

What is a church?

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A church is a congregation united by a Gospel covenant, marked by love, and set apart to follow the ordinances of Christ. Such a church reflects the nature of God.

▼ What is a church in detail?

▼ Congregation

▼ One body

▼ 1 Cor 12:12

- For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

▼ One people

▼ 1 Cor 1:2

- To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

▼ United

▼ Not divided by conflicts

▼ E.g. suing one another before unbelievers

▼ 1 Cor 6:1

- When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints?

▼ By a covenant

▼ 1 Cor 11:25

- In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as

you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

▼ Made possible by the Gospel

▼ 1 Cor 15:3-4

- 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

▼ **Marked by Love:**

▼ Marked by Faith in Christ

▼ 1 Cor 13:13

- So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

▼ Marked by Hope in Christ

▼ The resurrected Christ

▼ 1 Cor 15:5-8

- 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

▼ Marked by Love in Christ

▼ Affection for God that builds others

▼ 1 Cor 8:1-3

- Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” This “knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up. 2 If anyone imagines that he knows

something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. 3
But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

▼ Which seeks the good of others

▼ 1 Cor 13:4-7

- 4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

▼ E.g. by prioritizing prophesy over tongues

▼ 1 Cor 14:1

- Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.

▼ E.g. Instead of:

▼ disregarding the needs of others

▼ 1 Cor 11:21

- For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk.

▼ Not waiting for one other

▼ 1 Cor 11:33

- So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another

▼ **Set Apart**

▼ From the world

▼ Unbelievers who practice evil

▼ 1 Cor 5:13

- God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

▼ Fleshly desires

▼ 1 Cor 10:6-11

- 6 Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. 7 Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." 8 We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. 9 We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, 10 nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. 11 Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

▼ From Idols

▼ 1 Cor 10:14

- Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

▼ 1 Cor 10:21-22

- 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. 22 Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

▼ 1 Cor 3:16-17

- 16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

▼ Like the Temple

▼ 1 Cor 6:15-16

- 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! 16 Or do you not know that he

who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.”

▼ To follow Christ

▼ Through the ordinances of:

▼ Baptism

▼ 1 Cor 1:13-17

- 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. 16 (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

▼ The Lord's Supper

▼ 1 Cor 11:20-34

- 20 When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. 21 For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. 22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not. 23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you

drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. 31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. 33 So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another— 34 if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. About the other things I will give directions when I come.

▼ Study Guide

▼ Memory Verse

▼ 1 Cor 12:12

▼ For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one, so it is with Christ

▼ Study Questions

▼ True or False: The resurrection of the body has significant implications for our holiness and the holiness of the church?

▼ True

▼ Sanctification relies on Christ's resurrection

▼ 1 Cor 15:14

▼ Rom 4:25

▼ A church's (Holiness / Unity / Love / All the above) most reflects God's redeeming grace to the world.

▼ Love

▼ 1 Cor 13:7

▼ Jn 3:16

▼ Paul demonstrates how God has always desired His people to be holy by citing (Genesis / Deuteronomy / Ecclesiastes / Proverbs) when addressing the sexual immorality of Corinth.

▼ Deuteronomy

▼ 1 Cor 15:13 cites

▼ Deu 13:5

▼ True or False: Paul placed tongues over prophecy as the most loving expression of spiritual gifts at Corinth.

▼ False

▼ 1 Cor 14:1

▼ Paul argues for unity using the analogy of the (body / spirit / cross / temple).

▼ body

▼ 1 Cor 12:12

▼ Paul argues for holiness using the analogy of the (body / spirit / cross / temple).

▼ temple

▼ 1 Cor 6:19

▼ Discussion Questions

▼ What are the different ways Paul argues that the church must be holy? Which do you find most compelling?

▼ Negatively

▼ 1 Cor 6:18

- ▼ Christians are to flee sexual immorality
 - ▼ Rom 6:19-22
- ▼ Positively
 - ▼ 1 Cor 6:19-20
 - ▼ Christians = temple of the Holy Spirit
- ▼ How does Paul's discussion of the spiritual gifts relate to love?
 - ▼ Love is at the center of discussion on spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12-14)
 - ▼ Spiritual gifts are to be exercised for the edification of others
 - ▼ 1 Cor 8:1
 - ▼ Eph 4:12
 - ▼ Example with tongues / prophesy
 - ▼ 1 Cor 14:1
- ▼ What is the greatest problem caused by church disunity?
 - ▼ Disunity lies about the character of God
 - ▼ 1 Cor 12:12
 - ▼ Christ is one person with many members
 - ▼ God is triune
- ▼ In what ways can you strive toward holiness, unity, and love in your local church?
 - ▼ Pray for holiness, unity, and love, for CR families each day (e.g. using a CR registry)
 - ▼ Confess our sins to one another
 - ▼ Jam 5:16
 - ▼ Review and apply 1 Cor 13:4-7 each week as individuals and families
 - ▼ Exhort one another to strive towards holiness
 - ▼ Mat 5:23

▼ Mat 18:15-20