

THE CHURCH

1 Timothy 3:15 (NLT) ¹⁵ so that if I am delayed, you will know how people must conduct themselves in the household of God. This is the church of the living God, which is the pillar and foundation of the truth.

Share your earliest best memories of the church.

Share about your baptism or confirmation and what made that meaningful.



READ Ephesians 2:19–3:13 (NLT) ¹⁹ So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God’s holy people. You are members of God’s family. ²⁰ Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. ²¹ We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. ²² Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit. ¹ When I think of all this, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus for the benefit of you Gentiles ... ² assuming, by the way, that you know God gave me the special responsibility of extending his grace to you Gentiles. ³ As I briefly wrote earlier, God himself revealed his mysterious plan to me. ⁴ As you read what I have written, you will understand my insight into this plan regarding Christ. ⁵ God did not reveal it to previous generations, but now by his Spirit he has revealed it to his holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ And this is God’s plan: Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God’s children. Both are part of the same body, and both enjoy the promise of blessings because they belong to Christ Jesus. ⁷ By God’s grace and mighty power, I have been given the privilege of serving him by spreading this Good News. ⁸ Though I am the least deserving of all God’s people, he graciously gave me the privilege of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ. ⁹ I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning. ¹⁰ God’s purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God’s presence. ¹³ So please don’t lose heart because of my trials here. I am suffering for you, so you should feel honoured.

List some take aways from this text about who we are ‘in Christ’.

Draw an image of the church from this text:

1. The term 'church' appears for the first time when spoken by Christ Himself and is recorded in Matthew 16:18 (NLT) ¹⁸ Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means 'rock'), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. What can we take from this verse as meaning for today?

2. The word translated *church* in the New Testament is from the Greek word *ekklesia* which means an assembly or congregation. It does not refer to a building rather it refers instead to people. In the New Testament, it generally refers to believers Jew or Gentile who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ What were some of the priorities of the early church outlined in Acts 2:42f

3. Consider the following passages and what the images communicate about 'the Church':
 - a. Colossians 1:18
 - b. Ephesians 5:21-22
 - c. Revelation 19:7-9
 - d. Ephesians 2:19-22 (1 Corinthians 3:16)
 - e. 1 Peter 2:8-9 (Hebrews 3:6)
 - f. Acts 20:28 (see John 10)
 - g. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (see Ephesians 4:11-13)

4. **Read Acts 14:19-23** What does this passage tell us about the early development of what makes us a 'Church'?

5. **Read Ephesians 5:26-27** What does this tell us of the 'end game' of the church?