





# Rurpose of the Church

Is being a Christian and attending a church service related?

Should the global or local church take precedence?

Define and explore the word "ekklesia" and how the purpose of the church has changed over time.





- (A) Go It Alone (Lone Ranger Christianity)
- (B) Rely Solely on the Universal Church
- (C) Join the Local Church





(A) Co It Alone (Lone Ranger Christianity)

**(B)** Rely Solely on the Universal Church

(C) Join the Local Church





(A) **Co It Alone (Lone Ranger Christianity)** 

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Universal Church: You can pray; You can worship; You can take communion; You can baptize someone; You can serve and love others; You can give; You can preach;





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Universal Church: Does Not Meet as a Church (Heb. 10:24-25); Does Not Teach/Serve Through Offices (Eph. 4:11-13; Acts:2:42-47); No Collective Giving (Acts 2:42-47); No Expression of Spiritual Gifts in Church (1 Cor. 12) No Church Discipline (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-12)





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Also, many theologians question the doctrine of the "Universal Church":





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# Rurpose of the Phurch

# **The Local Church Has Always Been The Plan**

- 1. Jesus Inaugurated the Church\* (Matt. 16:17-18);
- 2. Jesus Chooses to Demonstrate His Power and Wisdom through the Church\* (Eph. 3:10);
- **3.** The Church\* is the Body of Christ in the World (Eph. 1:23);
- 4. Many expressions of the Church\* can only take place in the context of the local church.
- 5. Paul's example of forming churches focused entirely on the local church.





# Hebrews 10:24-25:

"And let us consider how me way spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching."



# Rurpose of the Phurch

- 1. Prayer, Worship, Proclamation and Teaching of the Scriptures so that the whole body may attain full maturity in Christ. (Eph. 4:11-13; Acts 2:42-47; Rom. 10:14)
- 2. Expression of Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor. 12-14)
- **3.** Participation with God to carry out God's mission in the world (2 Cor. 5:16-21; Eph. 2:8-10)
- 4. Love for One Another (1 Peter 2:17; 4:8; Gal. 6:2, 10)
- 5. Sacraments, especially Communion and Baptism (Matt. 26; 28:18-20)
- 6. Church Discipline (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-12)





Just a few books on Church:

- Simple Church
- Organic Church
- The Purpose-Driven Church
- Total Church
- The Externally Focused Church
- The Ministry of the Missional Church
- The Emerging Church
- Essential Church
- House Church
- Multiplying Church
- Strategically Small Church
- Zombie Church





# What is your evaluation of the church in America today?



# Rurpose of the Church

# **Challenges for American Christians:**

- **1.** Worship is stale: the "same old same old";
- 2. Evangelicals are watering own their theological beliefs;
- **3.** Evangelical congregations are split demographically into all-white, all-black or all-Hispanic churches (John adds: all-Asian);
- 4. Many Christians, especially younger ones, don't take the Bible seriously, especially on issues such as divorce and premarital sex;
- 5. Christianity in America does not cost anything;
- 6. Any expression of the supernatural has been excised from Sunday worship;
- 7. No one is ready for the fact that Gen Y Christians are going to radically reinvent the church;
- 8. U.S. churches tend to compete rather than cooperate;
- 9 There is a dearth of good leaders. Those who fill America's pulpits are teachers, but not leaders with vision (John adds: and not preachers);



# Rurpose of the Phurch

Many people I encountered with disappointed or perplexed in some way with God. They'd been Christians for more than a decade, and some had experienced serious suffering. The more honest ones admitted something was not working in their Christian faith. They were not connecting with God as to the reason for their sorrows; in fact God seemed to be confounding their prayers. Their churches were useless in giving meaningful counsel, and if these people brought up their concerns in a Bible study, their doubts and anger toward God were frowned on by others in the group. . . . Such people needed sermons on unanswered prayers, but their pastors were giving PowerPoint presentations on attainting breakthroughs.

My research suggested that people are simply not being pastored. Often ministers are out of touch with what's happening on the ground, as they are surrounded by a wall of secretaries and voice mail. Congregants have to wait up to a month for an appointment, if they can get in at all. Once-a-week home Bible studies lack the depth and theological know-how for help with serious problems many of us face. Many churches refer people to professional counseling that costs at least \$75 an hour with counselors who have no concept of a Christian worldview.

# Purpose of the Church

I ran into demographic groups, such as men and singles, who have abandoned the church in large numbers because they are fed up with their needs never being addressed. Singles are the largest demographic among the unchurched. A third group, working moms, is about to join those two demographics. Many people are no longer content to waste part of their Sunday on an institution that gives them nothing.

Other concerns that alienate people are church scandals, irrelevancy, an inefficient leadership model, the quenching of supernatural spiritual gifts during Sunday worship, clergy who are too controlling of passive congregations, the impersonal nature of the typical service – and the list goes on.



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