

INTRODUCTION

A Biblical View of CHURCH

Acts 2:42-47

Ephesians 4:1-16

1 Peter 4:1-11



5 January 2025

The Times We Live In (Luke 21:34-36)

- No trembling (Isaiah 66:2, 5; Psalm 2:11-12; 96:9; 99:1; 114:7; Philippians 2:12; James 2:19)
- No fear (Romans 3:18; Psalm 36:1; 2 Cor 7:1; Eph 5:21; Heb 12:28)
- No shame/blushing (Jeremiah 6:15; 8:12; 1 John 3:4-10; Matthew 7:23)
- No fear of judgment (Psalm 96:13; Rom 2:2; 1 Peter 4:17; 2 Cor 5:9-10; Hebrews 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:1-2; Acts 17:30-31)

Goals for 2025: PERFECTION (Philippians 3:12-14)

- RUN together. (Hebrews 12:1-2; Romans 12:4-5)
- RUN to WIN. Giving our ALL. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Luke 14:33)
- BE DISCIPLINED. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Hebrews 6:11-12; 2 Peter 1:5-8)
- LIGHTEN OUR LOADS. (Hebrews 12:1-2; Colossians 3:8-10; Ephesians 4:22-23) Living our SAID priorities.
- GATHER TOGETHER MORE OFTEN. (Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 2:42-46)

Six D's of Discipleship - A disciple of Christ . . .

- **D**ESIRE: Has a deep desire to be like Christ, please God, and grow as a disciple.
- **D**ETERMINATION: Makes plans/goals, commits to goals/plan, implements his plan.
- **D**ISCIPLINE: Overcomes obstacles. He sets priorities and live his priorities.
- **D**ILIGENCE: He makes "every effort" . . . He gives his all.
- **D**ELIGHT: He delights in the Law of God and in keeping it.
- **D**O: He is a DOER - not just a listener. He obeys God's commands.

Church Is Not What Many Think

- When did Church become optional?
- When did Church become redefined?

God Adds Every Believer to a Church

- ★ A church is made up of only baptized believers.
- ★ A church is made up of believers who are disciples.
- ★ A church is made up of believers who belong to each other and serve one another with their God-given gifts/grace.
- ★ Each and every believer **is added** to a church by God to use his/her God-given gifts/grace. There is no such thing as a no-nothing Christian.

Who Is A Believer? One who continually repents of his sins and believes God.

- Christ's preaching (Matthew 9:13; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 5:32; 13:1-5)
- Christ's commission (Luke 24:46-47)
- Apostle preaching (Acts 20:20-21; 26:20; 2 Peter 3:9)
- God given faith *always* leads to obedience. (James 2:14-26)
- BELIEF in GOD! (John 5:24; Rom 10:9-10; 4:3-6, 9, 20-25; Gen 15:6; Gal 3:6-14)

Before Rebirth

- Dead in trespasses - not weak, not sick - DEAD
 - Sinners - those who practiced lawlessness
 - Blind - UNABLE to see.
 - UNABLE to understand the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:14)
 - UNABLE to hear, confess, repent
 - LAME - UNABLE to come
- Slave to the world (Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 6:6, 17, 20) & Slave to Satan, to sin, to the to our own lusts and desires. (John 8:34; Eph 2:1-3)
- Objects of God's wrath (John 3:26)
- Alienated from God and enemies of God (Ephesians 2:12; Col 1:21)
- Darkness (Ephesians 5:8)
- Walking in Darkness (1 John 1:6; 2:9, 11)

What Happens at Rebirth?

- ★ REBIRTH is a SUPERNATURAL GIFT from God. It is NOT as act of a sinner's will. Rebirth is by the will of God - NOT MAN! (John 1:13)
 - BUT GOD . . . (Ephesians 2:4-5)
 - GRACE: the power of God (Ephesians 1:18-20) that transforms a sinner/enemy of God into a servant of God. (Ephesians 6:6; Galatians 1:10; 1 Thess 1:9; Hebrews 12:28)
 - The gift of LIFE (Romans 6:23)
 - New creature (2 Corinthians 5:17) **ONLY** the Creator can change a creature's nature. (Jeremiah 13:23; **impossible**: Matthew 19:24-28)
 - New nature (2 Peter 1:4)
 - New appetite (1 Peter 2:1-2; Hebrews 5:14; John 6:51-53; 7:37-38)
 - New behavior (1 John 3:6-10)

- New environment (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Romans 12:4-5)
- New associations (Matthew 12:49-50)
- Set free from bondage to Satan, the world, sin and ourselves. (John 8:32, 36)
- Set free to righteousness - (Romans 6:18, 19; 1 John 3:6-10)
- Bought at a price - our lives are no longer our own. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
- Objects of God's mercy and love (Ephesians 2:4-5)
- Light - Called out of darkness. (1 Peter 2:9; Ephesians 5:8)
- Walking in the light (1 John 1:6-7; Ephesians 5:8)
- Slave of God (Romans 6:22)
- Made living stones (1 Peter 2:4-5; Ephesians 2:20-22)

BUT More . . .

- A royal priest of God (1 Peter 2:4-9)
- Temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19; 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21-22)
- Sealed with the Holy Spirit - our Guarantee. (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Galatians 4:6)
- Endowed with more grace and a gift (Ephesians 4:7; 1 Peter 4:10-11)
- Put into a Body where that grace and gift are used to minister to other members of the Body. (1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:1-6)

What Is Church?

- It is a Body. (Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27)
 - The Christian life is one lived with a Church.
 - The Christian life is CORPORATE - NOT individual.
 - Each and every member is **gifted** to serve the rest of the Body.
 - Each and every member has a **function** within the Body. (Romans 12:4-5)
 - NO EXCEPTIONS!
- It is a Family.
 - A Family has ONE FATHER! (Ephesians 3:14-15)
 - Made up of brethren who do the will of the Father together. (Matt 12:49-50; Matthew 7:21)
- It is a spiritual temple built up with living stones. (1 Peter 2:4-5)
 - That grows together (Ephesians 4:16; 2:21)
 - A dwelling place of God (Ephesians 2:22)
- Body, family or spiritual temple - they were of ONE ACCORD! (Acts 2:46)
 - 1 Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 1:27; 2:2; Acts 2:46; 5:12; Romans 15:6; 2 Cor 13:11; 1 Peter 3:8)

What Does a Church Do? (Acts 2:42-47)

- They are passionately committed to God and the Body of Christ.
- They continue steadfastly (devoted to; addicted to) in . . .
 - The study of DOCTRINE.

- They were serious students of God's Word.
- They strived to have God's Word ABIDE in them. (John 8:31)
- FELLOWSHIP together.
 - The Greek word, *koinonia*, communicates: fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, to have in common with each others.
 - Fellowship is "the spiritual duty of believers to stimulate each other to **holiness** and **faithfulness**." (Hebrews 10:24-25)
 - Satan has deceived many today that biblical fellowship is not necessary for a Christians. Many falsely believe that intimate fellowship with other church members is acceptable to God.
- REMEMBERING what God has done for them. They regularly share the LORD's Supper TOGETHER.
- PRAYER together.
 - Prayer is NECESSARY.
 - ALL genuine Christians PRAY. NT Christians pray together.
 - Christians pray OFTEN together.
 - Christian pray as commanded and for what is commanded.
 - Satan has deceived many that intimate prayer is not necessary, that corporate prayer is not necessary, and that praying often is also not necessary.
- **THEN** . . . v. 43.
 - The fear of the Lord fell upon them.
 - They served God with reverence **and** fear. (Psalm 2:11)
 - They witness God working in them.
 - They met each other's needs.
 - They were full of joy.
- What did the first church NOT HAVE?
- BUT they met DAILY. See Hebrews 10:25

Are You Active, Serving Member in Church?

- Are you a disciple of Jesus Christ? A disciple is intimately joined to other disciples in a local church who are steadfast in . . .
 - The study of doctrine together.
 - Fellowshiping together.
 - Prayer together.
- How do you define "church"? Do you come on Sunday to a building, club, or to a Body of Believers who have Christ as their Head?
- Are you in the family of God? Are you doing His will or your will?
- Are you an active serving member of a local church? Did you come to church to be served or to serve?
- Are you using your God-given grace and gift in a local church for the good of other members?