

The Purpose of Ecclesia
“The Church” (October 8, 2023)

Definitions:

1. The Church is not simply a _____ or _____.
2. The Church is an _____ (Gathering) of Christ-followers (1 Cor. 12, 1 Cor. 6:19)

Vs 42 All the believers **devoted** themselves to the apostles’ **teaching**, and to **fellowship**, and to **sharing** in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to **prayer**.

Vs 43-47 A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many **miraculous signs and wonders**. And all the believers met **together in one place** and **shared everything** they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need.

They **worshipped together** at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and **shared their meals** with great joy and generosity— all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved. (**Acts 2:42-46**)

Passion for ‘Ecclesia’ is Diminishing in Today’s Culture!

The Emerging Generations know very little about the Purpose and Priority of The Christian Faith.

...or the Purpose and Priority of Church.

This Generation believes “the church” is an institution that dispenses religious goods and services, rather than an Assembly of Passionate Christ-Followers.

The lost DEFINITION and purpose of “the LOCAL church”

Hebrews 10:23-25

Without wavering, let us hold tightly to the hope we say we have, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Think of ways to **encourage one another** to outbursts of love and good deeds. And let us **not neglect our meeting together**, as some people do, but encourage and **warn each other**, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near. NLT

4 essential purposes... of the 1st (and 21st) century church

Purpose #1: TO _____ the SPIRITUAL _____.

Acts 2:42, All the believers devoted themselves ...to TEACHING

Hebrews 10:23-25, Without wavering, let us hold tightly to the hope

The “Spiritual Drift” is Subtle:

1. **It’s Encased in Deception.**
2. **It’s Engaged through Complacency**
3. **It’s Extended by Hectic Activity.**

4. It Ends with Eternal (Spiritual) Death.

Committed Church Involvement Reverses the “Spiritual Drift”!

1. Corporate Worship “Draws” believers “Near” to the heart of God.
2. Preaching & Teaching God’s Word “Exposes” counterfeit doctrine.
3. Fellowship provides Accountability through Relationship, which serves as a warning system against sin.
4. Corporate Prayer releases Christ’s cleansing, healing and miraculous power.

Purpose #2: TO _____ AND _____ EACH OTHER.

Acts 2:42, “All the believers devoted themselves ...to FELLOWSHIP”

Hebrews 10:24, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”

The word “Spur” in the Original language “paroxusmos”:

Means: To Provoke, Prod or Incite.
To Rouse or Stir-up.
To Love and Good Deeds
NOT TO ANGER AND REVENGE

Frederick W. Burnham (1871-1960) once said,
(He was a Pastor in Richmond, Virginia)

“The business of the ministry is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.”

Purpose #3: TO _____ AND TO _____.

Acts 2:42, “All the believers devoted themselves ...TO SHARING in meals (including the Lord’s Supper)

Vs 45 And all the believers met together in one place and SHARED EVERYTHING they had. They sold their property and possessions and SHARED THE MONEY with those in need.

Hebrews 10:25b “...but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

The words “Shared EVERYTHING” in the Original language “diamerizó”

It means: To Divide and Distribute (as needed)

Purpose #4: FOR MUTUAL _____.

Acts 2:42, All the believers “devoted themselves... To PRAYER.”

Hebrews 10:22, “...let us DRAW NEAR TO GOD with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings.”

Reflections:

1. How has the local church helped you avoid spiritual drift? Share a story.
2. How can you be the local church to someone this week?