

What We Believe

ABOUT THE CHURCH

1. Definition of

- Original language uses EKKLESIA, which was a common term used by the people at that time to describe their official 'assemblies.'
- The word literally means 'to call out,' so it really fits the idea of the assembly of the saved because God has '*called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*' 1 Pet. 2:9.

2. Founded by and upon Jesus Christ

- Matthew 16:13-18, "Upon this rock I will build my church."
- Ephesians 2:20. The church is built upon the foundation of the _____ and _____. Jesus is the _____.
- 1 Corinthians 3:11, "*No one can lay another foundation other than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.*"
- Q** – How would you answer someone who said they could follow Jesus and not belong to a local church?

3. Founded on Pentecost

- Acts 2:47, God added to the number of saved those who were being saved each day. (At your conversion, God *automatically added you* to the church.)
- Acts 5:11**. Great fear seized the _____.



- This is the first use of "church" after the ascension of Jesus Christ.
- Somewhere between Jesus' promise to *build* the church and Acts 5:11's reference to the *already-existing* church, the church had come into being.

4. Exists as the Body of Christ

- Col. 1:18. Jesus is the _____ of the body, which is the _____.
- Q** – How should this truth affect you in the involvement and support of the church?

5. The Local Church is Organized and Autonomous (Self-Ruled)

- Jesus has organized his church to govern itself by qualified leaders who know the Word of God. (Elders and Deacons: 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-16)
- Other than Jesus Himself, there is no higher governing organization above and beyond the local congregation.
 - **Q** – What might be God's purposes for organizing churches to be autonomous?
 - **Q** – How does autonomy affect fellowship between congregations?
- Acts 15 – The church at Antioch sent representatives to the church at Jerusalem to discuss and decide on a "sharp dispute" about Gentile Christians and the Law of Moses.

6. The Church is to be United in its Teachings

a. Jesus prayed for his disciples to become perfectly _____ so the world would know God sent Jesus (John 17:23)

b. Ephesians 4:1-6:

- A life lived worthy of God's calling should cause believers to be "eager to maintain the _____ of the _____ in the bond of _____."
- *"There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call – one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all."* (ESV)

c. Teachings:

- 1 Corinthians 11:2 – Paul praised the Corinthians for holding to the _____ just as he delivered them to them.