

## SESSION 3

# WHAT IS CHURCH?

God&Me&Us

## Focus Point

The Church has a 2000 year old legacy. It is founded on eyewitnesses to Jesus' ministry.

## The Key Truths

The church is often thought of as a building; however, whenever the Apostles in the New Testament talk about Church, they talk about a group of people coming together. The only recorded time that Jesus used the word "church" was in Matthew 16:18 in the context of building His Church, which referred to people - all over the world.

Jesus prayed that His followers would be one as He and the Father are one (John 17:20). It would be impossible for believers to be "one" unless they meet together. This is one of the reasons why the writers of the New Testament used the word "ecclesia" to indicate that it wasn't optional to be part of a local church if one was following Jesus. God "summons" us to be part of the church.

Paul established local churches in many cities and towns that he visited. In the same way, we who belong to Jesus must be a part of and active in our local church. We can't say that we belong to the global Church but are not prepared to be part of our local church.

## Scriptures to Consider

- **Ephesians 1:22-23** - *"And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all."* (ESV)

Jesus builds his church by each part of his "body" doing its part.

- **Romans 12:4-8** - *"For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness."*

- **1 Corinthians 12:15-17 (ESV)** – *“If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell?”*

## Group Discussion Questions

**Question 3:** What does it mean to be a member of God’s church? Some people believe that their relationship is just between them and God. How could we respond to this person using the passages from the Bible that we have just read?

**Answer:** The Church is the “body” of Jesus on earth, and we are the church. So, just as every part of my body has a particular function and purpose, each individual believer has a role to play in the local church. We are all connected to each other and need each other to function.

**Question 4:** Why do I, as a young person, also need to be part of the local church when it seems like it’s only the adults who do everything? I can’t lead meetings, I can’t play an instrument with the worship team, I don’t earn a salary so I can’t tithe. Does the church even need me?

**Answer:** Your little finger is not strong and you seldom do anything just with your little finger. However, if you were missing that little finger, there would be lots of things that you wouldn’t be able to do as well without it. Whatever small a part you play in your church, that small part makes a difference. Read 1 Peter 2:5 When stones were used to build the walls of a house, there were big stones and little stones. A small gap must be filled with a small stone.

**Make Suggestions:** In what ways could you be involved in serving others in the life of your church?

## Word of the Day

Ecclesia

## Verse of the Day

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.”* – Hebrews 10:24 (ESV)

