

# Church

When we accept God's offer and are reborn, we become a member of God's family. Every spiritual child needs a spiritual family. God is our heavenly father, and as followers of Jesus we are like brothers and sisters of the same family.

"This household is the church of the living God..." (1 Timothy 3:15). The household is not a building, and the "church" is not a place of worship, but a group of believers.

## Jesus and His church

*How does the Bible describe the relationship between Jesus and His followers?*

Romans 12:5: \_\_\_\_\_

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Ephesians 1:22-23: \_\_\_\_\_

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## What does church look like?

*Acts 2:37-47: What do we learn about church here?*

Church can meet everywhere: in parks, schools, cafés, church buildings, offices or at home in the living room.

## A definition of church (according to the Book of Acts)

In the New Testament the word "church" is used in three different ways:

1. All the followers of Jesus in the world (the "body of Christ")
2. All the followers of Jesus in a city / a region  
Example Acts 11:22: the "church in Jerusalem"
3. A group of followers of Jesus that regularly meet together  
Example Romans 16:5: the "church in the house of Prisca and Aquila"

Here we look at the third meaning. What elements make up a specific church?

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### **Covenant**

A group of people who decided to follow Jesus and have been baptised, who see themselves as a church and commit to doing God's will together.

### **Functions**

- **Worship:** Praising God and being in His presence
- **Fellowship:** Lovingly caring about each other and being ready to sacrifice for each other
- **Prayer:** Talking together with God
- **Training:** Reading the Bible and teaching everyone to obey God in everyday life
- **Multiplication:** Sharing the Gospel and making disciples by the power of the Holy Spirit

### **Leaders**

Healthy churches have leaders who care about the believers and support them to do God's will in all parts of their lives.

## Three duties we have as the church

### 1) Joining with Jesus: Baptism

The word “baptism” means “to immerse, submerge” as cleansing or washing. Just as Jesus was baptised, everyone who believes in Him needs to be baptised as well. Jesus commands His followers at the end of the Gospel of Matthew: “... baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:19)

The meaning of this verse becomes clear in Acts 2:38:

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Romans 6:1-11 explains the meaning of the baptism in water:

In the same way that Jesus was buried and then rose again to life, we go under water in baptism and come out of the water with a new life. Our old nature dies and we’re no longer “slaves of sin”. That means we no longer have to sin. We’re now a “new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17). In baptism we bury our old life and our new life begins, a totally new lifestyle guided by the example of Jesus.

### 2) Remembering Jesus: The Lord’s Supper

Jesus personally set the Lord’s Supper as a remembrance of His death and shedding of blood for our sins. (Luke 22:15-20)

When we take the Lord’s Supper, it helps us to remember what Jesus did for us and to give thanks. Isaiah 53:5:

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When we receive the Lord’s Supper, we should take time to examine our actions and faith. (1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

### 3) Giving

Giving thank-you gifts to God is an act of worship. We offer sacrifices to God in many areas of our life, e.g. with our time and our abilities. God has also asked us to give parts of our finances to him.

*Ask God: What should I invest my time in? How should I invest my money?*

