

## Jesus' Church

### I. How did the church begin?

It began with Jesus / Spirit! Lets go back and look...

#### A. Simeon prophesied in the Spirit

**1. Luke 2:25-26** *And the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.*

#### B. The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at Baptism - Luke 3:21

#### C. Jesus began his Galilean ministry by reading from Isaiah 61:1-2

**1. Luke 4:16** *So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:*

**2. Isaiah 61:1-2** *"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

#### D. Ministry - Jesus is said to be "full of the Holy Spirit" or "Lead by the Holy Spirit"

#### E. Jesus Prays and sends

**1. John 17:15-18** *I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*

a) **Keep them from the evil one** - That we would endure and glorify God through trials

(1) Jesus prayed that we would not leave the sick and dying world and huddle into a safe subcultural of society, but that we would stay in the world. In the same way, Jesus himself did not remain in the comforts of heaven but rather entered into a sinful culture on the earth as a missionary.

(2) The plan is not to leave as quick as possible. There is work to be done

b) **As You sent me into the world, have also sent them into the world**

(1) Jesus also commands us to be missionaries in culture as He was. He also said in John 20:21 "As the Father has **sent** me, even so I am sending you."

**We must follow the example of Jesus by being Spirit filled and Spirit lead**

**So the Spirit is the Initiator. The Church is birth when the Spirit comes upon her.**

Following his resurrection and just prior to his ascension in

**Acts 1:4-9** *“And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

**Acts 2** then records God the Holy Spirit descending upon the early Christians to anoint and empower them for ministry in the same way that he descended upon Jesus following his baptism.

**The birth of the church -**

First gathering 120ish people,

**Acts 2:41-47**

**41** Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about **three thousand souls were added to them.** **42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. **43** Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. **44** Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, **45** and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. **46** So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, **47** praising God and having favor with all the people. **And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.**

**The Lord added to the church**

In Acts 3 Peter and John go out to preach again and then **5000** get saved.

**So now we know how the church started.**

**We know what they originally did**

**42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. **46** So continuing daily with one accord in the temple,

**So even though Jesus is not here physically with us. He has left us His spirit and He is very involved in His church.**

**We are going to get to that in a second, but first we are going to look at the forms of the church.**

Merriam-Webster defines Church as  
“a building for public and especially Christian worship”  
**The Bible describes “church” a bit differently.**

#### ***F. Ecclesia - To Call Out***

1. This word is used in all about 111 times in the New Testament
2. The Greek word which we translate church is made up of two words which mean “to call out”; thus it comes to mean a gathering or assembly.
3. However, it needs qualifying—an assembly of whom?
  1. Sometimes it means an assembly of townspeople, called out in a political gathering (**Acts 19:32,39,41**)
  2. At least one time it refers to the gathering of the Jewish people in their assembling in the wilderness (**Acts 7:38**)
  3. Most frequently the word indicates a local group of Christians living in a certain place (**1 Cor 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; Rev 1:11**).
  4. The New Testament gives to this word a technical meaning when it refers to the universal church to which all believers and only believers belong; this is the same as the body of Christ (**Matt 16:18; Eph 1:22-23; 3:10, 21; 5:23, 25, 27, 29, 32; Col 1:18; Heb 12:23**).

The meaning of the word *church* is assembly. The kind of an assembly must be determined from the passage where the word is used. **In our case, the word church that we are looking at is an assembly of those who believe in Christ**

#### **II. The Nature of the Church – Marks of the Church The church exists in two forms:**

**A. The universal church - All believers from the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) to the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).**

1. **All believers and only believers belong; this is the same as the body of Christ**
2. **The Holy Spirit “baptizes” – places people into the “body of Christ,” which is the universal church**

**a) 1 Corinthians 12:12-14** *For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.*

**b) This function of the Holy Spirit began at the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; 11:15-18).**

**B. A local church:** • A group of believers in this time meeting in various cities and in various locations. • There may be many local churches in one city or region.

Through a quick google search, I found 27 different listings of those who claimed to be Christian churches in Santa Rosa.

B. (**Examples:** A “house church” is called a “church” in [Romans 16:5](#) (“greet also the church in their house”), [1 Corinthians 16:19](#) (“Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord”). The church in an entire city is also called “a church” ([1 Cor. 1:2](#); [2 Cor. 1:1](#); and [1 Thess. 1:1](#)). The church in a region is referred to as a “church” in [Acts 9:31](#): “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was built up.” Finally, the church throughout the entire world can be referred to as “the church.” Paul says, “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” ([Eph. 5:25](#)) and says, “God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers . . .” ([1 Cor. 12:28](#)).

**We may conclude that the group of God’s people considered at any level from local to universal may rightly be called “a church.”**

Yes we are all different fellowships of believers, but we all are still under Jesus’ authority. Jesus is the Vine?

**C. Invisible Church** - Church as God sees it. (Past Present Future)

**D. Visible Church** - Church as we see it. (Local Churches, people who come to church)

1. But the Problem is that there are people who come to church that don’t love Jesus. Not everybody is a Christian. Only He knows our hearts.

**Because the church exists in both scattered and gathered forms, church cannot be defined as a building, but rather as a living organism or the Body of Christ.**

**We are going to discuss the local church since we are a local church.**

**Definition of Local Church**

The local church is a community of regenerated believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord. In obedience to Scripture they organize under qualified leadership, gather regularly for preaching and worship, observe the biblical sacraments of baptism and communion, are unified by the Spirit, are disciplined for holiness, and scatter to fulfill the great commandment and the great commission as missionaries to the world for God’s glory and their joy.

### III. Ultimately we need to recognize that the Church is under Jesus' Authority.

#### A. Jesus started and builds the church

1. **Matt 16:18** *I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

#### B. Jesus is the Head of the church

1. **(Globally) Ephesians 1:22** *And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

#### C. Jesus is the Chief Shepherd

1. **1 Peter 5:4** *and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.*

#### 2. (We have 3 pastors)

#### D. Jesus is present with the church

1. **Matthew 28:20** *I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*

#### E. Jesus is the one who Plants churches

1. **Hebrews 3:1** *Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,*

#### F. Jesus shuts churches down.

- a) **Revelation 2:6** *Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.*

### II. The Purpose of the Church – What are churches supposed to do?

Introduction: The purpose(s) of the local church are derived by looking at New Testament commands given to the disciples (who were the “foundation stones” of the church – Ephesians 2:20) and other instructions given to individual churches or church leaders.

1. Regenerated church membership - The people must love Jesus. Repent and do good works
  - a. **Titus 3:4-8** *But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works.*
2. Qualified leadership (elder/pastor/deacon)
3. Gather for preaching and worship - ecclesia
  - a. **Hebrews 10:24-25** *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

- 4. Ordinances practiced - Communion / Baptism**
- 5. Unified by the Spirit - The spirit was integral in Christ ministry and it must be in ours**
- 6. Disciplined for holiness**
  - a. Repentance Matthew 18 ( the goal is always reconciliation and restoration)
- 7. Obey the great commandment to love**
  - a. serving each other / praying for each other / meeting the needs of the body)
- 8. Obey the great commission to evangelize and make disciples**

So this requires involvement on the part of the people

### **3. Involvement (Acts 11:27-30; Ephesians 4:11,12)**

Sometimes people in churches assume that ministry is the job of paid professionals – the pastors and staff. It's not. God has called every believer to be involved in ministry. He has given every person certain "spiritual gifts" – supernatural abilities to serve/help others in some way.

• Instead of leaders *doing* most of the ministry, their real role is to *equip* people for ministry (Ephesians 4:11,12).

**The life of the church is in the body. The body must be active. Those who drag churches down are consumer christians. The takers. Those who are not pouring out!**

**If you are a non christian, you are a guest. If you are a new christian, get caught up. If you have been a christian for a long time, contribute.**

**If you are part of another church and coming here to be refreshed. You are welcome to be here. If you are checking us out for the first time. Great! take your time.**

**What did Jesus ask us to do?**

#### **A. "The Great Commission" (Matthew 28:19-20)**

##### **1. The Command – "Go and make disciples"**

a. "Go" means that we must take the initiative. Evangelize, but also make disciples. Evangelism is required to accomplish the task of disciple-making.

b. Helping people grow as Christians. The church (every person in it) is responsible for carrying out this command. Every ministry in a church must be part of the process of disciple-making.

##### **2. The Means – "Baptizing, Teaching"**

These two words explain the means by which Christians grow as disciples.

- a. "Baptizing" – Public identification with Christ
- b. "Teaching" – Learning the scripture for the purpose of applying it
  - Psalm 119:11** *Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.*
  - 2 Timothy 3:15-17** – "know the Holy Scriptures" -----> "reproof, correction, training"
  - 2 Timothy 4:2** – "Preach the Word" -----> "reprove, rebuke, exhort"
  - James 1:22** – "doers of the Word and not hearers only"

#### IV. The Ordinances Of The Church

An ordinance is a physical act prescribed by Christ to illustrate a spiritual reality (sacrament = sacred sign).

- Only Baptism and Communion are specifically prescribed by Christ and clearly practiced by the early church.

#### 3. What do they have to do with a person's salvation?

Practicing these "symbols" in no way saves or even helps a person have eternal salvation.

**Ephesians 2:8-9** *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

These ordinances are meaningful only to a person who has already personally trusted Christ for salvation.

#### B. Water Baptism

1. Definition: The use of water to symbolize outwardly the inner spiritual change that took place when we trusted Christ as Savior.
2. The Model: Baptism was commanded by Christ and practiced by the early church.
  - a. Christ commanded the disciples to "Go and make disciples" by means of "baptizing" and "teaching" until "the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19,20).
  - b. Starting at the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38,41) water baptism after conversion became standard practice (Acts 8:12,36-38; 9:18; 10:47,48; 16:14,15,33; 18:8; 19:4,15).
3. **The Meaning: Baptism symbolizes what happened when we were saved.**
  - a. It symbolizes the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration
    - The Spirit (inwardly) baptizes us in to the body of Christ when we believe on Jesus.
    - Water baptism is administered by others outwardly after we're saved

## C. Communion

1. Definition: The regular use of the bread and cup to symbolically commemorate with other believers the saving work of Christ on the cross.

b. The Model: Christ initiated it at the Last Supper.

**Luke 22:19** - *“Do this in remembrance of Me.”*

c. **1 Cor 11:26** *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.*

a. The bread represents Christ’s substitutionary death in our place (“for you” – Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24).

b. The cup represents Christ’s fulfilling of the old covenant sacrifice system (“the new covenant in my blood” – Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25).

### The Leaders of the Church

That the church is to have leadership is a divine requirement ([Heb 13:7, 17](#)). The New Testament does sanction several classes of leaders.

#### A. Elders / Pastors / Overseers / Shepherds

##### 1. Who were they?

Sometimes they are called “elders” (Greek – presbuteros), a term that emphasizes the qualification of spiritual maturity needed. Sometimes they are called “overseers” (Greek – episcopos), a term that emphasizes their function of leading. The terms are used interchangeably of the same men (Acts 20:17,28).

##### 2. What are an elder’s qualifications?

1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 describe an elder’s qualifications. Spiritual character is emphasized over specific functions.

“Above reproach “ – no cause for just criticism

“Husband of one wife” – monogamous fidelity, not divorced

“Temperate” – self-control

“Prudent” – wise decision-maker

“Respectable” – orderly, organized

“Hospitable” – willing to share his home

“Able to teach” – can communicate spiritual truth

“Not given to wine” – not addicted

“Not pugnacious but gentle” – patient, not violent

“Uncontentious” – not insistent on rights, peaceable

“Free from the love of money” – not greedy or “in it for the money”

“Manages his household well...children under control” – discipline, peace and order at home

“Not a new convert” – to avoid pride

“Good reputation with outsiders” – has the respect of unbelievers

“Not self-willed” – genuine concern for others interests, not just his own

“Not quick tempered” (self-explanatory)

“Loves what is good” – can discern what is spiritually beneficial

“Just” – law-keeping himself and fair with others

“Devout” – avoids sin and is committed to God

“Hold fast the faithful Word” – knows doctrinal truth

### **3. What are an elders duties?**

a. “Shepherd and care for the flock” (1 Peter 5:2; 1 Timothy 3:5; James 5:14,15). This means he takes responsibility for their spiritual care.

b. “Be an example to the flock” (1 Peter 5:3). Consciously models and disciplines others in the Christian life.

c. “Teaching God’s Word” (Acts 20:20; 1 Timothy 3:2; 5:17; etc.)

d. “Guard against false doctrine” (Acts 20:28; Titus 1:9)

e. “Rule” (1 Timothy 5:17). This means to direct the church’s affairs.

## **B. Deacons**

### **1. Who are they?**

The word “deacon” actually means “servant” and can be used of any servant (Ephesians 6:21; 1 Corinthians 3:5, etc.). But in Acts 6:1-6 a group of men were officially designated as servers/deacons for a specific physical need in the Jerusalem church. Later, Paul used the word “deacon” in the official sense of a church office and described their qualifications (1 Timothy 3:8-13). So it seems that deacons are formally established as church officers. They are to assure particularly that the physical needs of the church body are met.

### **2. What are a deacon’s qualifications?**

1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-3 describe a deacon’s qualifications.

“Good reputation” – same as elder

“Spiritual” – men who consistently walk in the Spirit’s control

“Wise” – same as elder

“Dignified” – same as elder

“Not double-tongued” – honest, not telling conflicting stories

“Not addicted to much wine” – same as elder

“Not fond of sordid gain” – parallel to elder

“Holding to the mystery of the faith” – parallel to elder

“Beyond reproach” – same as elder

“Husband of one wife” – same as elder

“Good managers of their children and household – parallel to elder

- Also, deacon’s wives must be “dignified, not malicious gossips, temperate and faithful in all things” (1 Timothy 3:11). These are probably “deacon’s wives” and not “deaconesses” since their qualifications are found in the mid-

dle of the deacon's qualifications. Also, Phoebe (Romans 16:1), is called a "deaconess" or "servant"

### **3. What are a deacon's duties?**

There is only the general indication that deacons serve to meet physical needs to free up other spiritual leaders to focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4). But that does not limit deacons. They have spiritual qualifications and may have other spiritual gifts for significant personal ministry. One deacon, Philip, was an outstanding evangelist and preacher (Acts 8:4-8; 26:40; 21:8). Stephen, another deacon, is noted for his faith and his preaching (Acts 6:5; 6:8-7:60).

### **Spiritual Gifts / Pray for your leaders!**

**There are a lot of different things that the church needs to be taking part in. This is not possible on our own and so again we must look to Jesus to lead and shepherd His church.**

### **CHRIST WILL COME FOR HIS CHURCH / BRIDE**

**The second coming of Christ is mentioned 318 times in the 260 chapters of the news testament. Averaged out, it works out to be 1 in every 25 verses**

**John 14:1-4** *"Let <sup>a</sup>not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> In My Father's house are many <sup>1</sup>mansions; if it were not so, <sup>2</sup>I would have told you. <sup>b</sup>I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, <sup>c</sup>I will come again and receive you to Myself; that <sup>d</sup>where I am, there you may be also. <sup>4</sup> And where I go you know, and the way you know."*

Hebrews 9:28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

### **Christ is the Bridegroom and we are His bride**

**Eph 5:25-33** *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, **26** that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, **27** that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. **28** So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. **29** For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. **30** For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His*

bones. **31** “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” **32** This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. **33** Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

**Rev 19:7–8** Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” **8** And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

### **The Church is to be expecting Jesus’ Return**

**Luke 12:35-37** “Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; **36** and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. **37** Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.