

Purpose of the Church



Part 5

Purpose of the Church

What is the Purpose of the Local Church?

To be “the sign, witness and foretaste of where God is moving in all creation...”

To live out what God is doing in the world, collectively.

Are We Meant to Be Part of a Local Church?

Yes.

What Constitutes a Local Church?

Does any gathering of Christians constitute a local church?



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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)



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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.



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



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

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?



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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 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);





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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.

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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.

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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.

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EXODUS INTERACTIVE FORUM.

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FEEDBACK, QUESTIONS OR
COMMENTS, AND WE WOULD
LOVE TO HEAR HOW EXODUS HAS
IMPACTED YOU. EMAIL US AT:

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