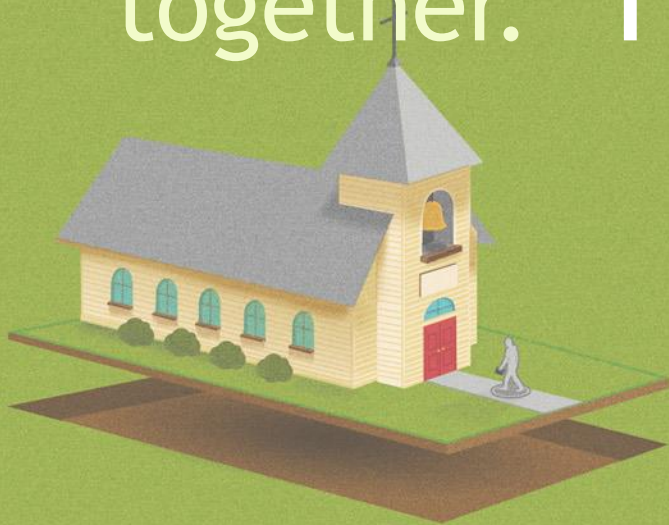
Ephesians 1:22-23



What is the church?

- “Church” - Used in 2 senses

Local - a group of that body (the saved, with judgment) that join together in a given location to do the work God has given us to do together. 1 Corinthians 1:2, 11:18
Galatians 1:2



What is the church?

- **“Church” - Part of God’s eternal plan**

The church was not an afterthought

- Prophesied - Daniel 2:44, Isaiah 2:2-4

- Matthew 16:18-19, cf. 16:28

- Ephesians 3:10-11- according to

His eternal purpose,

Reveals His manifold

wisdom



What is the church?

- “Church” - Part of God’s eternal plan
As part of God’s wisdom
 - Both universal AND local
 - Many see God’s plan as the universal church and believe a local church can do whatever they want
 - This is why we are so divided
 - When we leave His pattern, we are no longer His church



What is the church?

- **What is the work of the church?**
- Evangelism - 1 Thessalonians 1:8,
Acts 13:2-3, cf. Philippians 4:15-16
- Benevolence - limited - 1 Timothy
5:16, Acts 2:44-45, 4:32-35, 11:27-30
- Worship - 1 Corinthians 11-15,
Acts 20:7



What is the church?

- **What is the work of the church?**
- Edification - building up the body of Christ Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Corinthians 14:26, etc.

Much of the NT letters are addressed to congregations related to this - addressing both doctrinal and relational matters



What is the church?

- What is the work of the church?
- Edification - building up the body of

There is a pattern for
each of these areas!

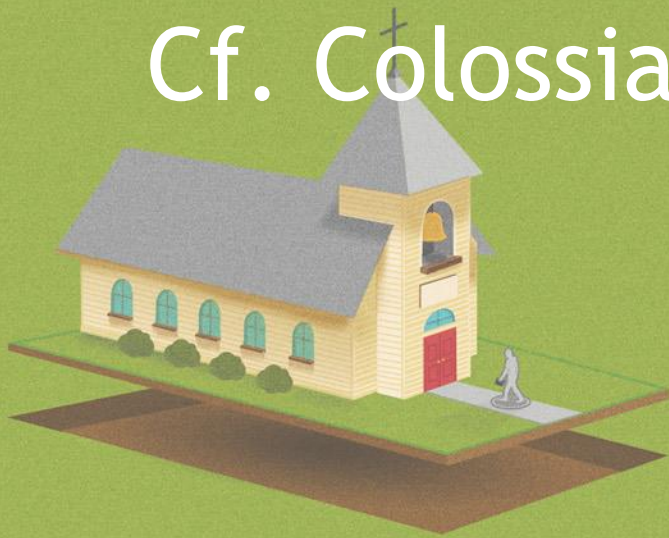


and relational matters

HOW can the church draw me closer to God?

- I need to be part of a local church!
- She needs to be important
- IF the congregation is part of God's pattern and wisdom, it is important.
IS it important to me?

Cf. Colossians 3:2



HOW can the church draw me closer to God?

- I need to be part of a local church!
- God EXPECTS me to be part of a local church

- If not, why does it exist?

- Consider Paul -

Acts 9:26 - he sought to join the church in Jerusalem

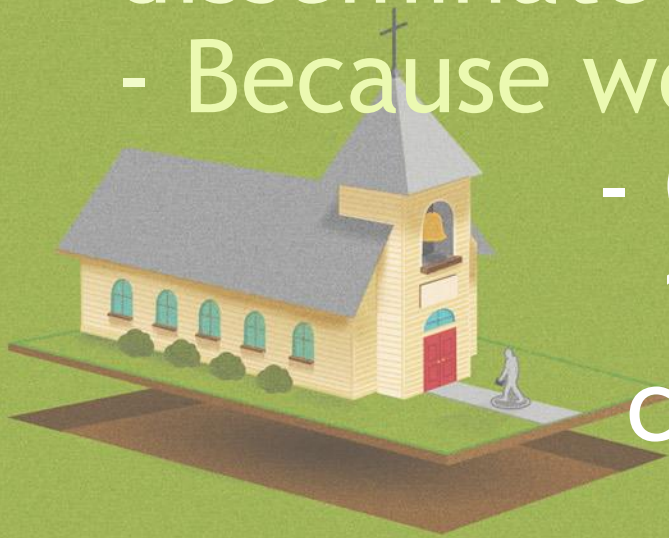
- Acts 11:26, 13:1-3 -

Antioch



HOW can the church draw me closer to God?

- I need to be part of a local church!
- God EXPECTS me to be part of a local church
 - Many NT letters written to local churches - Why? Information disseminated
 - Because we NEED each other!
 - Galatians 6:2
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:14
 - cf. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27



HOW can the church draw me closer to God?

- I need to be part of a local church!
- God EXPECTS me to be part of a

IT needs to be more
than a name in the
directory!

I need to be involved

1 Thessalonians 5:14

cf. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27



HOW can the church draw me closer to God?

- **I need to be here!**
- How can the church strengthen me if I am not here? I need her and she needs me!
- Acts 20:7, cf. 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, 16:1-2
- Ephesians 5:19 - we teach and admonish one another
Hebrews 10:24-25



HOW can the church draw me closer to God?

- **I need to be involved!**
- Consider the analogy of the body
- Ephesians 5:16
- Am I “invested” in her?

Cf. 2 Corinthians 11:28

What I “invest” in will become more important to me



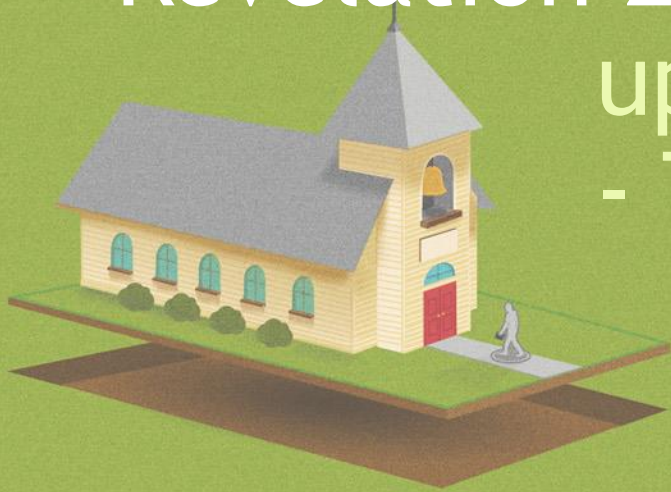
HOW can the church draw me closer to God?

- I need to prefer my brethren
- Acts 2:46 - Daily
- Hebrews 3:12-13 - exhort one another daily
- Romans 12:10 - we prefer one another
- **WE need each other!** In an increasingly ungodly world!



HOW can the church draw me closer to God?

- **I need to strive to keep her pure**
- Holiness is about purity - Ephesians 5:25-27 - Jesus died for this.
- 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 - she is “the temple of God”
- Revelation 2 & 3 - 7 churches called upon to be pure
- Their standing with the Lord was at stake



HOW can the church draw me closer to God?

- I need to strive to keep her pure

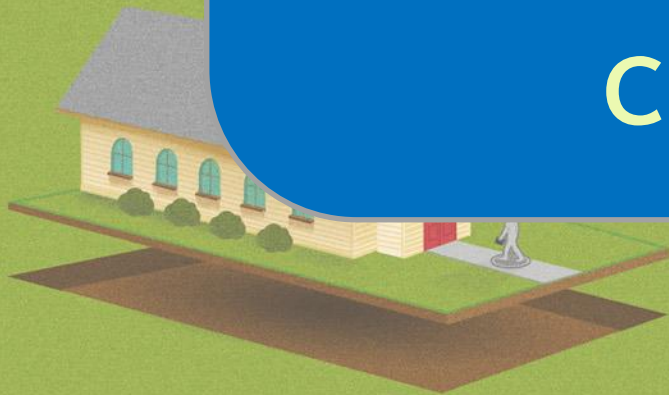
- Holy Spirit

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The only way the church will help me draw closer to God is if she is striving to draw close to Him





HOW IMPORTANT IS THE CHURCH TO YOU?



Let us pray!