

the CHURCH era



ACTS 2:42-45

(NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION)

THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE APOSTLES' TEACHING AND TO FELLOWSHIP, TO THE BREAKING OF BREAD AND TO PRAYER. EVERYONE WAS FILLED WITH AWE AT THE MANY WONDERS AND SIGNS PERFORMED BY THE APOSTLES. ALL THE BELIEVERS WERE TOGETHER AND HAD EVERYTHING IN COMMON. THEY SOLD PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS TO GIVE TO ANYONE WHO HAD NEED.

What is the Church?





In the past God
dwelt in the
Tabernacle and
the Temple.



But now God's
house would no
longer be in
buildings...now
he would dwell
within his own
children via
The Spirit.

“Because we are his children,
God has sent the Spirit of his
Son into our hearts, prompting
us to call out, ‘Abba, Father.’”

Galatians 4:6

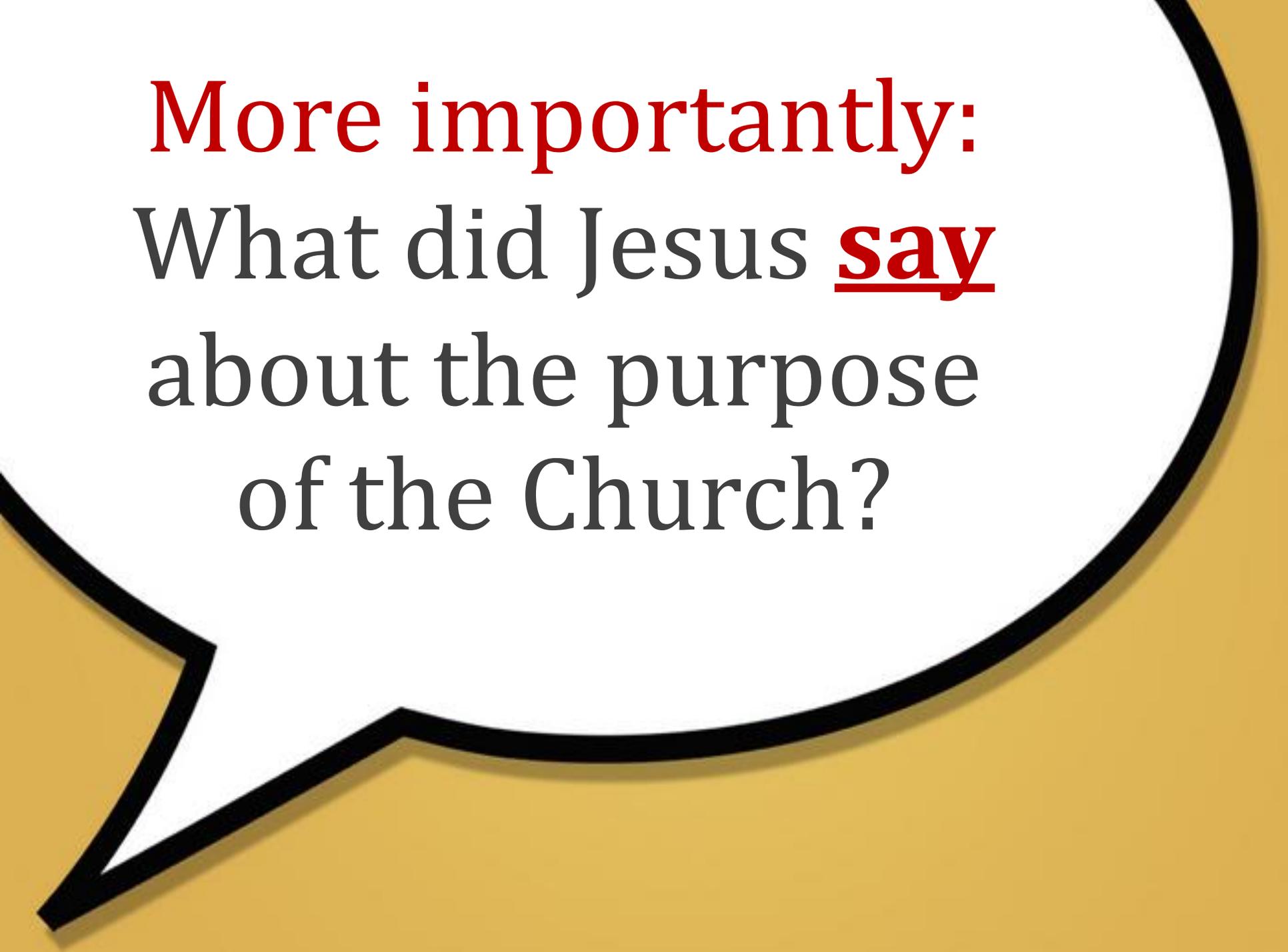
“For we are God's masterpiece.

He has created us anew in
Christ Jesus, so we can do the
good things he planned for us
long ago.”

Ephesians 2:10

What does the Church do?!





More importantly:
What did Jesus **say**
about the purpose
of the Church?

What did Jesus say about the purpose of every believer?



The summary of the purpose of the Church **according to Jesus** can be summarized in three statements.

Jesus replied:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like
it: **‘Love your
neighbor as yourself.’**
All the Law and the
Prophets hang on these
two commandments.”

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name
of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit, and
teaching them to obey
everything I have
commanded you.”

Five Tasks that Christ ordained for his Church to accomplish:



1

Love God
with all
your heart.

“Worship”

Love your
neighbor.

“Ministry”



Go and make
disciples.

“Evangelism”



Baptizing them.



“Fellowship”

Teaching
them to
obey.

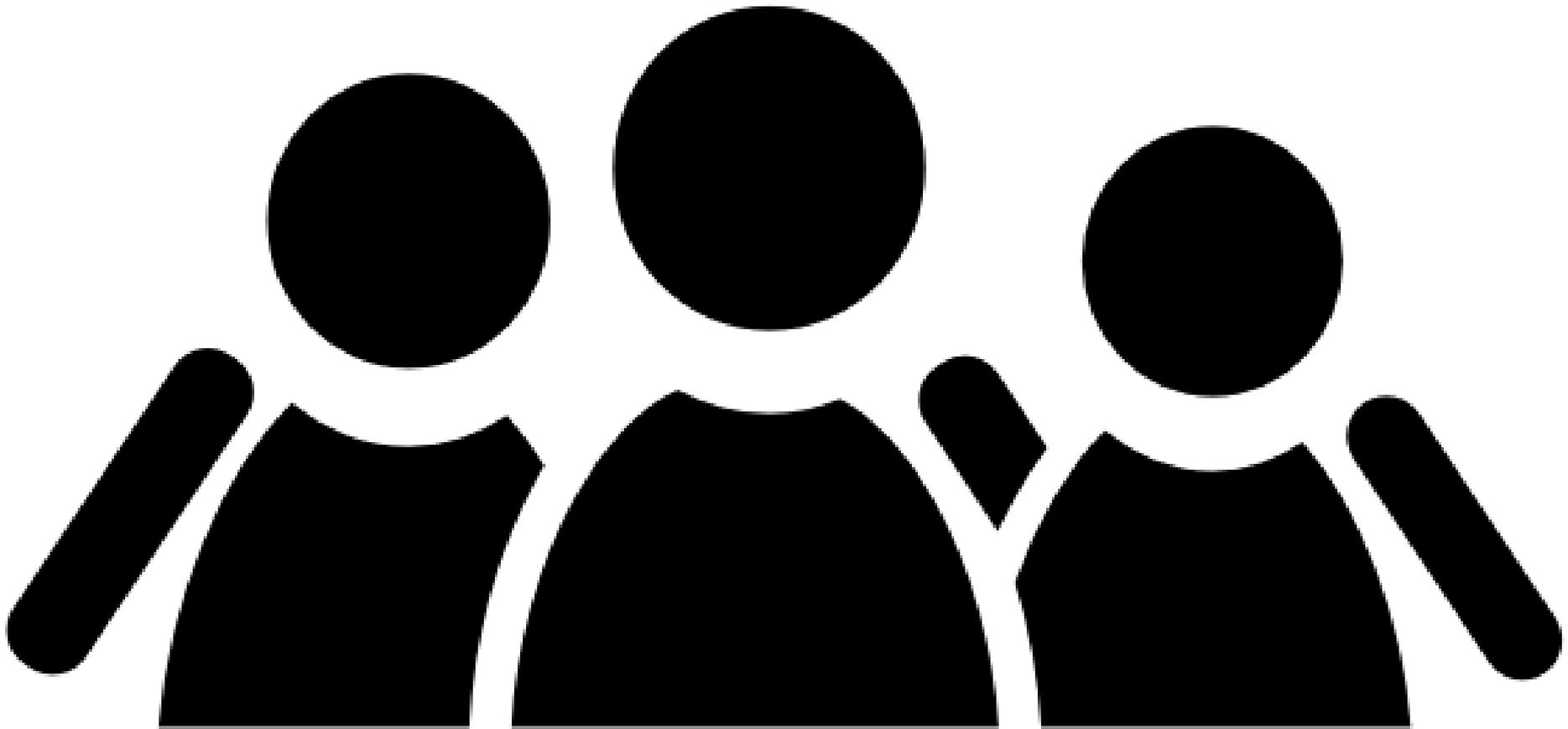


“Discipleship”

These are the things that every
Church should be doing:



**These are the things that every
believer should be doing:**



Purpose 1

Love God with all your heart

“Worship”



Worshiping God is the Church's first purpose. All throughout scripture we're commanded to magnifying the Lord and exalt his name.



Glorify the LORD with me; let us
exalt his name together. Ps 34:3

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his
name; **worship the LORD** in the splendor
of his holiness. Ps 92:2

Worship the LORD in the splendor of his
holiness; **tremble before him**, all the earth.
Ps 96:9

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. **This is truly the way to worship him.** Romans 12:1

Examples from the Early Church in ACTS

They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They **worshiped 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. Acts 2:45-47

Purpose 2

Love your neighbor

“Ministry”



Ministry is demonstrating God's love to others by meeting their needs and healing their hurts. The church is to ministry to all kinds of needs: **spiritual, emotional, relational** and **physical**.



Examples from the Early Church in ACTS

They sold their property and possessions and
shared the money with those in need.

Acts 2:45

They shared their meals with great joy and
generosity...

Acts 2:46

All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great blessing was upon them all. There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them.

Acts 4:32-34

Purpose 3

Go and make disciples

“Evangelism”



The church exists to communicate God's word. We are ambassadors for Christ and our mission is to evangelize the world. It is **EVERY** Christian's responsibility to share the Good News wherever we go.



We are to tell the whole world of Christ's coming, his death on the cross, his resurrection, and his promise to return.



Someday each of us will give an **account** to God regarding how seriously we took this responsibility.



Therefore go and **make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them to obey everything I have commanded** you. Matt 28:19-20a

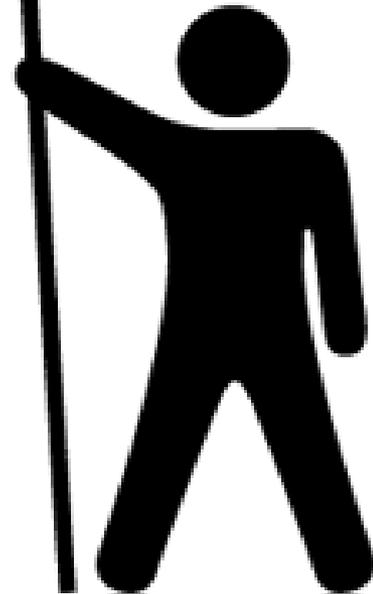
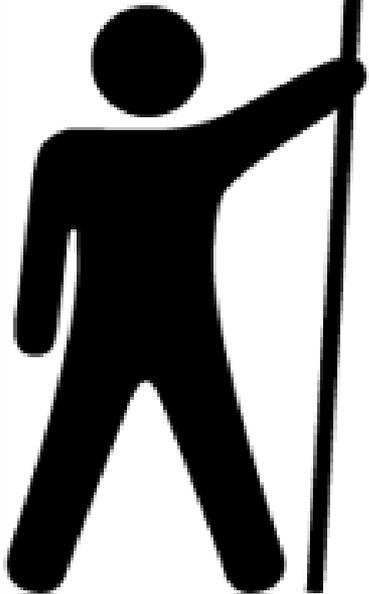
“As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” John 20:21



We are Christ's ambassadors;

God is making his appeal
through us. We speak for
Christ when we plead,
"Come back to God!"

2 Cor 5:20

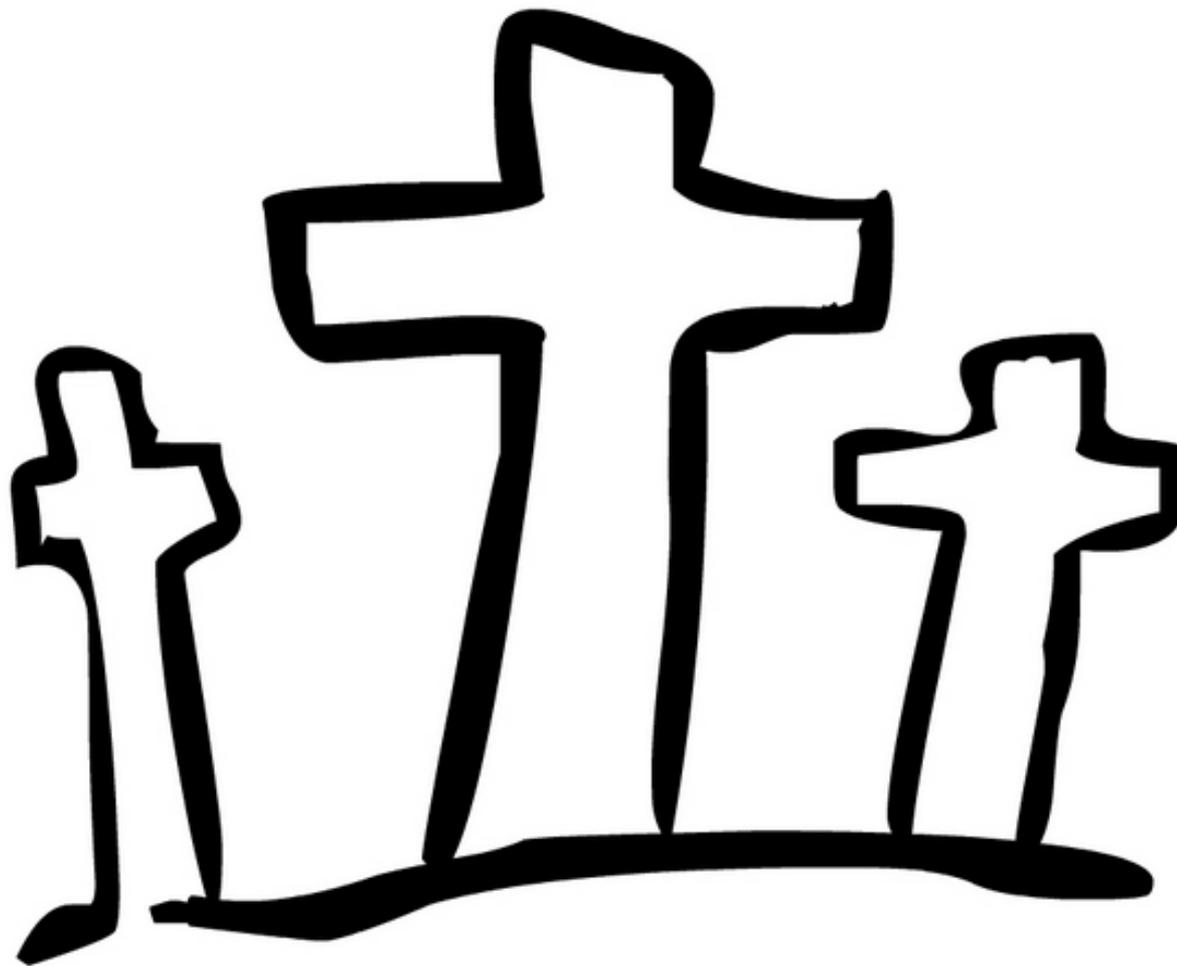


If you knew the cure for cancer, I'm sure you would do everything you could to get the word out. It would save millions of lives.



the cure

But you already know something better:
You've been given the Good News of Eternal
Life to share, which is the greatest new of all!



Examples from the Early Church in ACTS

They preached about the death and resurrection of Jesus. (Acts 2:23-24)

They preached about the need to repent and be baptized. (Acts 2:38)

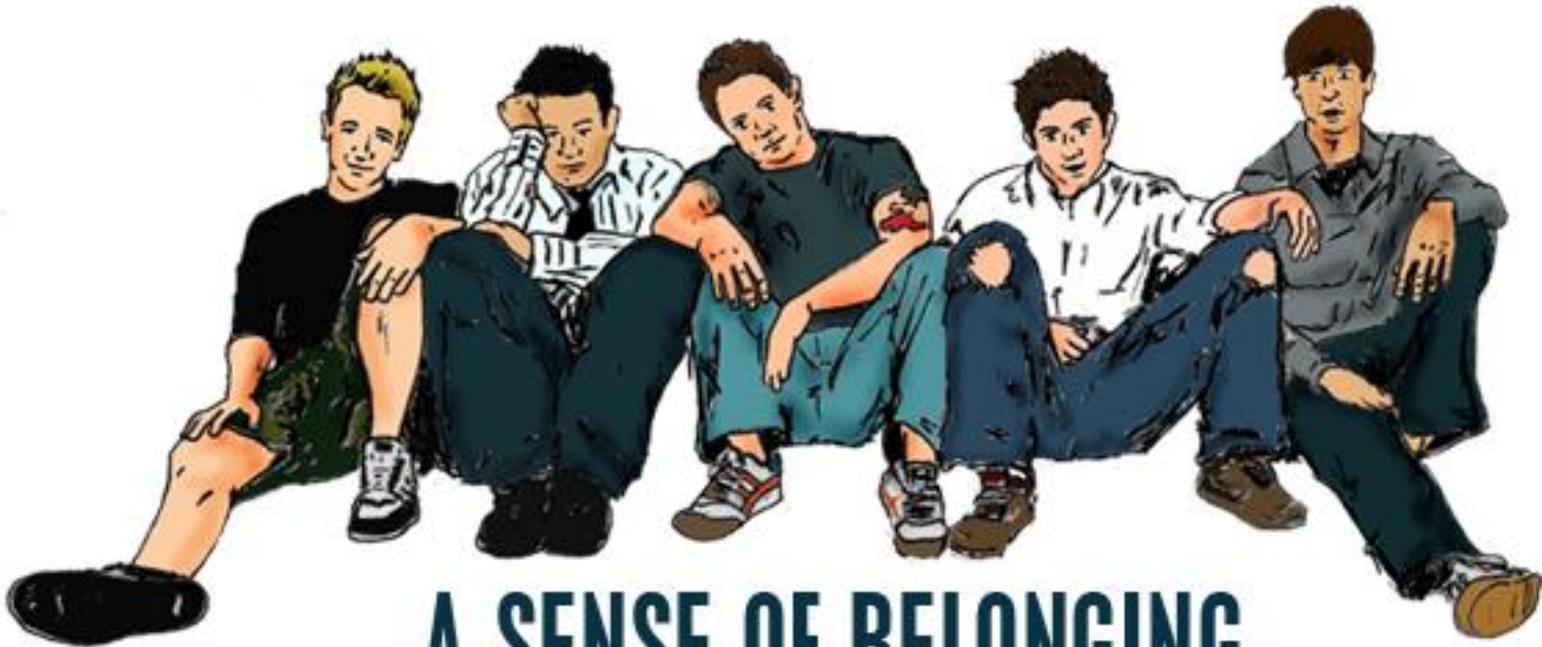
Purpose 4

Baptizing them

“Fellowship”



As Christians we're called to **belong**, not just believe. Baptism is not only a symbol of salvation; it is a **symbol of fellowship.**



A SENSE OF BELONGING

It not only symbolizes our new life in Christ, it visualizes a person's incorporation into the body of Christ. It says to the world, **"This person is now one of us!"** We are not alone. We have each other for support.

Examples from the Early Church in ACTS

“All the believers were united in heart and mind.”

Acts 4:32

“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.

Acts 2:42

Shared their meals with great joy and generosity.

Acts 2:46

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” **Heb 10:25**

Purpose 5

Teaching them to obey

“Discipleship”



The church exists to edify, or educate, God's people. Discipleship is the process of helping people become more like Christ in their thoughts, feelings, and actions.



“Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.”

Romans 12:2

This process begins when a person is born again and continues throughout the rest of their life.

Colossians 1:28 says, "We continue to preach Christ to each person, using all wisdom to warn and to teach everyone, in order to bring each one into God's presence as a mature person in Christ"

As the church we are called not only to reach people, but also to teach them. After someone has made a decision for Christ, he or she must be **discipled**.

It is the church's responsibility to develop people to spiritual maturity. This is God's will for every believer.

The Purpose of every church and every individual believer:

To bring people to Jesus and **MEMBERSHIP** in His family...to develop them into Christ-like **MATURITY**, and to equip them for their **MINISTRY** in the church and to send them out on a **MISSION** in the world, in order to **MAGNIFY** God's name.