

“It’s What?”
The Church, Part 1
July 11th, 2021

How did the church get started?

Matthew 16:13-18 (NLT) “¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ ¹⁴ ‘Well,’ they replied, ‘some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.’ ¹⁵ Then He asked them, ‘But who do you say I am?’ ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’ ¹⁷ Jesus replied, ‘You are blessed, Simon son of John, because My Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. 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.’”

The **FOUNDATION** of the Christian church is Peter’s confession that Jesus was the long-awaited & promised Messiah, the **SAVIOR** of the world who **REPAIRED** our broken relationship with God through His sacrificial death on the cross

Ephesians 1:22-23 (NLT) “²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made Him head over all things for the benefit of the church. ²³ And the church is His body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with Himself.”

The New Testament church is a **BODY** of believers who have been **CALLED OUT** from the world by God to **LIVE** as His people under the **AUTHORITY** of Jesus Christ

What the Church Isn’t

- **The church isn’t a **BUILDING** – it’s **PEOPLE****

The Greek word “ekklesia” describes a **GATHERING**, **ASSEMBLY** for a specific purpose
Acts 19:32 (NIV) “The assembly [the “ekklesia] was in confusion...”

WE are the church (**PEOPLE**)

- **The church isn’t a **COUNTRY CLUB****

The church isn’t for “**MEMBERS ONLY**”

1 Corinthians 14:23-24 (NIV) “²³ ...and some who do not understand or some unbelievers come in,... ²⁴ But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in...”

- **The church isn’t a **SOCIAL** activist or **POLITICAL** group**

What the Church Is – 3 Analogies

1. **The church is a **FAMILY****

Matthew 12:49-50 (NLT) “⁴⁹ Then Jesus pointed to His disciples and said, ‘Look, these are My mother and brothers. ⁵⁰ Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother!’”

Ephesians 2:19 (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.”

Romans 12:10&13 (NLT) “¹⁰ Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other... ¹³ When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.”

The primary activity of the early church was “**ONE-ANOTHERING**” one another (*see handout*)

John 13:35 (NLT) “[Jesus said] Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples.”

Galatians 6:2 & 5 (NIV) “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ... each one

should carry their own load.”

When everyone is sitting in **ROWS**, you can't do any **ONE ANOTHERS**

It's so much easier to do one-anothering in **CIRCLES** than **ROWS** – that's why **LIFE GROUPS** are crucial at New Hope

2. The church is an **ARMY, and we are God's **SOLDIERS****

2 Timothy 4:7 (NIV) “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

1 Timothy 6:12 (NLT) “For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world,…”

Ephesians 6:13 (NLT) “Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.”

2 Timothy 2:3-4 (NLT) “³Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.”

Our #1 enemy that keeps us from fully following Christ & being greatly used by Him is **BUSYNESS**

Mission Statement of New Hope: To **INFLUENCE** people toward a **LIFE-CHANGING** relationship with Jesus Christ

3. The church is a **BODY**

1 Corinthians 12:1 (NCV) “Now, brothers and sisters, I want you to understand about spiritual gifts.”

1 Corinthians 12:11 (NLT) “It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.”

1 Corinthians 12:21 (NLT) “The eye can never say to the hand, ‘I don't need you.’ The head can't say to the feet, ‘I don't need you.’”

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NLT) “All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.”

The body of Christ at New Hope **NEEDS** YOU!!! We are not **WHOLE** without YOU!!!

My Next Step Today Is:

- I will read through the 59 “One Others” of the New Testament this week
- I will ask God this week, “What part of the body am I?,” & I will listen for His answer
- I will visit the Ministry Fair on the patio to learn some of the things my church does

Join us next week for Part 2 of “**The Church**” – **S.H.A.P.E.d for Significance**. Invite a friend!