

Growing in CHRIST

REVEAL CHURCH

Growing in Christ
Study No 3:
The Church



The Church

The Church, as God sees it, is not just a building or an institution. In this study we will see how God intends the church to be, and what our part in the church is. We will also look at some of the typical parts of a church service and why we practice what we do each week.

The answers to the following questions are all found in the Bible verses given. Read the passages and look for the answers there. Don't guess!

A. What is the church?

The word that Jesus first used to describe the church was originally recorded in ancient Greek and is translated as "that which is called out." In other words, the



church was a group of Christians called out of the world in the sense of living a different attitude and lifestyle.

Jesus referred to the church twice in His ministry. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus referred to the universal church (worldwide). In Matthew 18:17 Jesus referred to the local church.

Therefore all of God's people are called out of the world and gathered together in local churches. All the local churches make up the universal church.

1. What illustrations are used to describe the church in the following verses and what do these mean?

a) 1 Peter 5:2 and Ephesians 2:19-22

b) Colossians 1:18 and 1 Corinthians 12:27

c) Revelation 19:7 (Read also Ephesians 5:25,32)

d) John 10:14, 15

2. What are the purposes of the church according to the following verses and what do these mean?

a) Ephesians 2:22

b) 1 Peter 2:5

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

c) Matthew 28:18 – 20

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

(iv) _____

B. Communion

When the church meets together people will often participate in a celebration of 'communion', which is also called 'The Lord's Supper'. This is a remembrance of Jesus' last meal with His friends which he



used to symbolise His sacrifice for our sins. This sacrifice is the foundation of our belonging to the family of God together.

The word 'communion' is very similar in meaning to another Biblical word called 'fellowship'. The original communion celebration was simply the sharing of a meal by Christians who were building community on their shared experience of Jesus.

1. What occasion did Jesus use to initiate the Lord's Supper? Luke 22:8

2. When the Jesus and His disciples had finished eating the Last Supper, what did Jesus do? 1 Corinthians 11:23

3. What did Jesus say the broken bread represented? 1 Corinthians 11:24

4. What did Jesus do after He broke the bread? 1 Corinthians 11:25

5. What did the cup represent? 1 Corinthians 11:25

a) What does 1 Corinthians 11:28-31 say that Christians must do before they share in the communion? Why is this important?

b) If we do find that we have committed any sin what does the Word of God tell us to do in 1 John 1:9?

c) Read 1 Corinthians 11:26

(i) Why does this verse say that we participate in Communion?

(ii) This verse mentions the return of Jesus. Read the following verses and state what we learn from them about Jesus' second coming:

a) Luke 12:40

b) Acts 1:11

c) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

d) Matthew 24:14

C. Tithes and offerings

Read Malachi 3:8-10

1. How can people “rob God” according to verse 8?



2. Tithing is the giving to God of one tenth of all our income and it originated in the Old Testament. Genesis 14:20 and Leviticus 27:30 provides an example of its operation, although Luke 12:42 shows it continuing in the New Testament.

a) According to Malachi 3:10, where does the tithe belong?

b) What does God promise to those who bring the tithe to Him?

The offering is anything above the tithe, or the tenth, of our income. It may be given elsewhere, but will often contribute effectively to special projects and needs within the local church.

3. Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-7 and 9:6-8. What do these verses suggest to the person who struggles to give a minimum ten percent of their income to God?

D. Praise and Worship

As the names imply, some time is spent during church services in giving honour to God. This can be done with prayer, but is often very naturally expressed with music.



1. What do the following verses teach us about how we praise or worship God?

a) Psalm 47:1

b) Psalm 63:4

c) Psalm 150:3-5

d) Acts 4:24

e) 1 Corinthians 14:39

A Time to Think

1. What do you think God intends for you to contribute to the local church now?



2. Does taking communion wash away your sins?

3. What sort of attitude does God want you to have regarding money and giving?

4. How do you feel about being expressive toward God in praise and worship?

Summary:

Complete the following statements by selecting the most appropriate answer from those given.

1. The church is to function with...

- The pastor do everything.
- Everybody doing everything.
- Everybody playing their particular part.

2. The Communion meal...

- Contains the actual flesh and blood of Jesus.
- Represents the broken body and shed blood of Jesus.
- Is just a ritual which is not especially important.

3. Giving tithes and offerings to the local church is...

- Essential for all Christians.
- An optional extra for rich Christians.
- Unimportant for us today.

4. God loves ...

- The person who gives most.
- The person who gives happily.
- The person who gives what they can afford.

5. Praise and Worship is important because it is...

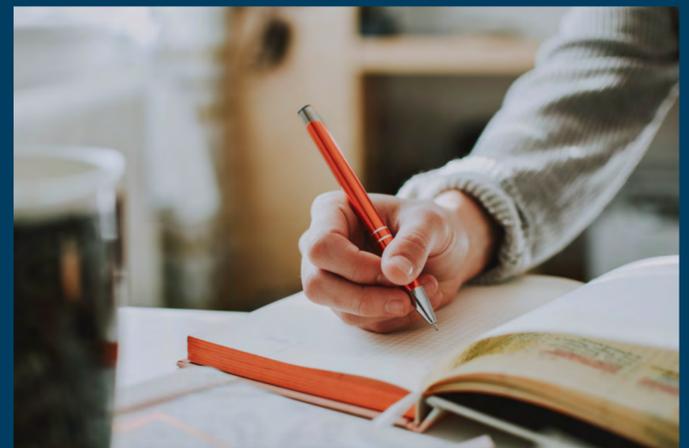
- Helps to prevent church services from being too boring.
- An opportunity for musical people to have a role in church.
- An opportunity to naturally express our love for God.

Memory Verse:

1 Peter 2:5

“And now you are living stones that are being used to build a spiritual house.

You are also a group of holy priests, and with the help of Jesus Christ you will offer sacrifices that please God.”



In our next session together, we will look at the **Two Baptisms**.

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