



# What's the church all about?

Part 005 - The purpose of the church

## INTRODUCTION

Let's do church on purpose.

'Purpose' might be described as 'the end to which our efforts take us.' Any organisation has a purpose.

### LUKE 4:18-19

'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour'

A clear understanding of biblical purpose can make a church:

- purposeful and expectant.
- faithful and flexible, innovative yet true to Scripture.
- gracious and relational, emphasising God's love and forgiveness.
- joyful and celebrate (people are looking for this).
- vital and dynamic, equipping people for real life ministry.
- growing and reproducing, planting new churches

## THE ROLE AND NATURE OF THE CHURCH TODAY

### A. The Church—A Called-Out People With Both A Local And A Universal Manifestation

#### EPH 1:9-10

And He has made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to bring all things in heaven and on earth together in Christ.

#### EKKLESIA

#### ACTS 19:38-41

So if Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open and proconsuls are available. Let them bring charges against one another there. But if you are seeking anything beyond this, it must be settled in a **legal assembly**. For we are in jeopardy of being charged with rioting for today's events, and we have no justification to account for this commotion."

After he had said this, he dismissed **the assembly**.

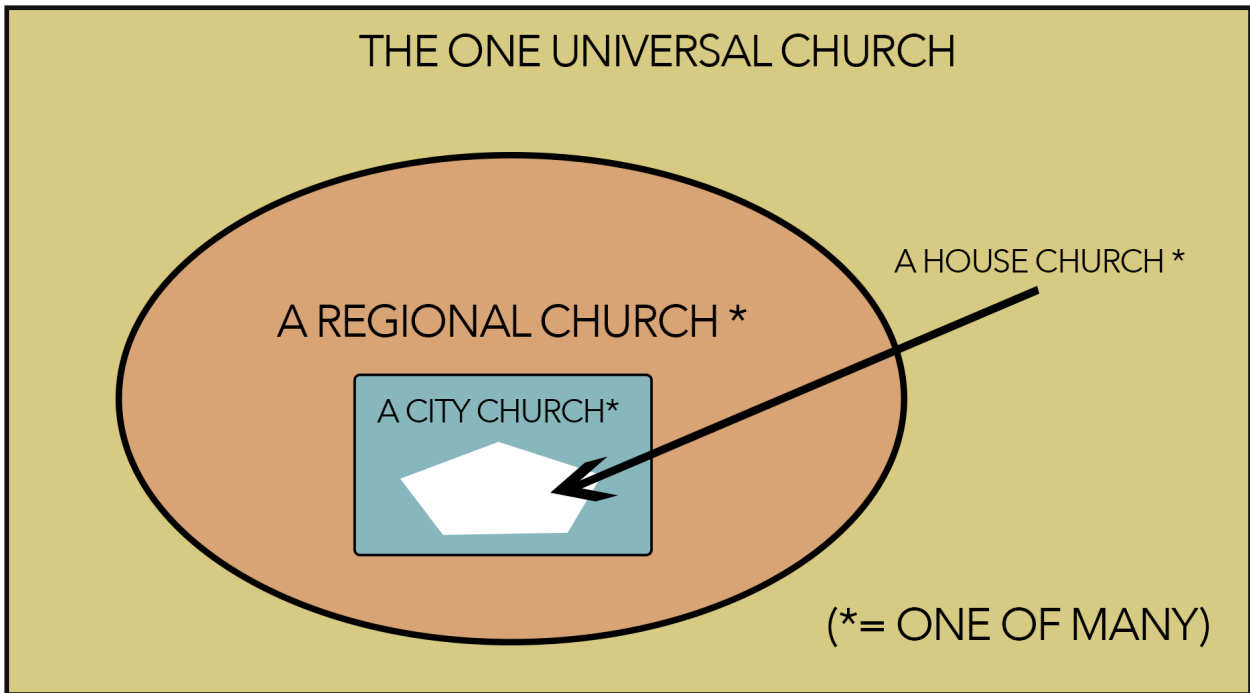
#### QUESTION

**WHY HAS THE WORD "CHURCH" GOT SO MANY INCORRECT INTERPRETATIONS? WHAT DID YOU THINK OF "CHURCH" BEFORE YOU WERE SAVED AND HOW DID YOU CHANGE YOUR OPINION?**

Note that the local church may be defined in different ways:

- A house church: 1 Corinthians 16:19 (Church that meets in house of Aquila and Priscilla) Colossians 4:15 (Church that meets in house of Nympha)
- A city church: 1 Thessalonians 1:1 (Church of the Thessalonians) 1 Corinthians 1:2 (Church of God in Corinth) Acts 13:1 (Church at Antioch)
- Regional churches: Galatians 1:2 (Churches in Galatia) Acts 9:31 (Churches throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria) 1 Corinthians 16:19 (Churches in the province of Asia)

**FIGURE 1: ONE CHURCH AND MANY CHURCHES**



*B. The Church Is The Body Of Christ*

1. **The Body Is Interdependent**
2. **The Body Has One Head**

*C. The Church Is God’s Number One Instrument For Spreading The Gospel*

*I. THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH*

Fig 1 - The Three Fold Purpose of the Church

Ultimate Purpose	Outward Purpose	Inward Purpose
Exalt the Lord	Evangelise the Lost	Edify the labourers
The Church Exists for the Lord	The Church Exists for the world	The church exists for itself

**A. Exalt the Lord**

QUESTIONS:

1. WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOU TO GLORIFY GOD?
2. HOW DOES THE CHURCH GLORIFY GOD?

**B. Evangelise the Lost**

QUESTIONS:

1. WHAT COMFORT IS THERE IN THE TRUTH THAT "ALL AUTHORITY" HAS BEEN GIVEN TO CHRIST?
2. SINCE HE IS THE SOVEREIGN LORD, WHAT HAS HE ASKED US TO DO?

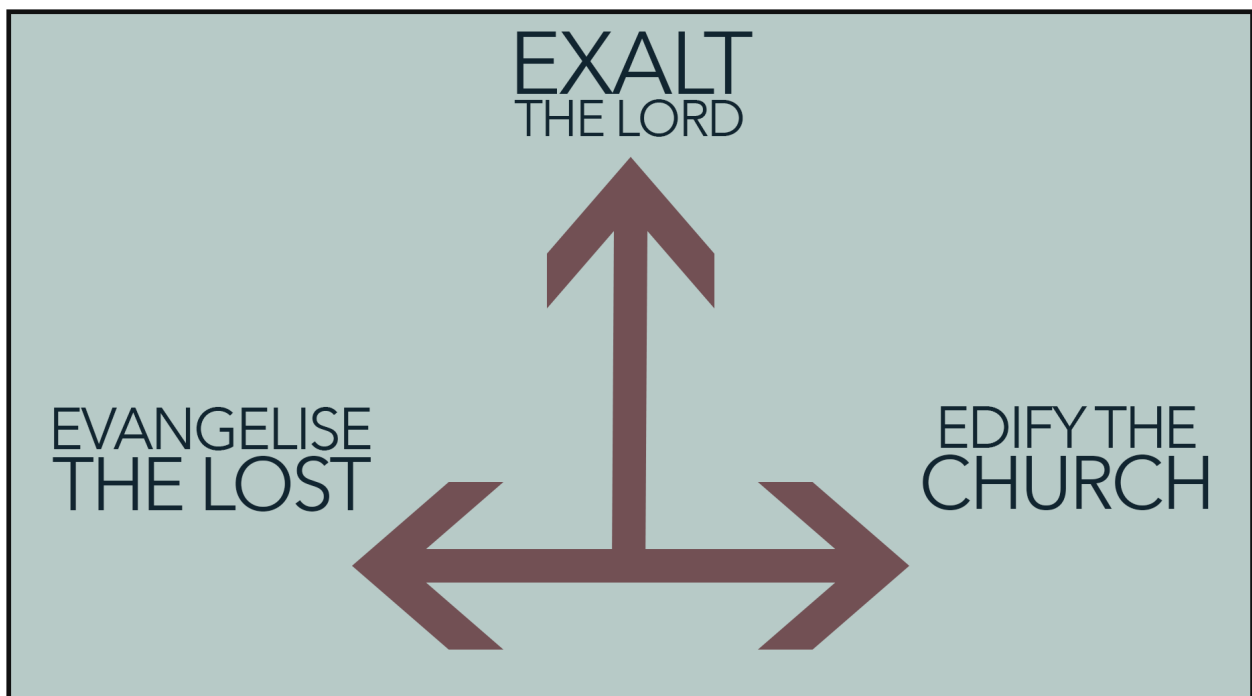
READ MARK 16:15-20

3. WHAT WARNING DO YOU FIND HERE FOR THE UNBELIEVER?
4. WHAT WILL BE THE EVIDENCE THAT FOLLOWS BELIEVERS?
5. WHAT FEARS DO I HAVE THAT NEED TO BE OVERCOME BY THE REALISATION OF THE SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY OF CHRIST?
6. HOW CAN THE GOSPEL BE PROCLAIMED IN "ALL THE NATIONS" IN MY COUNTRY?

### C. Edify the Labourers

QUESTION:

1. LEADERSHIP IS GIVEN (V. 11) TO EQUIP THE SAINTS FOR MINISTRY (V. 12), NOT JUST TO DO THE WORK OF MINISTRY THEMSELVES. WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS VITAL TRUTH FOR OUR CHURCH?



### QUESTIONS

1. CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH. WHAT ARE THE PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THIS? (EPH 1:23; COL 1:18). HOW DO WE LET HIM BE BOTH LORD AND MASTER ON A PRACTICAL LEVEL?
2. CAN A BELIEVER BE PART OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AND NOT PART OF THE LOCAL CHURCH?
3. WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE CHURCH TO BE INDIGENOUS?
4. STUDY SOME OF THE METAPHORS USED TO DESCRIBE THE CHURCH (EPH 2:15, 19, 21; 1PE 2:9-10). WHICH OF THESE IS MOST MEANINGFUL TO YOU PERSONALLY?
5. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT THE CHURCH UNDERSTAND ITS PURPOSE? WHAT HAPPENS WHEN CHURCHES DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEIR PURPOSE?
6. HOW WOULD YOU SUMMARISE THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH? AND SPECIFICALLY, OUR CHURCH?
7. DO YOU KNOW WHAT OUR CHURCH'S MISSION STATEMENT IS?
8. HOW DOES THE GREAT COMMISSION RELATE TO THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH? WHAT OTHER PASSAGES IN THE BIBLE HELP US UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH?