

## Church

**Church defined** - comes from the word **ἐκκλησία**, which is defined as “a regularly summoned legislative body, *assembly*.” The Bible refers to a universal Church, which includes all who put their faith in Christ. And it refers to local churches, which are assemblies of local believers. It is the people, not the building. However, it is presumed they will gather together on a regular basis. Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:1, and Hebrews 10:25.

**Christ instituted the Church** and Christ is the Head of the Church. See Matt 16:18; Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:20, 5:23-24; Colossians 1:18; and Revelation 2 and 3. Peter was a rock, but not the cornerstone. Phraseology used in verse 19 is a metaphor referring to decision maker. Acts 2 shows Peter explaining to Jews what signs meant. Acts 5:1-10 shows Peter exercising authority to purify the church. Acts 10 shows Peter bringing in first Gentiles. Acts 15 shows Peter as part of the decision making council. However, Acts 12:17 and 15:13 show James took prominent position on that council.

**Church has authority.** Matt 16:19 and 18:15-20 show that the body was expected to rule on disciplinary issues. The local assembly sent missionaries who established other local churches with pastors and then reported back on progress. See Acts 11:22&26; 13:1-3; 14:21-27. When conflict arose, leaders of local assemblies met with the church in Jerusalem to establish a resolution - Acts 15. Also important to note that the elders/pastors appointed by the church were appointed by God to maintain purity of doctrine. Ephesians 4:11-15.

**Church and the world.** Acts 2:43 hints at respect within the church body. Acts 5:11-14 shows that when church was pure, everyone had great respect for her. Church is expected to interact with the world – 1 Cor 5:9-10 and 9:19-23. Church is commissioned to win the lost world to Christ – Matt 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8.