

What is Church?

1. Can you see the big house in front? There is a cross on the top. Isn't it a church?
2. No, that's not correct. The church is not a building. The church is a group of people who believe in Jesus and are called from this world to follow Jesus. The place where they gather together is the church meeting place.
3. I see. Now I know the church is not a building.

- . Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. (Acts 20:28 ESV)
- . To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours. (1 Cor. 1:2 ESV)
- . Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia. (2 Cor. 1:1 ESV)
- . If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. (Matthew 18:17 ESV)

4. After we listened to the gospel, we decided to repent and to accept the Lord as our Saviour. When we believe in His name, we become the children of God.

- . But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12 ESV)
- . For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs— heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (Romans 8:14-17 ESV)

5. When the children of God gather unto His name, God promises His special presence. Through this, the church is shown.

- . Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. (Matthew 18:19-20 ESV)
- . Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:20 ESV)

6. We call God Abba Father. Jesus is our elder Brother. All of us are members of God's household.

- . If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.
(1 Timothy 3:15 ESV)
- . For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise." (Hebrews 2:10-12 ESV)

7. Therefore, we are brothers and sisters. This is not just a title, but we truly have a deep relationship.

A: It's great to become members of God's family!

8. B: In God's family, we don't have hierarchies and rankings. Each one of us is important and precious. Because of God's love, we love and we care for one another.

- . For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." (Matthew 12:50 ESV)
- . So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:5-8 ESV)
- . Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Cor. 12:27 ESV)

- . Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. (Eph. 4:25 ESV)
- . A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:34-35 ESV)

9. We have mature older brothers and sisters leading the church. In the meetings, they share messages. They use the word of God to teach us, guide us and to bless us. They younger ones should listen to the older ones. We work together to preach the gospel and to shepherd the young brothers and sisters.

- . So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (1 Peter 5:1-5 ESV)
- . Let brotherly love continue. (Hebrews 13:1 ESV)
- . Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. (Hebrews 13:7 ESV)
- . Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Hebrews 13:17 ESV)
- . I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (Revelation 1:9 ESV)

**10. There are some brothers and sisters in the church who have laid down their own professions, giving themselves continually in prayers and preaching the word of God. They have faith and trust that God will provide for them. We should respect, support, and provide for these brothers and sisters.
The brothers and sisters are really precious!**

- . But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” (Acts 6:4 ESV)

- . Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. (1 Timothy 5:17 ESV)
- . For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. (Romans 15:27 ESV)
- . Begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints. (2 Cor. 8:4 ESV)
- . Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. (Galatians 6:6 ESV)

11. B: We have lots of different meetings and activities in the church. All these help us to know more about God and to be close to Him. They also help brothers and sisters to know one another, to have fellowship and improve together.

- . So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:41-47 ESV)

12. In God's family, we have to love God and to draw close to Him. Among brothers and sisters, we also have to love one another and live out God's family.

- . A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. (John 13:34 ESV)
- . Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. (Romans 12:10 ESV)
- . So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding. (Romans 14:19 ESV)
- . Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:3 ESV)