

# The Purpose of the Church

“And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”  
Acts 2:47

## Introduction:

1. Having studied I Corinthians 12 last week and I Corinthians 13 this morning, let us consider the church.
  2. There are many organizations and assemblies in our city called churches, but few of them match Scripture.
  3. If we do not have God’s purpose and goals for our life as a church, then we miss His pleasure and our profit!
  4. This is not an in depth study of the doctrine of the church but rather a practical reminder of our mutual duties.
- A. A church is a congregation of saints committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and one another in love.
1. It is not a building at all. At best a building is just where the church assembles. Forget the place.
  2. Most churches emphasize the building. The building is a major goal and their primary identity.
  3. The “house of God” in which the Spirit dwells is the group of people themselves (Eph 2:20-22).
  4. It is not a Sunday activity. “Going to church” is a confusing misnomer: the church exists 24/7.
  5. Church members are united with important spiritual duties all day, every day, plus Sundays!
- B. Its purpose is to provide mutual help to one another to grow in grace before Jesus Christ returns.
1. Do yourself a favor and read the 32 occurrences of “one another” in the New Testament epistles, for “one another” describes the duties of each member toward the other members individually!
  2. Consider the context of the commandment to not forsake a church’s assemblies (Heb 10:23-25)!
  3. Holding fast our profession of faith to Jesus Christ without wavering requires help from others.
  4. Assemblies are to consider one another, provoke them, and exhort them to bear much fruit.
  5. Assemblies are not to “go to church,” do religion, have private worship, or hear a preacher!
  6. The importance and need for mutual consideration and exhortation is clear (Hebrews 3:12-13).
  7. Our mutual goal is to grow toward the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13).
- C. The primary purpose of the church is not individual or private worship, which can be done privately.
1. Paul forbade any speaking in tongues that would not edify the rest of the church (I Cor 14:1-19).
  2. Even singing in the church is primarily for the mutual edification of others (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16).
  3. The melody in your heart is to the Lord, but the verbalization of truth is for instruction of others.
  4. Jesus taught that “closet worship,” not seen by men, is the kind He rewards openly (Matt 6:4-5).
- D. Here are practical suggestions to help each member fulfill their role and build a glorious church.
1. If you are married, church is not a date; after the service, both spouses should be serving others.
  2. Your marriage becomes very secondary when you are with brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.
  3. A wife is lazy and selfish that simply follows her husband around; she is not the virtuous woman.
  4. Cuddling, fondling, whispering, and so forth in assemblies is immature, crass, cheap, irreverent.
  5. If you have family in the membership, church is not a reunion; invest your time in God’s family.
  6. You have 168 hours during the week to get caught up on the trivial details of family members.
  7. Prepare before assemblies to get to certain members and serve them spiritually by God’s means.
  8. Work at turning conversations to a spiritual solution for whatever situation faces the other party.
  9. Stay away from carnal discussions of the worldly sort pertaining to jobs, children, houses, etc.
  10. Be thankful and joyful about everything, for this is very contagious and encouraging to others.
  11. Jesus Christ put all the various members in a church, so love each one accordingly (I Cor 12:18).
  12. Practice hospitality with other members to get with them at other times (Rom 12:13; I Pet 4:9).
  13. Immediately deal with any problems you have with other members (Matt 5:23-24; 18:15-17).
  14. We have the most convenient means of communication, which we ought to use with one another.

- E. A church should have very specific goals that match up with the goals of the New Testament.
1. As stated earlier, our mutual goal is to grow up to the full measure of Christ's stature (Eph 4:13).
  2. We do not want to lose any children to the world, so we must all help one another with children.
  3. I am sick of those churches talking about saving the Aborigines but losing their own children!
  4. We do not want to see a single divorce in the church, so we must all exhort to godly marriages.
  5. We have the most merciful and Scriptural doctrine of divorce, but we do not need to use it here!
  6. Older women should teach the younger women to be godly wives and mothers (Titus 2:3-5).
  7. The trivial preferences of cooking, nursing, childcare, and so forth are spiritually worthless.
  8. Understanding that men lead families and have enormous influence, all men should be esteemed.
  9. We want to build happy, functional, and godly families; therefore the men must be emphasized.
  10. Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost are clear goals from the Bible (Romans 14:17).
  11. There should be no division, but all members should be striving for one goal (Ephesians 4:1-3).
  12. The first church under the influence of the Spirit illustrates great unity and service (Ac 2:42-47).
  13. Do you start weeping with the grieving and rejoicing with the honored (Ro 12:15; I Cor 12:26)!
  14. The highest measure of love is doing all you can to prepare another person to meet Jesus Christ.
- F. Forget what your church can do for you, and ask instead what you can do for your church.
1. Most people today want to know what the church has to offer for them, because they are selfish.
  2. Some will actually verbalize to pastors – why doesn't the church love my children and me more?
  3. The love that gives evidence you are a child of God is the love you show others, not vice versa!
  4. Never come to an assembly and drag or mope around waiting for the church to come after you.
  5. Those that have hearts like the Lord Jesus Christ will immediately be seeking to serve others.
  6. The growth of a church to be all that it should be depends on every joint working (Eph 4:11-16).
- G. There are false goals of churches that corrupt its purpose and distract saints from what is needful.
1. We are not a building – temple for public and private worship only, like Roman Catholics.
  2. We are not a social club for society politics, networking, or other socializing with mere friends.
  3. We are not a stage for a weekly performance by the pastor to make everyone happy (I Pet 5:1-4).
  4. We are not a business organization for the fulfillment of the Great Commission of the apostles.
  5. We are not a seminary class for mere indoctrination by weekly lectures and detailed instruction.
  6. We are not a daycare for Sunday School and other programs to train children for lazy fathers!
  7. The Great Commission is not the church's purpose; the apostles fulfilled it quite well (Col 1:23).
  8. There is not a single verse in the all the epistles to churches to be consumed with evangelism.
  9. It is sick for churches to chase Aborigines with ungodly marriages and carnal children at home!
  10. Churches filled with functional, happy, and spiritually prospering people would do much good.
- H. Are you an edifying member of this church, or an anchor that holds us down from spiritual growth?
1. Are you full of joy and thanksgiving for all God has done for you, or do you whine about life?
  2. Do you encourage the others in the Lord, or do you drag around waiting for them to love you?
  3. Do you warn, comfort, support, and forbear all the other members as Paul taught (I Thess 5:14)?
  4. Can you cheerfully take correction from others and not get defensive (Prov 27:6; Ps 141:5)?
  5. Are you ready, willing, and able to convert brethren back to the truth (Gal 6:1-2; Jas 5:19-20)?
  6. Do you love as Jesus required, Paul defined, and Peter praised (Jn 13:35; I Cor 13:4-7; I Pe 4:8)?
  7. Pride or selfishness keeps you from loving and serving as you should (Rom 12:16; Phil 2:3-4).
  8. Get outside yourself and think about the other members. What can you do to make them better?
  9. The highest degree of love is preparing another person to meet Jesus Christ. Do you love others?
  10. Are you committed to regular intercessory prayer for other members and for the whole church?

**Conclusion:**

1. The church is the body and temple of God the Holy Spirit, so we should desire to fulfill our purpose with zeal.
2. No church yet has fully realized the potential of spiritual growth by allowing the Holy Spirit free course.
3. Compromising churches will lose the Spirit and become congregations of the dead (Rev 2:1-5; Pr 21:16).

**For further study:**

1. [Sermon outline on I Corinthians 12.](#)
2. [Sermon outline on I Corinthians 13.](#)
3. [Sermon outline on The Life of the Church.](#)
4. Sermon outline, The Purpose and Life of the Church.
5. Sermon outline, Body Building.
6. Sermon outline, The Importance of Assembling.
7. Sermon outline, Caring Enough to Confront.
8. Sermon outline, Getting Along with Others.
9. Sermon outline, Investment in Souls.