

Purpose of the Church



Part 4

Purpose of the Church

- WEEK 1:** Introduction to Our Series
What Constitutes a Church?
Scriptural Support for the Local Church
- WEEK 2:** Purposes / Functions of a Local Church
Unifying Beliefs as Part of Local Churches
- WEEK 3:** The Local Church vs. the Universal Church
Was Being Part of a Local Church Intended?
Evaluating Today's Churches



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Evaluating Today's Churches
- TONIGHT:** [Responding to] Your Questions



Purpose 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.

What is the purpose of a “little c” church service? Is it necessary, an option, or not useful?



Purpose of the Church

Isn't it enough to just go to Exodus? Why should we go to "church" as well?

Is it okay to only join a church group and not go to a service?

Could a group of people interacting around a dinner table qualify as a church?

Can any Christ-followers in community be considered a church?

Can ministries of the church develop into churches or do they always remain just ministries?



Purpose of the Church

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)



Purpose of the Church

IS EXODUS A CHURCH?

We might be close, but:

We are not pastorally-led or pastorally-oriented;

We have not engaged church discipline and authority;

We are strong in teaching and equipping, covenant community and we are growing in service, but have not emphasized exhortation (proclamation) and we lack focus on evangelism and deeping/multiplying discipleship.



Purpose of the Church

Should the pastor have some sort of authority over the lives of the people at the church?

What are the most significant qualifications for a local pastor?
What should his responsibilities be?

If the church is really necessary, why is there a need for membership?

Is it healthy to have a set of group leaders or should the church be run by members?



Purpose of the Church

Should clergy be paid? Why or why not?

I understand certain compensation for work done, but in today's age, at least when it comes to U.S. based "missionaries" and "pastors," is it necessary to have them fully-sponsored financially? What benefit does this present to the church as a whole?



Purpose of the Church

“The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For Scripture says, “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,” and “The worker deserves his wages.” Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. But those elders who are sinning you are to reprove before everyone, so that the others may take warning. I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.”

- 1 Timothy 5:17-19



Purpose of the Church

“Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge? I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you. And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so.”

- 2 Corinthians 11:7-9



Purpose of the Church

“Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed.”

- 1 Thessalonians 2:8b-10



Purpose of the Church

“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone’s food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.”

- 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10



Purpose of the Church

I feel like churches today aren't doing what they are supposed to do, but I don't know exactly what they should do.

What should be the goals of the local church? It seems like a lot of churches that I see are floundering from a lack of purpose.

Megachurch vs. small local church – which is really more effective and what are the pros/cons of each?



Purpose of the Church

Is “church shopping” appropriate (i.e., finding the church that’s “right for me”)? Is this too individualistic?

How do I know which church is right for me?

Is the church supposed to feed us or supplement us in our faith?

If we are supposed to go to church, does it matter what church we go to? Is it okay to leave a church for another?

Are there ever good and biblical reasons to change churches?
If so, what are they or why not?



Purpose of the Church

**What are the good reasons for churches to split?
Are there any?**

Should the churches/denominations try to unite?

Does the disunity of the church (many denominations) post a threat to the Christian name? Is it a big setback in the sense that it goes against how the church is the body of Christ? Would Jesus be okay with all of the denominations?



Purpose of the Church

How does a church remain accessible to new members and still deep enough for people who are lifelong Christians?

Should we support churches with bad theology?



Purpose of the Church

What role should the church play in the creation of new ministries?

What is the church's role in evangelism?



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Megachurch vs. small local church – which is really more effective and what are the pros/cons of each?

Although we are all the body of Christ, often times I have difficulty dealing with and understanding the “local church” – especially concerning hypocrisy.

How do we separate our faith from the shortcomings of the church?



Purpose of the Church

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.**

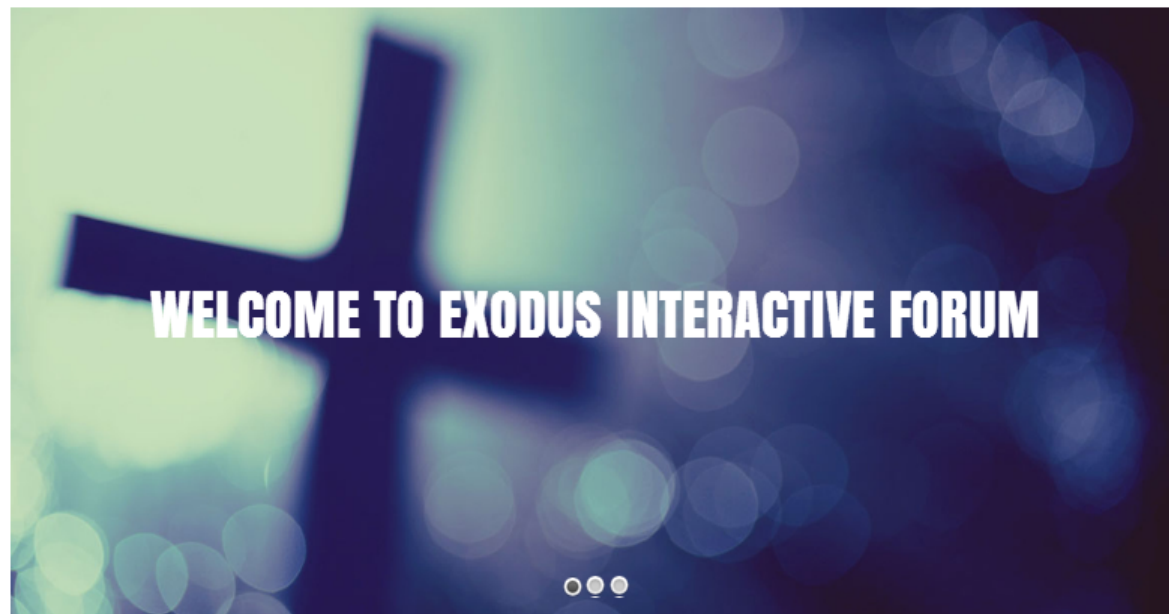


Purpose of the Church

Challenges for American Christians:

1. Worship is stale: the “same old same old”;
2. Evangelicals are watering down 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);





INTERACTIVE

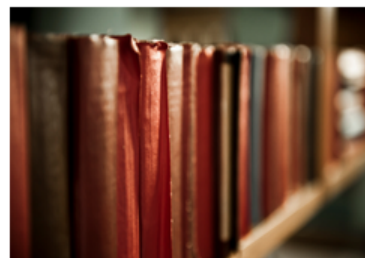


Participate, ask questions, talk back...

What if we listened to what everyone had to say — and discovered that God can speak through us all? After all, we all learn better when we talk things out, hear different points of view, and give room for the Spirit to speak through our deliberation.

[Read more](#)

THOUGHTFUL



Test everything, hold on to what is good...

Many hours of research are dedicated to prepare each one of our series. We explore the scriptures, the breadth of Christian scholarship, contemporary authors, and consider a wide range of sources outside of our faith.

[Read more](#)

FAITHFUL



Set apart Christ as Lord...

We all have questions. But we learn together in a way that tackles the deepest part of our doubts while making sure that our purpose is clear: to always know the reason for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ, and to be prepared to share that answer with everyone who asks us about that hope.

[Read more](#)

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